

ST. CLAIR COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

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ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Meeting Minutes October 21, 2021

Members Present:

Jerry Dinges, Assistant Chairman
Robert Allen
Matt Smallheer
Robert Trentman
Rick Vernier

Members Excused:

Ken Sharkey, Chairman
Marty Crawford

Staff Present:

Rick Stubblefield, Director

Others Present:

Bryan Johnson, MidAmerica Airport Director

Call to Order:

In Chairman Ken Sharkey's absence, Assistant Chairman Jerry Dinges called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m. and took roll call. Attendees rose and recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

Public Comment Regarding the Agenda:

Assistant Chair Dinges asked if anyone present had a question or comment regarding the agenda. There were none.

Approval of the September 16, 2021 Committee Minutes (action required):

Assistant Chairman Dinges called for action on the September 16, 2021 Committee minutes. Mr. Smallheer made the motion to approve the minutes, which was seconded by Mr. Allen. The motion passed unanimously.

New Business:

Rick Stubblefield informed members the PACE ordinance is not yet complete as details are still being worked out. The draft ordinance is under revision. He tabled the item for next month.

New Business (Director's Report):

Rick Stubblefield stated St. Clair County is still working to secure funds for work that needs to be done at the airport in regard to Boeing. He explained the County has partnered with Greater STL for a Build, Back, Better grant through EDA. The grant application has two parts; the first part was submitted last week. Mr. Stubblefield expressed he believes applicants will need to be in the top thirty of census areas. St. Clair County

partnered with Greater STL to include the entire St. Louis region. He stated there are several municipalities in St. Clair County as well as Madison County that have plans as well. Mr. Stubblefield explained EDA is only giving out sixty of the first part of the two-part grant; the first part is \$500,000 to develop plans; the second part is up to \$100,000,000 to execute the plan. He noted he and Bryan Johnson has been working with Greater STL regarding the importance of Boeing and what they bring to the entire region. Greater STL has asked Chairman Kern to be a part of the decision-making coalition. Mr. Stubblefield stressed the importance of that as it gives St. Clair County an advocate for this side of the river.

Mr. Stubblefield stated he met with Boeing and SWIC yesterday. SWIC has secured a \$7.5 million grant for a new advanced manufacturing center on the Belleville campus. He noted Boeing has expressed concern as to where prospective employees will come from regarding training and human resources on this side of the river. He explained it is easier to go from Columbia or Alton, Illinois to the Bridgeton plant than it is to the MidAmerica Boeing plant location. Mr. Stubblefield has engaged in conversation regarding incorporating training and the Metrolink expansion; the expansion will take Metrolink to MidAmerica Airport. He stated St. Clair County has a diverse population that does not have access to transportation or training; the new facility on the SWIC campus will allow populations from areas such as East St. Louis, Emerson Park, and Washington Park to take the Metrolink to the campus for training and then out to the new Boeing plant at MidAmerica Airport. Conversation has been had regarding SWIC reopening their childcare facility for those in training and at work. Mr. Stubblefield stated Boeing currently trains through Florissant Valley Community College in St. Louis. He explained all costs for the 5-week course are funded through the State of Missouri likely through Workforce Development Grants. Mr. Stubblefield stated the same grants are administered through IGD; he is confident he will be able to fund the same training at SWIC to keep as many St. Clair County and Illinois residents employed here as possible.

Mr. Stubblefield stated Belleville School District #201 recently closed on the Kings Point facility in West Belleville off 74th Street. The 100,000 square foot building will be turned into a career and technical education center. District #201 is bringing back classes such as automotive repair, welding, and machining. Boeing is very interested in having conversations with District #201 in the coming weeks regarding engaging students while they are in high school to generate interest in the Boeing-designed curriculum program at SWIC.

Mr. Stubblefield stated there are still many inquiries from start-up businesses and businesses wanting to relocate to the County. He has had several promising conversations.

There were no comments or questions.

Assistant Chairman Dinges called for action to place the Director's report on file. Mr. Vernier made the motion, which was seconded by Mr. Allen. The motion passed unanimously.

New Business (MidAmerica Airport Director's Report):

Bryan Johnson stated he reached out to IDOT and the Illinois Department of Aeronautics because of what was appropriated in the last legislation. \$25,000,000 is coming down through IDA; there is another \$32,000,000 coming through DCEO. He is meeting with both entities every other week and is working to drive funds to Southern Illinois to support the Boeing project. Mr. Johnson reiterated Mr. Stubblefield's comments and expressed the tremendous amount energy regarding the project. He has one finance director assigned to the DCEO piece; he also has Dan Trapp leading the IDA piece.

Mr. Johnson discussed the dynamics of workforce and air carriers. The recent vaccination mandate applied to government contracts; if you have a government contract, you must be vaccinated. All air carriers have government contracts. He expressed some air carriers such as Southwest Airlines and Delta are in the headlines; Allegiant is not a headline however the issue is being pushed down to their employees. He expressed people will work for a short period of time and then quit working; they are seeing spotty work shortages.

Mr. Johnson noted the airport has a lot of construction that is on-going and noted the history-making significance of the projects.

Mr. Johnson stated the concession agreement was re-established at the recent PBC meeting.

There were no comments or questions.

New Business (Military Affairs Director Comments):

Kimberly Huth was unable to attend due to a conflict.

Other Comments:

None

Adjournment:

There were no additional comments or questions from the Committee. Chairman Sharkey asked for a motion to adjourn. Mr. Vernier so moved and it was seconded by Mr. Dinges. The motion to adjourn passed unanimously and the Committee adjourned at 5:13p.m.