

Florence County Economic Development COMMITTEE MEETING

MISSION: EDC will retain, expand and recruit a diversified business population which provides broad and varied job opportunities while safeguarding the area's natural surroundings.

Date: August 27th, 2015

Time: Thursday, 4:00 pm - 2nd Floor Conference Room – Courthouse

1. Call to order and roll call

The meeting was called to order by Chairman, L. Neuens. Members J. Bomberg, G. Steber, and L. Dzekute were present. J. Halada was excused. Director W. Gehlhoff was also present.

2. Approve agenda

The agenda was approved on a motion by L. Dzekute, G. Steber 2nd, motion carried.

3. Approve minutes

The minutes were approved on a motion by J. Bomberg, L. Dzekute 2nd, motion carried.

4. TIF Project Revision

The Assisted Living project asked if they could receive more of the approved TIF incentive in the form of up-front monies? Discussion led to a decision to stick with the original \$100,000 up front with \$650,000 in the form of yearly pay-as-you go payments so as not to borrow more from the general fund.

5. TIF District Bill Approval

10 bills from the RV Dump Station, Dog Park, Hotel Study and Assisted Living Financing Pro Forma projects totaling \$\$17,187.78 were reviewed. These items were part of the TID plan. On a motion by J. Bomberg, G. Steber 2nd, the bills will be sent on to Audit and Budget for reimbursement. Motion Carried.

6. 2016 Draft Budget

On a motion by J. Bomberg, L. Dzekute 2nd, the budget proposals go on to Audit & Budget. Motion carried.

7. Economic Development as County Department

On a motion by L. Dzekute, J. Bomberg 2nd, the County Economic Development Director Job Description was approved and will be forwarded to Personnel Committee. Motion Carried. On a motion by G. Steber, J. Bomberg 2nd, the list of questions and issues to address to finalize this position as a county position were approved and will be forwarded to Personnel Committee. Motion carried.

8. Update on other EDC Projects and Loan Program

The attached EDC Project Update was reviewed with committee members.

9. Board Member Concerns

The need for a local day care was discussed and Director will continue to assist as needed.

10. Adjournment

On a motion by J. Bomberg, L. Dzekute 2nd, the meeting was adjourned. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Wendy Gehlhoff – FCEDC Director

EDC Project Update August 25th & 27th, 2015

- **RLF Loan Program**
 - 14 RLF loans in Fence, Florence, Tipler, Long Lake. Balance to loan out \$190,000. Loans are current.
- **Forest Products Industry Support**
 - Embarking on phase 2 of Grow North Wood Products Marketing Initiative. 10 companies have signed on with 4 from Florence County. First steps are RR Tie workshop to add 20-25% profit and small volume species concentration for new markets via co-op or other system.
 - CNNF SPA #1: Goods sale complete. Service work nearly complete. 2nd SPA is to be signed in Sept.
 - Good Neighbor Authority underway with possible 25% more harvesting in 2016. WI is first to pursue. GNA can do everything but road work (SPA's can do this). ASQ catch-up harvesting is still needed!
 - Discussions to develop a Forest Industry Day for FHS students to get a hands on understanding of the industry careers and importance of the industry to our economy
- **Business Development and Entrepreneur Support**
 - Helped 5 entrepreneurs locate business resources, regulatory info, site options and loan options.
 - Wrote letter of support for Pat's Foods – they were 1 of 6 WI grocery stores to win Community Service award. Their customer numbers continue to climb and sales are strong.
 - Helping Assisted Living facility developer with details for builder and financing. Spring is target.
 - Still working with AmericInn developer and hotel study person to locate potential hotel investors.
 - Part of FHS team initiating new Fab Lab and BAWDB employability skills curriculum. Leading efforts to connect with five businesses on Industry Advisory team. Exploring Potawatomi grant for equipment.
- **TIF District (TID)**
 - Family Dollar store shelf stocking underway. Opening this week. Need more job applicants so networked with WI Job Center, MI Works and emails. Their new value will hit assessment roll in 2016.
 - DOR 2015 Statement of Changes in TID Value report showed and 11% increase in TID value producing a \$1,353,200 growth in equalized value. When 2015 taxes are paid, the TID will receive its first revenues.
 - Florence Hardwoods first building added \$585,000 value to TID for 2015. 2nd building will hit tax rolls in 2016. Certificate of building completion prompted \$100,000 up front payment.
- **Tourism and Website Projects**
 - Writing and taping monthly radio ads re events/attractions in Florence County for 2 radio stations.
 - Wild Rivers 50th Anniversary, Badwater Bass Tourney and Hunnies, Hot Rods & Hogs were successful.
 - Dog park and RV dump station were added to national websites so US 2 travelers stop here. Road icon signs were added. One large DOG PARK sign needed for east fence that can be seen from US 2. Locals are telling me many travelers and even Iron Mountain residents are using the Bark Park.
 - Working with Chamber on next newsletter and to ID new process for visitor guide production.
- **Northwoods Rail Transit Commission (NRTC)**
 - WEDC grant application underway for detailed shipper data collection in WI in 13 northern counties.
 - Attending 1 day of GLTPA Logging Congress to promote NRTC and collect freight shipping contacts.
- **Other Projects**
 - Exploring grant for possible business incubator feasibility study and/or strategic planning.
 - Considering a 2nd Tourism JEM grant for Wild Rivers as a destination promotion.
 - Forming group to pursue WEDC Connect Community application for downtown Florence. This brings most of Wisconsin Main Street Program resources to the downtown businesses for only \$200. We have accomplished much of the projects identified by First Impressions so now are ready for new goals.
 - Time spent on EDC as county position and/or department details ie budget, job description etc.