

Florence County Economic Development

COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

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: September 29th, 2014

Time: Monday, 4:30 pm, 2nd Floor Jury Room – Courthouse

1. Call to order & roll call

The meeting was called to order by Chairman G. Steber. Board members G. Steber, T. Bomberg, E. Wenger and C. Nelson were present along with FCEDC Director, W. Gehlhoff. S. McLain was excused.

2. Approve agenda

An agenda was approved on a motion by T. Bomberg, E. Wenger 2nd, motion carried.

3. Approve minutes

The minutes were approved on a motion by T. Bomberg, E. Wenger 2nd, motion carried.

4. RLF Loan Program (discussion and/or action)

- a. **Current RLF loans – monthly payment status:** All loans are current. There is a \$152,000 balance in the program fund available to make new loans.
- b. **Monthly Bill Approval:** On a motion by C. Nelson, E. Wenger 2nd, the May-September monthly bills were approved. Motion carried.
- c. **Marketing the RLF Loan Program:** The RLF loan balance has been growing because although several loan applications have gone out, no one has turned in a final loan request. Additional marketing will be done through the Chamber, area banks, newspapers, Grow North and website.

5. Schenk Audit review: The group reviewed the 2012/2013 audit. On a motion by e. Wenger, Tim Bomberg 2nd, the audit was accepted. Motion Carried. Director will ask Scott Sternhagen if the Commission should request that the remaining \$15,805 Industrial Park loan balance be forgiven.

6. 2015 Draft Budget review: On a motion by C. Nelson, E. Wenger 2nd, the draft budget was approved to be forwarded on to Audit and Budget. Motion carried.

7. Industrial Park: The DNR Storm Water Management Permit to level lots 5, 6 and 7 in the industrial park will expire in October of 2015. Some dirt has been removed as fill for other town projects. The Town has been very busy with many great projects. Hopefully 2015 will wrap up this project.

8. Update on projects: The attached EDC Project Update was reviewed.

9. Board member concerns: The TIF project process was reviewed for clarity.

10. Adjournment: On a motion by C. Nelson, E. Wenger 2nd, the meeting was adjourned. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Wendy Gehlhoff – FCEDC Director

EDC Project Update 9/29/14

- **RLF Loan Program**
 - Currently 14 RLF loans - businesses in Fence, Florence, Tipler, Long Lake. Balance to loan out \$152,000.
 - All loans paying on time. Several loan applications have been requested, but none returned.
- **Forest Products Industry Support**
 - Florence Hardwoods expansion projects are under way. Remanufacturing line is being debugged. 2nd building concrete has been poured. These 2 projects will add 14 new jobs for a total of 58 employees.
 - CNNF SPA #1 (235 acres, 2.35 MMBF for \$150,000 of goods) signed 9/15. Timber bids will go out in Oct.
 - Final application for \$30,000 NewNorth/Grow North WEDC grant to market wood products industry.
 - Attended August 1st Governor's Council on Forestry meeting to address CNNF issues. All groups working to get more logs from CNNF presented. Paul Strong, CNNF supervisor, gave excuses – no staff or money
 - Sent written input to 8/18 USFS Region 9 upper management meeting re their lack of harvesting.
 - Attended International Wood Fair August 20-23 in Atlanta with 3 other Grow North EDC peers and DNR Forest Industry specialists. Gave our sawmill contact info to lumber buyers, new finished product idea.
- **Business Development and Entrepreneur Support**
 - Family Dollar land closed last week. Construction to begin this fall with opening in May 2015.
 - New Pat's Foods/Ace Hardware store has had very good sales. Have submitted two batches of building and equipment receipts to WEDC for grant reimbursement at 20% up to \$250,000 cap, 1st ck received.
 - Assistance for critical day care business in Florence in Acorn Cottage building.
 - Facilitating DCHS and TDS partnership to establish small pharmacy in the Florence medical clinic.
- **TIF District (TID)**
 - EDCommittee approved TIF monies to hire best out of 3 companies to do older adult market study, laying ground work for assisted living project.
 - Working with Florence Hardwoods and Corp. Counsel to come to re terms for Developers Agreement.
- **Northwoods Rail Transit Commission (NRTC)**
 - Next meeting October 10th re process to get more detailed shipper data from businesses for rail use.
 - Giving presentation on NRCT efforts at WI Freight Rail Day October 7th.
- **Tourism and Website Projects**
 - Agreed to represent tourism industry on new County Deer Advisory Council to review deer herd #'s.
 - After submitting final report - received Badwater Bash grant full reimbursement for \$5,452 spent.
 - Held Badwater Bash wrap-up meeting. Firemen will not help next year. Looking for volunteer group.
 - Grant funded facebook ads for Badwater Bash and Wild River tour have pushed our facebook likes to 5500 vs. 3000 last summer and only 700 during 2012 summer. Our events and recreational attractions are being found and followed by a much bigger audience. Oxbow and other tubing spots very busy.
- **Signage Projects**
 - Promotions for Wild Rivers and Waterfalls work continue via fall color push for \$18,935 Wild Rivers Tour Dept. of Tourism JEM grant. Redoing county rec map text side, map updated and print company found.
- **Other Projects**
 - Facilitated Senator Ron Johnson & Sr. Director of Legislative and Local Affairs (Cindy Polzin) visits/tours.
 - Hosted outdoor writer from Road Trips for Families and Wisconsin Parent August 12th. She stayed at Lakeside B&B with her 3 kids and wrote 2 visual articles for Wisconsin Parent.com. She already promoted Florence County waterfalls and our website on Wisconsin Public Radio back in May.
 - Brought Don Sidlowski to meet Supt. Ben Niehaus to discuss how to start a Fab Lab at FHS like 3 Lakes.