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: August 25th, 2015
Time: Tuesday, 4:00 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 D. Stohl were present along with FCEDC Director, W. Gehlhoff. S. McLain was absent.

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. Discussion/Action finalize offer to purchase document
Obtain preapproval letter from the bank that is financing the project before conducting the loan closing. On a motion by E. Wenger, D. Stohl 2nd, the offer to purchase document was approved with Chairman as signee. Motion carried.

5. RLF Loan Program Review
The monthly payment list was reviewed. All are current except one loan that director has addressed. The loan pot has $190,000 available to loan out. There are currently two applications underway.

6. Monthly Bill approval
On a motion by T. Bomberg, D. Stohl 2nd, the bill list was approved. Motion carried.

7. Discussion/Action 2013/2014 Schenk Audit
This item was tabled until Schenk corrects and error re "monies returned to state" did not occur.

8. Discussion/Action 2016 draft budget
On a motion by E. Wenger, D. Stohl 2nd, the draft budget was approved and forwarded to County Committees. Motion carried.

9. Economic Development structure
Discussion occurred regarding the position restructuring. The Industrial park and other land ownership/sales remains the sole responsibility of the Commission. The Commission will also remain involved in the loan approval process.

10. Update on EDC projects: The attached EDC Project Updates were reviewed. Several suggestions were made to approach re "who do you know who might be interested in investing in the hotel project".

11. Board member concerns: T. Bomberg mentioned some industrial park signs are getting weathered. May need to investigate cost to replace.

12. Adjournment: On a motion by E. Wenger, T. Bomberg 2nd, 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 Imitative. 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 Connnect 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.