LA CROSSE COUNTY NOTICE OF MEETING

COMMITTEE/BOARD: LA CROSSE COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FUND, INC.

DATE OF MEETING: THURSDAY, JUNE 5, 2014

MEETING PLACE: COUNTY ADMINISTRATIVE CENTER – ROOM 3220 (3rd FLR)
400 4TH ST N, LA CROSSE, WI

TIME OF MEETING: 7:30 A.M.

PURPOSE OF MEETING:
1. Call to Order/Roll Call
2. Public Comment
3. Approve Minutes of April 3, 2014
4. Welcome to New Board Members
5. Invoice for Revolving Loan Fund Administrative Services from MRRPC
6. Update on Potential Tourism Merger
7. Update on Synergy Conversation with Economic Development Partners
8. Micro Lending Fund Proposal
9. Update on County Properties
   • Park Plaza
   • Administrative Center / Downtown Campus
   • Lakeview Health Care Center
10. Next Meeting – July 3, 2014 - 7:30 a.m.
12. Adjourn

NEWS MEDIA
La Crosse Tribune
Other news media

COUNTY DEPARTMENTS
County Board Chair
County Administrator
County Clerk
Facilities

OTHERS
Paul Gleason
Scott Heinig
Ryan Olson
Carl Colsch
Jean Lunde
Larry Kirch
Jim Speropulos
Clinton Thorp
Amy Peterson
Mark Seitz
Vicki Markussen
Dave Booth
Anne Hlavacka

COMMITTEE MEMBERS:
Tara Johnson, President
Sharon Hampson, Vice President
Sharon Davidson, Secretary/Treasurer
Patti Balacek
Dirk Gasterland
Dave Holtze
David Lange
Debra McKenney
Matt Nikolay
Steve O’Malley
Michael Richards
Laurie Strangman
Joe Veenstra
Tina Wehrs
John Wettstein

MEMBERS: NEED A QUORUM TO CONDUCT BUSINESS
If unable to attend, call County Board Chair Office at 785-9563.

PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES: If you need accommodation to attend this meeting, please contact County Board Chair Office at 785-9563 as soon as possible.

DATE NOTICE POSTED: May 30, 2014
CALL TO ORDER
The meeting was called to order at 7:31 a.m.

PUBLIC COMMENT
There was no public comment.

APPROVAL OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FUND MINUTES FROM MARCH 6, 2014
MOTION by Gasterland/McKenney to approve the La Crosse County Economic Development Fund minutes of March 6, 2014. Motion carried unanimously (Ebert, K. Johnson, Richards & Veenstra excused)

PURPOSE, STRUCTURE AND REVIEW OF BUSINESS ASSISTANCE GRANT PROGRAM
Included in the packets was a red line version of program materials with changes suggested by staff. Staff has met with the Small Business Development Center, as they were the non-profit entity working with two applicants that were turned down last month. Based on their feedback, staff is making the following suggested edits:

- Change name of the grant program from Business Assistance Grant Program to Innovation & Diversification Grant Program.
- In the Program Description, add “to complete innovative projects”.
- In the Grant Funding Requirements: reduce minimum to $1,000 instead of $2,500 and in the Non-profit match: change from 25% to 10%.
- Add the word “Project” before “Outcomes and Evaluation”
- Under Project Outcomes & Evaluation add: “the amount of a grant request should be consistent with the anticipated outcomes of the project”. Steve O’Malley suggested also adding, “this project will assist businesses with the goal of expanding their product lines and/or markets and achieving greater diversification and job growth.” This will also be clarified in the Evaluation Criteria.
- Under Project Budget: “Please also provide a brief explanation of the financial need for the grant and explain why the business is unable to fund this project without the grant”.
- Under Evaluation Criteria Funding, add: “company has demonstrated a need for the funding”.

Brian Fukuda noted that it is a part of the reporting requirements in the Grant Contract that the receiver of the grant come back to the EDF within a certain period of time to report on the success of the program. They need to meet their program’s sustainability goal, and if the project is successful, they are required to pay back a portion of the grant.
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April 3, 2014
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Staff will do some research regarding micro lending, as well as work on these refinements. **MOTION** by Lange/Wehrs to approve application as presented by staff with the refinements that staff has suggested. **Motion carried unanimously** (Ebert, Johnson & Richards excused).

**UPDATE ON BUSINESS RETENTION & EXPANSION INTERVIEWS**
The 7 Rivers Region organized a Business Retention & Expansion (BRE) process. Staff and others were scheduled to complete 27 interviews with businesses in December and January. They completed 22 businesses; talked with four who were not interested in an interview, and one who they are still trying to connect with. Of the 22 interviews that were conducted, 15 of them have been entered into the 7 Rivers Region database. Staff assumes that there will be a comprehensive regional report on these interviews this spring. There are a number of committee members that assisted in these interviews and the plan is to do this on some level on a yearly basis. Staff felt that this was a very successful worthwhile project.

**LAKEVIEW BUSINESS PARK BACKGROUND/UPDATE**
One of the interviews in the BRE project was with Select Trusses. Chris Wakefield, the manager at Select Trusses discussed the poor internet service in the Lakeview Business Park; River Steel also confirmed this. Previously, attempts at getting Charter to install cable and internet services in the Lakeview Business Park were unsuccessful, but this is once again being pursued.

CP Rail is spending a significant amount of their time on oil and sand delivery and the number of trains has increased significantly. This has reduced their service quality to some of the lower needs users. Both of the users in the park of CP have lumber needs, so staff has made contact with businesses that the County has contracts with to provide rail service to the park.

Charlie Handy showed pictures of the Lakeview Business Park. The Economic Development Fund still owns about 16 acres in the business park. The EDF originally bought 80 acres from the County. There are covenants and deed restrictions in the Lakeview Business Park that were adopted on these 80 acres. As we move forward, these vacant properties should be sold and also the covenants and deed restrictions should be reviewed.

**UPDATE ON LOT C ADVISORY COMMITTEE WORK**
The final meeting of the Loc C Advisory Committee is scheduled for this afternoon. This is an adhoc committee that was formed to do a visioning process on Lot C as the County is considering offering Lot C to the market for development. The committee was led by Stantec, which is our development consultant. A lot of the data has been collected that a developer would need to get something started on this lot. Stantec took the information from the market study and put it into massing analysis, including a parking structure, hotel, housing, Associated Bank, office space, public open space, etc. for a high density, high tax base development.

The next steps will be for final recommendations made to the County. There has been an RFQ (Request for Qualifications) released to the development community which are due back April 30th. There is a Proposer Conference today. The RFQ will narrow down the pool
of developers, who will then be asked to respond to an RFP. The goal is to have a sale of Lot C by September.

**UPDATE & DISCUSSION ON COUNTY PROPERTIES**
- RFP for Realtor – updates in staff report.
- Park Plaza – updates in staff report.
- Administrative Center/Downtown Campus - updates in staff report.
- Lakeview Health Care Center – updates in staff report.

**NEXT MEETING: MAY 1, 2014**

**FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**
- BRE interviews
- Begin discussion on Lakeview covenants
- Synergy Conversation leaders invited (June)

**ADJOURN**
There being no further business, **MOTION** by Hampson/Veenstra to adjourn the meeting at 8:40 a.m. **Motion carried unanimously** (Ebert, K. Johnson, McKenney & Richards excused).

The above minutes may be approved, amended or corrected at the next Committee meeting.

Terri Pavlic, Recorder
#4 – Welcome New Members – With the recent election of the County Board, we welcome two new County Board Supervisors to the Economic Development Fund Board – Matt Nikolay and Dave Holtze.

#5 – Invoice for RLF Administrative Services from MRRPC – we have received an invoice from the MRRPC for $800 for services during the period of October 1, 2013 through March 31, 2014.

#6 – Update on Potential Tourism Merger – We have invited Mayor Chilsen and Mayor Kabat to provide a brief update on the discussion of a potential merger of tourism and convention services for the area. The La Crosse Area Convention and Visitors Bureau (LACVB) is a non-profit organization that represents the convention and tourism industries of the La Crosse/Campbell Area, funded primarily by room tax and memberships. Onalaska Tourism is a department of the City of Onalaska, under the direction of the Tourism Commission, to promote the City, enhance tourism, and improve the quality of life, and is also funded mostly from room tax.

#7 – Update on Synergy Conversation – We have heard pieces of this over the past year or so – since the boards of the Chamber of Commerce, La Crosse Area Convention and Visitors Bureau, La Crosse Area Development Corporation, Downtown Mainstreet, Inc, and 7 Rivers Alliance all agreed to be part of a “synergy conversation” to explore how they can better work together to promote and develop this region. We have invited the executive directors and key board members of each of these organizations to come to this meeting to provide an update on the discussion and to see how we can help move it forward.

#8 – Micro Lending Fund Proposal – We have fairly significant cash balances in our revolving loan funds that have not been used much recently, in part because of some of the restrictions due to their funding sources. However, one of the funds was capitalized using all local dollars (property sales revenues), and therefore the County has the ability to set different lending parameters on that one. Staff would like to propose that we convert that fund (Fund 240) to a Micro Lending Fund, with some different lending parameters. We will present this proposal and ask for your feedback this month, and then ask that you consider taking necessary action next month.

#9 – Update on County Properties – Below is a brief update on a number of projects on county properties for your information.

Park Plaza – West Coast Development LLC has agreed to extend the offer to purchase, which was also approved by La Crosse County in May. We are continuing progress toward plan approvals at the City of La Crosse, and have made significant progress on the Developer’s Agreement. We now expect closing on the property in September and start of construction immediately after closing.

Administrative Center/Downtown Campus – We received three responses to the Request for Qualifications (RFQ) on Lot C. We have now invited all three development teams to respond to a Request for Proposals (RFP) for the purchase and development of the lot. The City of La Crosse has approved a contingent rezoning of the current Administrative Center to allow for conversion to student housing. Negotiations are also moving forward with Associated Bank on the purchase of their building on 6th and State.

Lakeview Health Care Center – Design continues to move forward on both the new campus buildings and on the Garland Street extension with hopes of breaking ground later this year.