CALL TO ORDER
The meeting was called to order at 7:30 a.m.

PUBLIC COMMENT
There was no public comment.

APPROVAL OF SEPTEMBER 4, 2014 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FUND MINUTES
MOTION by Gasterland/McKenney to approve the La Crosse County Economic Development Fund minutes of September 4, 2014. Motion carried unanimously (Balacek, Holtze Richards excused).

FUNDING REQUEST FROM LA CROSSE WARMING CENTER
In the Economic Development Budget, there are a couple of line items for requests from the community. This request from the La Crosse Warming Center in the amount of $15,000 would come out of the Housing Projects line item. Last year this committee set some priorities for these funds, which were listed in the staff report. Staff feels that the request meets at least 10 of the 13 priorities and there are adequate funds available.

Rick Staff presented to the committee additional background information on this project idea. He and Nancy Gerrard established a not for profit corporation called Shelter Development, Inc. and are proposing to move the Warming Center from its old location on West Avenue and Main Street to their property on Third Street. In doing so, this would create a more comprehensive project for populations that are in need. The new facilities would include office space for social workers, food pantry, clothes closet, kitchen, showers, bathrooms, etc.

After discussion, Chair Johnson indicated that the EDF is supportive of this idea, but that staff needs to do more work internally to determine what funding sources would be best used to help get this up and running, as well as what role the County might play in each of the three phases of this project. The committee would also like staff to determine its compatibility with the City’s vision regarding neighborhood revitalization. This agenda item will be brought back to the committee in 60 days.

FUNDING REQUEST FROM ROTARY LIGHTS
Pat Stevens from Rotary Lights was present to discuss their request for $1,000/year for 3 years. Funding would come out of the Business and Industry Promotion line item in the Economic Development Fund Budget. Rotary Lights is working with Discover Wisconsin on a video promotion project that would promote the La Crosse region across multiple states in the upper Midwest through various media outlets, and the Rotary Lights will be highlighted.
MOTION by Wehrs/Wettstein to approve the entire three year Rotary Lights request in the amount of $3,000 from the 2014 budget - Business & Industry line item. Motion carried unanimously; Balacek, Holtze & Richards excused.

7 RIVERS ALLIANCE UPDATE
Lisa Herr started as the new Executive Director of the 7 Rivers Alliance in August 2014. She has been working with many people across the region and is working with her Board to update the goals for the organization and to restore the 7 Rivers Alliance to its original vision and focus. The region consists of 8 counties in Wisconsin, 4 counties in Minnesota, and 2 counties in Iowa. Prior to Lisa being hired, a survey was targeted at 269 businesses, of which 178 responded. The survey was lengthy and not all questions were answered. The themes indicated that organizations are experiencing growing sales; reported no changes in leadership at the senior level and suppliers are more regional, national and/or international. Other themes were the overall opinion of the County to conduct business was good or excellent; lack of land for expansion as a barrier to growth and major reason for relocation; and greatest need in the next five years will be a skilled workforce.

The following priorities were identified:

Priority 1: Communicate our purpose and value proposition
Priority 2: Offer value added events and services to investors and regional stakeholders
Priority 3: Increase investor satisfaction
Priority 4: Diversify revenue streams
Priority 5: Create scalable organizational structure
Priority 6: Board leadership and membership reflects the 7 rivers region

2015 BUDGET OVERVIEW
Included in the packet was the 1061-Economic Development Fund budget as well as 2551-Lakeview Business Park (non-TIF) and 2552-Lakeview Business Park (TIF). The entire 1061 ORG is paid for out of excess sales tax. This year’s sale tax revenue is up almost 14% so we will have excess again this year to put in the fund.

1061 – Economic Development Committee
Account 86010 – Land Purchase - Included in the 2015 budget $375,000 is budgeted to purchase the Schroeder property near the entrance to the landfill on Highway 16. If approved, the County will purchase this property and work with the City of La Crosse in expanding a certified site for larger developments adjacent to the current Industrial Park.

Account 79062 - Housing Projects - the original request of $25,000 is being increased to $50,000 to help support the work being done by the City in neighborhood revitalization.

Account 79064 – Transit Projects - the original request of $7,400 is being increased to $10,000 as the County continues to fund the SMRT Bus.

The remaining items in these ORGS are similar to recent years. Staff reminded the committee that Brian Fukuda’s compensation is paid for out of the 1061 Economic Development budget as well as 50% of Charlie Handy’s compensation.
2551 - Business Park (non-TIF)
The County started building the Business Park in West Salem before the Village created a TIF. We spent money to put in this infrastructure and are now paying the debt service on these infrastructure expenses to extend Industrial Drive and to start the industrial lead track off of the CP Rail Line. What we are using to pay this off is the sale of property there, plus a mini TIF was created. This is the contribution revenue from Economic Development – or basically the County’s portion of that new incremental value that was generated out there approximately $16,000/year.

2552 - Business Park (TIF)
The County worked with the Village of West Salem to create the TIF District to extend the infrastructure in the Business Park and now is paying debt service on this. The loan repayments line item is actually the Village of West Salem through a Revenue Sharing Agreement giving us their incremental revenues from that TIF District, which is approximately $175,000/year depending on assessments and mill rates for a given year. In the 2014 budget year, we budgeted for the Garland Street extension. We don’t anticipate additional infrastructure projects next year so nothing is being budgeted for in the capital section.

These ORGS of the 2015 Budget will also go to the Executive Committee and then on to the County Board. The La Crosse County Economic Development Fund, Inc. concurred with the County Administrator and is supportive of these three ORGS within the proposed 2015 budget.

CLOSED SESSION: Upon a motion duly made and carried, the Committee may go into closed session pursuant to Wis. Stat. s. 19.85(1)(e) for purpose of deliberating or negotiating the purchase of public properties, the investing of public funds, or conducting other specified public business, whenever competitive or bargaining reasons require a closed session, TO WIT: Potential sale of land in the Lakeview Business Park to DWM Properties LLC. Following the closed session, the Committee will reconvene in open session before proceeding to the next agenda item.

MOTION by Hampson/Wehrs to go into closed session at 8:39 a.m. Motion carried unanimously; Balacek, Holtze & Richards excused.

MOTION by O’Malley/Gasterland to reconvene in open session at 9:04 a.m. Motion carried unanimously; Balacek, Holtze, Richards & Strangman excused.

There was no action taken in closed session.

MOTION by Lange/Hampson to approve the sale of approximately two acres to DWM Properties for the net sale price of $50,000 and with the condition regarding commencement and completion of construction under section 24A being waived on the grounds that the literal enforcement of that covenant would create an unnecessary hardship and it is one not produced by the owner and waiver is consistent with the spirit of the protective covenants. Motion carried unanimously; Balacek, Holtze, Richards & Strangman excused.
MOTION by Lange/Balacek to authorize Chair Johnson to appoint a committee to negotiate the sale of approximately 4 acres to Sunrise Agriculture Services according to the terms discussed. Motion carried unanimously; Balacek, Holtze, Richards & Strange excused.

UPDATE ON COUNTY PROPERTIES
- Park Plaza – Negotiations with West Coast Development have ceased. Staff is requesting direction from the EDF if this property should be listed with our contract with Coldwell Banker River Valley Realtors. The closing date in our previous amended agreement with West Coast Development was Sept. 30. Since we are passed this date, we are officially not in any agreement with them at this point. Contracted fee of 7% of $750,000 would be $52,500. It was the consensus of the EDF that staff bring back options for how to proceed with the marketing and sale of the property.
- Administrative Center/Downtown Campus – update included in packets
- Lakeview Health Care Center – update included in packets
- Meadow Park Estates – Two lots were sold in the Rockland subdivision.

UPDATE ON SKIPPERLINER LOAN
Brian updated the committee that Skipperliner is current on their loan agreement with the County. Staff has had conversations with them and they have no intentions of defaulting on this and will continue to make payments. Currently, they have $699,225 in outstanding debt and are making payments of $2,307/month which will balloon in November of 2021 with an approximate final payment of $500,000.

NEXT MEETING: NOVEMBER 6, 2014 at 7:30 A.M.

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS
- Update on synergy conversation

ADJOURN
There being no further business, MOTION by Veenstra/Nikolay to adjourn the meeting at 9:22 a.m. Motion carried unanimously; Balacek, Holtze, Richards, Strangman & Wehrs excused.

Approved November 11, 2014, Terri Pavlic, Recorder