CALL TO ORDER
Vice Chair Hampson called the meeting to order at 7:33 a.m.

PUBLIC COMMENT
There was no public comment.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF APRIL 7, 2016
MOTION by Gasterland/Holtze to approve the minutes of the April 7, 2016 La Crosse County Economic Development Fund. Motion carried unanimously; Johnson, Lange, McKenney, Richards, Giese & Wettstein excused.

SYNERGY UPDATE
Karl Green reported that the Synergy Steering Committee continues to meet. The proposed schedule is that tentatively on May 11th, they will finalize a white paper that would summarize the findings of the last three months, with a public roll-out scheduled for late May/early June. At that point, presentations would be made to the various boards and hope to get buy-in and implement the ideas in the plan.

CONSIDERATION OF AMENDMENTS TO INNOVATION & DIVERSIFICATION GRANT PROGRAM
This discussion started last month, and had public comment from a business that has applied for this program. The LCEDF made recommendations, and a redline version of program guidelines and application was included in the packets. Brian Fukuda went through these changes as follows:

Page 1 (cover page): Under Program Description: some businesses may not need customized consulting assistance, so wording was changed to state … “gaining customized consulting assistance and completing innovative projects…”

Page 2 Program Background: the wording was a little dated, so this was deleted, and new wording to state “Small businesses are a vital part of the economy in La Crosse County”. Many small business recognize that expanding their product offerings and diversifying their market segments are important steps to insure continued growth and economic stability, but struggle to find the resources to take those steps. The importance of innovation and diversification increases as the internet and global markets create new portals for sales and more savvy consumers.

Page 2 Program Purpose: relaxing the language about working with partners and adding … “to help businesses that are poised for growth and encourage them to use the resources of existing non-profit economic development organizations in our community…”
Page 2 Grant Requirements: clarification that applications received by noon on the third Thursday will most likely be taken for consideration.

Page 2 Company Match: rather than a percent of total cost, changed to: Minimum 100% cash match of County Grant Amount. Applications with at least 50% cash match of County Grant may be considered if other program goals are exceeded.

Page 2 Non-profit Participation: Added the word participation and struck the word match. Previously required 10% of total costs. Relaxed language to state: Applicant must demonstrate that they have worked with non-profit resources to prepare for their proposed project if applicable. Applications with a cash or in-kind contribution from a nonprofit resource of at least 10% of the County Grant amount will receive preference.

Page 5: Non-Profit Input to Application: added if applicable.

Page 6: deleted the words “the LCEDF Board should talk more about this”

Page 6: in the Example Evaluation Table, section A, delete the word “President” and replace with “Business”

Page 7: Evaluation Criteria: Under Funding: added Applicants with at least 50% match, but less than 100% can earn up to 5 bonus points for meeting a demonstrated community need such as:
- Quality job creation
- Providing a service that will assist other businesses with growth
- Etc.

MOTION by Holtze/Nikolay to approve the Innovation & Diversification Grant Program application with suggested changed as discussed above. Motion carried unanimously; Johnson, Lange, McKenney, Richards, Giese & Wettstein excused.

LOAN AND GRANT FUND FINANCIAL REPORTS AND STATUS UPDATES
Included in packets were the financial reports for our three revolving loan funds.

Community Development Block Grant Fund: Currently has a cash balance of $518,573. There is considerable cash still available, and significant job creation and reporting requirements. Outstanding loans are:
- Skipperliner project: they are current and we continue to receive payments;
- River Steel: they are a couple of months behind; Greg Flogstad has talked to them and they expect to be back on track by May.
- La Crosse Day Care Center: they are out of business; they are selling their assets to Red Balloon and are trying to make everything up to all their creditors. There is a $42,000 balance on this (was originally a $93,000 loan)
- S&S Cycle – this was our most recent loan; they have started making payments and are current

Fund 1 La Crosse County Economic Development Revolving Loan Fund: this is our micro lending fund with a cash balance of $106,000. Outstanding loans are:
- 4 Sisters: have been making “interest only” payments and will start making principle payments next year or later this year.
- River Steel: as stated above, they are a couple of months behind, but hope to be back on schedule in May
• Truck Parts – this loan in the amount of $11,630 was written off approximately 10 years ago. Truck Parts did repairs/maintenance for Gateway Foods vehicles. When Gateway went out of business, Truck Parts went under.

Fund 2 EDA Fund: Currently has a cash balance of $72,648. We have committed all of this, plus a little more to Pearl Street Brewery, as we continue to work with them on meeting their contingencies that were put on. Previously, the LCEDF approved two installments of $75,000; the first of which we closed on last year.

Innovation and Diversification Grant Program: This is a budgeted line item of $15,000. We have an application from Evergreen Child Care, along with two other applications in progress.

**LCEDF STAFF CURRENT PROJECTS**

Brian Fukuda, Karl Green, Charlie Handy and Steve O’Malley have been working on the following economic development projects:

• Working on a large transportation/freight grant for the 2017 Federal Grant Cycle - this is for all four modes of transportation and freight and could be in the realm of $100 million

• Bluffland Plan is at a 75-80% completion, finalizing draft to go to public input session in early June

• SMART bus expansion to Tomah and Arcadia route is at approximately 25%; Feasibility Study should be complete by August

• RENEW La Crosse Neighborhoods is scheduled for May 14th and June 18th, 2016. If anyone is interested in this, you can volunteer on the Habitat website

• Neighborhood Revitalization Grant program applications due today for a May 19th award; $280,000 to fund these projects this year

• Golden Shovel application for Holmen Business Park – was just certified this week; plan is to roll out to the 7 Rivers Alliance Region

• Boundary Agreement discussions: Lacrosse/Shelby; La Crosse/Medary; Onalaska/ Medary

• Extra-territorial sub-division review for four subdivision plats in Hamilton, Holland and Shelby; the School District, the County, the City, and the Towns get together to review the developers plans in these areas

• Working with Weber Holdings, State agencies and City of La Crosse on new parking facility

• Working with City of La Crosse on North Side floodplain program for homeowners

• CDBG Small Cities Housing Program – La Crosse is the lead county for 11 counties; there has been approximately $6 million distributed in these 11 counties

• La Crosse Promise
• Assisting the Village of Bangor with extra-territorial zoning discussions
• Update of La Crosse County Comprehensive Plan
• Workforce/Talent attraction program – bring to EDF next month
• BORE manufacturing business visits - haven’t started these yet and need to do 30 this year
• La Crosse Neighborhood Development Corporation
• County Health Assessment Grant
• Employee Sentiment Surveys with 7 Rivers Alliance
• Rebuilding for Learning Conference
• Commercial Ports Association Annual Conference in La Crosse
• HE Craig Harbor Assistance Grant – starting construction this summer
• Getting a lot of activity with loan and grant programs
• Working with local partners (DMI, Couleecap) trying to brand the community in entrepreneurial initiatives under “Launch La Crosse”

UPDATE ON COUNTY PROPERTIES
• **International Business Park II** – Project layout has been determined, currently negotiating for sale of land. Start of Construction of road probably in September of 2016; design engineering of specs and bidding documents for road construction is being done; the design and layout has been determined.
• **Administrative Center/Downtown Campus** – downtown campus projects are on schedule and moving forward.
• **Lakeview Business Park** – Working with a couple of potential business expansion projects. We will be studying the cost and TIF impacts of extending the Industrial Drive this month; this will be put on a future agenda
• **Park plaza** – indications from Waterplace One are that they will be breaking ground in July or August.

AGENCY UPDATES
• Jim Hill reported that a very successful Economic Forum was held; their next event is an Industry Appreciation Breakfast the 2nd week of July at the Omni Center.
• Patti Balacek indicated that the Sustainability Institute is hosting a meeting regarding storm water on June 30.
• On November 2 there will be a Resiliency Symposium working session community conversation
• Greg Flogstad noted that Maid Rite paid their loan off.
• Mike Richards, Lisa Herr and Greg Flogstad are getting together with the Regional Planning Commission and 7 Rivers Alliance on May 16 to discuss collaboration on projects.
CEDS report has come out for this year; this will be put on a future agenda.

NEXT MEETING: June 2, 2016

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS:
- CEDS Report

ADJOURN
There being no further business, MOTION by Gasterland to adjourn the meeting at 8:22 a.m. Motion carried unanimously; Johnson, Lange, McKenney, Richards, Giese & Wettstein excused.

APPROVED June 2, 2016 - Terri Pavlic, Recorder