CALL TO ORDER
Chair Johnson called the meeting to order at 7:30 a.m.

PUBLIC COMMENT
There was no public comment.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE MAY 4, 2017 LA CROSSE COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FUND, INC.
MOTION by Holtze/Balacek to approve the minutes of the May 4, 2017 La Crosse County Economic Development Fund, Inc. Motion carried unanimously; Augustine, Richards, Wehrs and Wettstein excused.

INTRODUCTION OF MICRO LOAN APPLICATION FROM CHRISTOS TAVERNA AND GIFT SHOP LLC
Brian Fukuda introduced the EDF members to a micro loan application from Christos Taverna and Gift Shop LLC, who is applying for a $20,000 loan. This fund currently has $86,000 in it so there are sufficient funds. Robbi Wolff, the owner of That Foreign Place on 4th Street in downtown La Crosse has experienced success in her first year and a half of business and is looking to expand her operation to 107 3rd Street S. She is looking to expand the gift shop side, and also add a bar and restaurant serving Greek cuisine. The loan would help fund new equipment, furnishings and inventory. Staff is still working on the loan analysis but wanted to introduce it to the EDF in preparation for the August meeting for action. They are also applying for a loan from the City for $35,000 and a DMI grant for $5,000 and putting in $10,000 in equity.

LA CROSSE PROMISE UPDATE
This was moved to the August agenda.

SYNERGY UPDATE
Karl Green distributed a handout outlining the updates on the Synergy Group. Back in 2015, an analysis was done of the five strategic plans of the following organizations: La Crosse Area Chamber of Commerce; La Crosse Area Convention and Visitors Bureau; La Crosse Area Economic Development Corporation; Downtown Mainstreet, Inc. and the 7 Rivers Alliance. The group came up with 3 committees that seemed to be the most sufficient in dealing with the issues with work plans, as well as working more efficiently together. The Synergy Organizing Framework consists of Organization, Marketing and Finance.

Recommendations:
Finance Team
- Create an MSO-management service organization with support services defined by group
- Consider membership software license sharing
- Consider a shared position for common activities
- Share a common website landing page
- Registration online combined between organizations – customized per organization’s event

**Marketing Team**
- Increase coordination of events and schedule
- Better coordinate content delivery to reduce perception of duplication
- Economic Development Specific Program Funding
  - Integrated Marketing Study for Area
  - Workforce Development Strategic Plan
  - Economic Development Strategic Plan
  - Retention of University Students
- Web Page Sharing/Landing Page
- Form Synergy Executive Committee
  - Peter Huges, Chair
  - Jerry Arndt, Synergy Liaison – 1 tear term
  - Karl Green, Facilitator
  - 5 Economic Development Board’s Chair or Chair designee
  - 5 Executive Directors

**Operations Team**
- Form Visioning Committee
  - 7-10 largest non-public sector employers
  - Consider topics regarding
    - Workforce development
    - Economic development
    - Business advancement
    - Business startup
    - Business climate
    - Economic work/life balance
- Shared resources Committee (Executive Director Level)
- Review Managed Service Organization (MSO) options

**2017 Progress:**
- Quarterly meetings of Synergy Executive Committee
- Synergy Liaison
- Executive Directors meeting regularly
- ED three goals for 2017;
  1. Economic Development Strategic Plan
  2. Marketing Branding Plan
  3. Workforce development plan (WISE - Workforce Innovation for Strong Economy)
- Need these developed to use as the “backdrop” for the Visioning Committee (to be established)

**WORKFORCE HOUSING TOUR**
Caroline Gregorson from the City of La Crosse contacted Charlie regarding long-term goals that we’ve set from an economic development standpoint to have more successful tax credit applications in the County. The goal is to have one every year. There are many steps to carry out this plan, but the first step is to learn the process better. They met with a number of municipalities in the County to see what lands they have available for multi-family development and if there were property owners that were interested in having their sites shown on a tour of tax credit developers. This tour was held last week and was well attended - about 10 tax credit developers attended.
UPDATE ON COUNTY PROPERTIES

- **Park Plaza** – Now called Pettibone Pointe, is in the first phase of development and has broken ground and will include 25 cottage-style condominium units on about half the site. This will start generating some TIF increment which will help to pay the County back for money we have invested in this site.

- **International Business Park II** – Staff feels that this committee should tour this construction project in the future. Current construction includes underground utilities and final grading on portions of the project; should be closing on the sale of the land to the City any day.

- **Lakeview Business Park** – Still negotiating with the accepted offer to purchase on this three acre site. Once they have got their plans done, we’ll go through a Development Agreement with them and take it to the Park Development Review Board for approval. Closing may be in 2-3 months.

- **River steel** - has an accepted Offer to Purchase which would continue to allow the current renter to stay; the new buyer doesn’t need the whole facility yet, but they do plan to utilize it.

AGENCY UPDATES –

- Greg Flogstad reported that the Mississippi River Regional Planning Commission had their annual meeting last Wednesday. They have finished up their annual report for 2016-2017 and will be distributing copies soon. They hosted a meeting with a representative from the U.S. Dept. of Commerce, Economic Development Administration, who are looking for proposals by the end of June on 5-6 projects in La Crosse. SMRT bus ridership in the month of May was the highest ever.

- Jim Hill noted that LADCO’s Industry Appreciation Breakfast is in July12th at the Radisson Center. Craig Culver is the keynote speaker. Also, Oktoberfest in the Capitol is October 11th.

- Brian Fukuda updated the EDF on the WISE Project from the 7 Rivers Alliance. This process is moving forward. There are a couple of summer working sessions: July 19th in Black River Falls and August 16th at the Associated Center in La Crosse. These are brainstorming sessions on finding ways to implement various solutions. A few weeks ago they hosted the WISE summit regarding best practices/innovative programs that are happening in the upper Midwest. (Brian will send out a link). There will be validation sessions in the fall and wrapping up work in September.

NEXT MEETING – August 3, 2017 at 7:30 a.m.

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS:

- Mobil oil site (from May meeting)
- La Crosse Promise

ADJOURN

There being no further business, MOTION by Nikolay/McKenney to adjourn the meeting at 8:20 a.m. **Motion carried unanimously**; Augustine, Richards, Wehrs and Wettstein excused.

APPROVED August 3, 2017 - Terri Pavlic, Recorder