



# East Central Illinois Economic Development District

*Approved as Distributed*  
**Quarterly Meeting Minutes**  
**Friday, March 5, 2010**  
**J. Dimit Meeting Room – CCRPC**  
**8:00 a.m.**

| <b>County</b> | <b>Present</b>             | <b>Absent</b>       | <b>Organization</b>                        |
|---------------|----------------------------|---------------------|--|
| Champaign     | Barbara Wysocki – Chair    |                     | Champaign County Board                     |
| Champaign     | Chris Kaler                |                     | Rantoul Chamber of Commerce                |
| Champaign     | Seamus Reilly              |                     | Parkland College Institutional Advancement |
| Douglas       |                            | Brian Moody – Treas | Tuscola Econ Dev ED                        |
| Douglas       | Lloyd Murphy               |                     | Tuscola Natl Bank                          |
| Douglas       |                            | Rachael Crane       | Arcola Chamber of Commerce                 |
| Vermilion     | Todd Lee (proxy)           | Vicki Haugen        | Vermilion Advantage                        |
| Vermilion     |                            | Jim McMahan         | Vermilion Co Board Chair                   |
| Vermilion     |                            | Bill Donahue        | Asst. State’s Attorney                     |
| Iroquois      | Ken Barragree – Vice Chair |                     | Iroquois Development Assoc                 |
| Iroquois      | Roger Dittrich             |                     | T & D Metal Products                       |
| Iroquois      |                            | Jim McCray          | Iroquois County Board                      |
| Piatt         |                            | Steve Gaines        | Village of Mansfield                       |
| Piatt         | Mike Wileaver              |                     | Piatt County Board                         |
| Piatt         | Joe Streit                 |                     | Parkland College Business Training         |
| Ford          |                            | Randy Ferguson      | Ford County Board                          |
| Ford          | Diane Johnson              |                     | Gibson City Chamber of Commerce            |
| Ford          |                            | Rick Bowen          | Ford County Board                          |

**Others:** Paul Faraci (DCEO)  
**CCRPC Staff:** Susan Chavarria, Kathy Larson, Beth Brunk

## *Minutes*

### **I. Call to Order**

Ms. Wysocki called the meeting to order at 8:04 a.m.

### **II. Roll Call – Sign-in Sheet**

Roll was taken by written record and a quorum declared present.

### **III. Approval of Minutes**

A. *Friday, December 4, 2009*

Mr. Barragree moved to approve the minutes from December 4, 2009. Mr. Kaler seconded. Upon vote, the motion carried unanimously.

### **IV. Approval of Financials**

A. *Balance Sheet and Income Statement from October 1, 2009 to November 30, 2009*

B. *Balance Sheet and Income Statement from October 1, 2009 to December 31, 2009*

C. *Balance Sheet and Income Statement from October 1, 2009 to January 31, 2010*

**Mr. Lee moved for approval of the financials. Ms. Johnson seconded. Upon vote, the motion carried unanimously.**

## **V. New Business**

### *A. Officers Rotation*

The positions of Chair, Vice-Chair and Treasurer currently held by Barb Wysocki, Ken Barragree and Brian Moody respectively, are open for election. The position of secretary is always held by the Champaign County Regional Planning Commission. At this time, officers can only be selected from Champaign, Douglas and Iroquois counties since these are the counties that the EDA officially recognizes in the ECIEDD. Once the EDA approves the annexation of Ford, Piatt and Vermilion counties, then officers can be chosen from any of the six counties.

**Mr. Lee moved to keep the current slate of officers until the end of the fiscal year, 9/30/10, at which time the Board will adopt an annual rotation where each officer moves up to the next position. In October 2010, Ken Barragree will assume the role of Chair, Brian Moody will become the Vice-Chair, etc. Mr. Streit seconded. Upon vote, the motion carried unanimously.**

### *B. Community Ventures Network (CVN)*

Ms. Chavarria reported that CVN has discontinued their Chicago meetings and will consolidate their quarterly sessions in Minneapolis, MN. If the Board wishes to continue their CVN membership, the annual fee would be reduced to \$4,500 from \$6,600.

**Mr. Barragree moved to discontinue the membership fee to CVN. Mr. Murphy seconded. Upon vote, the motion carried unanimously.**

Mr. Wileaver asked what would happen to the money that counties have already paid for this service. Ms. Chavarria suggested that the counties may want to redirect the money to the I-Open retreat on asset building which would continue the counties' collaboration in the ECIEDD program by offsetting their local match.

Mr. Wileaver solicited his county board for the extra \$300 to fund the CVN membership, not for anything else. With the current tough financial times, Mr. Wileaver thought the money should be returned to the individual counties. Ms. Chavarria explained that the reduction in the local matches from the individual counties will mean that Champaign County will have to pick up the shortfall. In addition, it may jeopardize EDA designation of the ECIEDD and the \$53,000 planning grant since the counties are no longer sharing in the equitable distribution of the match. Mr. Lee expressed the challenge of funding the ECIEDD when budgetary cuts in spending are occurring at all levels.

**Mr. Wileaver moved for reimbursement to the counties of the CVN fee by check or reduction of their respective local match. Mr. Lee seconded. Upon vote, 4- Ayes (Douglas, Vermilion, Iroquois, Piatt) 2 – Nays (Ford, Champaign). Motion carried.**

Mr. Streit wanted to discuss the possibilities of using the CVN money on other EDD projects for counties that have already allocated the money. Ms. Chavarria offered the I-Open Retreat as a possibility. Brian Moody had highly recommended the workshop when he participated in 2008 as part of a 10 southern county region. The speaker, Ed Morrison has a \$5,000 fee and participants were charged \$300 for a 2.5 day retreat. This would be a tangible asset to sell to the respective county board and would also go toward the county's local cost share.

Mr. Lee suggested exploring other third party options to administer the EDD in an effort to save money and still maintain the EDA eligibility. Ms. Chavarria pointed out that Champaign County RPC provides secretarial and fiscal functions free of charge. The administrative fee covers 75% salary and benefits for Ms. Chavarria and 25% for Ms. Larson. Their time is spent producing the annual CEDS document (approx. 500 hrs of work), organize/facilitate meetings, provide financial reports, collaborate workshops/retreats, maintain the Board compositions, provide data collection and grant writing expertise, etc. Ms. Chavarria felt that it is money well spent.

Mr. Lee voiced his discouragement that he has been a part of this group from its inception and has little to show to his county board for the effort. Mr. Murphy acknowledged that the process has been slow but felt like the EDD is getting more done now. Besides the planning grant, Mr. Barragree asked what the advantage was to have the EDA designation. Ms. Chavarria responded that if the ECIEDD submitted an application for a project to the EDA, it would be a stronger candidate for funding. RPC acts as an intermediary between the EDA and the local project. In addition, RPC staff will prepare the EDA application as a free service.

Ms. Chavarria asked that each county give what they can for the local cost share with a statement explaining the economic constraints that make it unrealistic to pay for their assessed portion of the local match. RPC will cover the shortfall in the local match from the interest earned in their revolving loan program. Ms. Chavarria is hopeful that the EDA will understand the tough economic environment and look at any collaboration as an attempt to fully participate in the EDD.

Ms. Chavarria also noted a lack of guidance on the part of the counties to let Champaign County RPC know what they want. The I-Open retreat is a good way to regroup and identify what each county has to contribute and a plan to move forward. Mr. Dittrich stated that Iroquois County needs jobs. Their county board has no money so they are soliciting donations from the private sector. Ms. Chavarria commented that the ECIEDD has developed an Economic Development Guide, county economic profiles and provided data modeling support to help the counties attract and retain business.

Mr. Dittrich asked who had received EDA money for projects in our 6-county area. Ms. Chavarria responded that Gilman received funding from EDA about ten years ago but no one has been submitting applications to EDA. To refocus economic development efforts with EDA funding, Ms. Chavarria proposed a twofold approach: 1) attend the I-Open retreat to identify assets, gaps and a strategic plan to move forward and 2) develop the CEDS document by soliciting every municipality in the six-county area for possible projects as well as ideas from this board. Mr. Lee interjected that due to the bureaucracy and lengthy approval process, EDA funding is an option of last resort.

### *C. I-Open Retreat*

Mr. Wileaver stated that the retreat will not solve problems, and if the public finds out about the \$300-\$600 expense for the retreat, it will not be acceptable. Mr. Murphy has heard Ed. Morrison speak and felt there was value in the I-Open retreat. He echoed Ms. Chavarria's comments that the individual communities have not proposed much to utilize the EDD. The top line needs to be raised to increase the tax base and jobs. Mr. Murphy thought that shrinking at this time would be a mistake. He supported having the counties pay what they can if RPC is willing to cover the shortfall and forge ahead.

Ms. Wysocki, who attended the I-Open retreat held in 2008, added that bailing out of organizations like ECIEDD in hard times is not a good idea. Instead, more energy should be put into it. Ms. Chavarria reiterated that if Champaign County RPC footed the entire local cost share and nothing came from the other counties, then EDA will remove their designation at year end. She asked that the counties pay as much as they can to keep the ECIEDD going and find their strength as a group. If the counties cannot pay for the I-Open retreat, Champaign County RPC will make it happen without major expense to this group. A charge will be required for people outside the ECIEDD. Ms. Wysocki asked if the retreat could be simplified to cut costs. Mr. Murphy offered the use of a conference room in Tuscola for no charge. Ms. Chavarria suggested that the attendees pay for their own accommodations.

Ms. Wysocki asked when the retreat would be held. Ms. Chavarria responded that in May or June would best benefit the CEDS Committee. Mr. Lee inquired if the Champaign County RPC budget could pay for the retreat. Ms. Chavarria replied that the \$2,500 RPC contribution toward the CVN could be used as well as some other non-staff line items. Mr. Faraci shared his positive experience of Ed Morrison's workshops on a personal and professional level.

Mr. Lee expressed his view that identifying the assets that each county has at the I-Open retreat would not be valuable to him as he already has a good idea of what is out there from the years of working in economic development. Instead, he recommended meeting with the job creators already in our communities to see what they need and figure out ways of making that happen. Mr. Lee thinks that is the key to job creation. Ms. Chavarria responded that those people are exactly the type of people that should be included in the I-Open retreat.

**Mr. Murphy moved to participate in the I-Open retreat to be structured in a way to be as inclusive as possible. Mr. Streit seconded. Upon vote, the motion carried unanimously.**

*D. County Economic Development Updates*

Ms. Chavarria deferred the County updates due to time constraints with the Business Retention workshop starting at 9:00 a.m.

**VI. Old Business**

*A. Update on Free Labor Hours Usage*

Ms. Chavarria reported that each county still had 60 hours to use before 9/30/10.

*B. Demographic Profiles for ECIEDD Counties*

Ms. Chavarria has completed the profiles for Champaign, Vermilion and Iroquois counties. Douglas, Piatt and Ford counties need to review the profile for any revisions and add photos or logos so Ms. Chavarria can finalize the project.

**VII. Public Participation**

None

**VIII. Adjournment**

**Mr. Streit moved to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Lee seconded. Upon vote, the motion carried unanimously.** Ms. Wysocki adjourned the meeting at 8:56 a.m.