



East Central Illinois
Economic Development District

Quarterly Meeting Minutes

Approved as Distributed

Friday, March 6, 2009

J. Dimit Meeting Room – CCRPC

9:00 a.m.

In Attendance: Barbara Wysocki, Chair, and C. Pius Weibel, (Champaign County), Cameron Moore, Lloyd Murphy (Tuscola), Diane Johnson (Ford County),
Others: Paul Faraci (DCEO), Erik Kotewa (CCEDC), Seamus Reilly (Parkland College)
CCRPC Staff: Susan Chavarria, Brent Rose

Minutes

I. Call to Order

Chair Barb Wysocki called the meeting to order at 9:05 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 5, 2008*

Mr. Weibel motioned, seconded by Ms. Johnson to approve the minutes from December 5, 2008. Upon vote, the motion carried unanimously.

IV. Approval of Financials

A. *Balance Sheet and Income Statement from October 1-2008 to November 30, 2008*

B. *Balance Sheet and Income Statement from October 1-2008 to December 31, 2008*

C. *Balance Sheet and Income Statement from October 1-2008 to January 31, 2009*

Mr. Weibel moved adoption of all three balance sheets and income statements. Ms. Johnson seconded. Upon vote, the motion carried unanimously.

V. Old Business

A. *Wind Farm Forum*

Ms. Chavarria provided a summary of the wind farm forum. She stated that about 25 people attended from five out of the six counties; Iroquois County was unable to attend. There was a speaker from the Illinois Wind Working Group, Professor David Loomis, and Tim Polz from Midwest Wind Energy. Information was distributed on 17 existing wind ordinances and an accompanying summary sheet as well as relevant news from the six-county area. She added that the information distributed at the meeting is now available on the new ECIEDD web pages on the CCRPC website. She stated that the general consensus was that as a six county area, we need to look more into how we can become part of the supply chain for parts of the wind farm, how we can bring more educational opportunities to the area so that we have employees ready to go.

Ms. Wysocki mentioned that she attended the Greener Living Expo the Saturday before. She stated that they had one or two wind developers there, who were mainly advocating the

singular tower, back yard type of wind turbine. She found a cross-section of a turbine interesting and was surprised at how few pieces there are to it.

Mr. Moore asked about area manufacturers. He asked those in the room who has been in the area related to wind turbine manufacturing. Mr. Kotewa responded that there was a company making the turbines in 2004, so he thinks there is opportunity to potentially bring in manufacturers. Ms. Chavarria offered that staff could inventory existing manufacturers that potentially have the capability to make turbine parts in the six-county area. Mr. Weibel stated that there is a facility over in Clinton that makes the tower portions of the turbine. Mr. Moore said it would be useful to find out what companies need and how we can partner with companies to make the parts.

B. Community Ventures Network update

Ms. Chavarria said that we've paid our annual membership, so now as a six-county area we are members of the CVN. Mr. Kotewa stated that he attended the last meeting. He said that seven companies presented, some related to manufacturing, assembly and components that would be a good fit for several areas of our region. He added that follow up calls are being made two six of them by Champaign County EDC this week. If financing can be found, he thinks some of these might have a good chance. Mr. Weibel asked if it was worthwhile. Mr. Kotewa answered in the affirmative. Mr. Moore said it's important to get an update on the meetings so we can decide whether the membership is worth it.

VI. New Business

A. ECIEDD Website

Ms. Chavarria stated that there are now some pages on the CCRPC website for ECIEDD. She said that she would try to find a way to create an easier link to it somewhere on the site's main page. It will have meeting announcements, news, meeting materials, links to presentations such as the wind farm forum, and fiscal impact modeling. She offered to post other interests from the group.

B. ECIEDD County Representatives

Ms. Chavarria stated that we have the ability to have three representatives and three proxies from each county. She wanted to see if the representatives that are currently on file are still valid. It was decided that Ms. Chavarria would send an email out asking each County Board to formalize who their EDD representatives are.

C. Next steps

Ms. Chavarria asked the members what they would like staff to focus on for the rest of this fiscal year, which ends in September. Currently, staff is working on demographic profiles for each county. Mr. Kotewa suggested inventorying the industry base for the region, and inventory what financial resources are at the local/regional level. He thinks that would help streamline the process for attracting companies to our area. Mr. Weibel suggested inventorying existing available site locations. Ms. Chavarria responded that Location One and individual municipalities keep such inventories. Mr. Kotewa said that Location One should be sufficient. Ms. Wysocki summarized that continuing with the demographic profiles and then creating a regional profile would be good.

D. Other

Other 1: CEDS Approval

Lloyd asked about CEDS approval for our six-county area. Mr. Moore said he had checked with the EDA Illinois representative this week. He shared with them our frustration for EDA to give clear answers as to our status. Even though we have been operating as a six-county

EDD, we are still officially a three-county EDD. His contact at EDA has assured Mr. Moore that he will check into this right away.

Other 2: Extra planning funds from EDA

Mr. Moore stated that in conjunction with the stimulus funding, EDA anticipates increasing the planning grant funds by about \$10,000 for our area from the \$54,000 that we receive currently.

Other 3: Submitting applications to EDA

Mr. Moore stated that member counties need to come to CCRPC with potential projects. He added that we are slightly at risk of decertification as an EDD because we have not submitted an application to them. He suggested that staff distribute information about the possible funding sources again. He said that EDA primarily likes to invest in infrastructure rather than businesses because it is something that doesn't have the possibility of moving away such as some businesses do. EDA also invests in revolving loan funds and business incubators, among other things. He added that if we're doing a good job, our EDD should bring in 1-2 projects per year worth \$1-2 million each. He encouraged members to bring their project ideas to CCRPC staff.

Mr. Faraci offered to add an article in the agency's regional electronic ED newsletter to get the word out about making applications.

Ms. Wysocki suggested that our region look at other similarly sized or populated districts to see what types of projects have been approved that we can use as a model. Mr. Moore suggested asking someone from the EDA Chicago office to come talk to us about their funding priorities at our next meeting, which will be on June 5th.

As a reference to next steps, Ms. Wysocki stated that we need to look how to educate people about economic development, what we can do in that area, and how we can communicate that in our region.

The committee directed staff to work with Mr. Faraci on the newsletter.

Other 4: EDD Resource Guide printing

Ms. Chavarria stated that staff has received a quote for printing the Economic Development Guide; it will cost \$2-3 each to print. The group originally requested 1,000 copies, so it will impact the EDD budget.

Other 5: Economic Development Specialist

Mr. Rose is leaving the employ of CCRPC today. The job description is available and open for applications through the end of the day.

VII. Public Participation--None

VIII. Adjournment

Ms. Wysocki adjourned the meeting at 10:35 a.m.