

## **LA CROSSE COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FUND, INC.**

La Crosse County Administrative Center, Rm. 3220

Thursday, April 1, 2010

7:30 a.m.

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Steve Doyle (exc. 8:35-8:37), Don Brenengen (7:37), Steve Burgess, Vicki Burke, Gary Ingvalson, Audrey Kader (7:41), Dennis Manthei, Steve O'Malley, Bill Shepherd, Joe Veenstra, John Wettstein

**MEMBERS EXCUSED:** Dirk Gasterland, Tara Johnson, Mary Jo Werner

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** None

**STAFF & GUESTS:** Brian Fukuda, Charlie Handy, Karl Green, Margaret Norden, Jenny Kuderer, Dave Clements, Noel Jordan, Travis Parish, Sharon Hampson

### **CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL**

Chair Doyle called the meeting to order at 7:34 a.m.

### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

None requested.

### **APPROVE MINUTES OF MARCH 4, 2010**

**MOTION** by Burke/Manthei to approve the Minutes of March 4, 2010. **Motion carried unanimously.** Brenengen, Gasterland, Johnson, Kader, Werner excused.

### **LACVB PROPOSED BRIDGEVIEW PLAZA WELCOME CENTER**

Since the State's welcome center on French Island on I-90 was closed, the La Crosse Area Convention and Visitors Bureau has been working on creating a tourist information site at Bridgeview Plaza near I-90 Exit 3. Dave Clements reported the Bridgeview Plaza site would be a short-term solution that would be re-evaluated after a year. He presented an estimated budget of \$38,530.13, and requested \$4,000 from the County's economic development budget designated for tourism promotion to support the project. He reported that if the French Island site were leased from the state, the state would require that it be manned and open for 12 months; however, there are safety concerns from staff about working alone at the rest area. Discussion was held regarding difficulty accessing the Bridgeview Plaza location and alternative sites such as a motel lobby or free-standing kiosk; additional staffing or remote videoconferencing at the French Island site; and additional funding sources. Clements will return with an updated report. **MOTION** by Shepherd/Kader to allocate \$4,000 to the tourism center. **Motion carried unanimously.** Gasterland, Johnson, Werner excused.

### **SKIPPERLINER FINANCIAL UPDATE**

As a condition of their loan, Skipperliner was asked to return to the committee in April, 2010, with a financial update, to include the following: Current financial statements no older than 60 days; certified, unqualified audited financial statements for the prior year; and a showing of progress made on payments to local vendors, and sales. Noel Jordan gave updated information regarding increased employment, and reported that a cash flow report was provided to the Finance Director. He stated that other financial information had to come from multiple, out-of-state locations and the audit could not be completed by April, 2010. Chair Doyle stated that information should be provided to committee members in advance of the meeting. Discussion was held regarding Skipperliner's desire for confidentiality of its trade secrets and/or its proprietary information and the County's need for accountability. **MOTION** by O'Malley/Kader to have Corporation Counsel Shepherd and Finance Director

Ingvalson review the original motion, the contract, and Skipperliner documentation, with discussion in closed session at the May 6, 2010, meeting. A friendly amendment was proposed by Steve Burgess to have Corporation Counsel review Burgess's possible conflict as president of a Skipperliner financial lender. O'Malley/Kader agreed to the amendment. **Motion as amended carried unanimously.** Gasterland, Johnson, Werner excused.

#### **RECOMMENDATION OF TIF POLICY**

NOTE: Chair Doyle was excused, and Vice-Chair O'Malley took the chair. Brian Fukuda reported that Larry Kirch has offered to make a presentation on the City's TIF policy, and the consensus of the committee was to carry over their discussion for Kirch's presentation at the May 6, 2010, meeting. O'Malley also asked Karl Green to give his presentation that makes comparisons with TIF's in similar-sized communities. NOTE: Chair Doyle retook the chair at the end of the discussion.

#### **VILLAGE OF ROCKLAND PROPOSED TIF**

Brian Fukuda reported that the Joint Review Board will hold its first meeting on April 1, 2010, regarding a proposed TIF District in Rockland. The proposed TIF would assist Quality Hardwoods, Inc., with expansion. As part of the TIF, the Coulee Housing Development Corporation is working to create workforce housing options in the Meadow Park Estates Subdivision. Meadow Park is currently in the process of In Rem Foreclosure. A public hearing is scheduled for April 13, 2010.

#### **PARK PLAZA DEVELOPMENT UPDATE**

Steve O'Malley reported that staff is working to get the site ready for development, including cleaning up easements, obtaining a stormwater permit, and working with the City Utilities Department. Charlie Handy showed a drawing of property lines, and locations of the Bikini Yacht Club, a fuel tank, and power poles. Discussion was held on resolving issues that have been barriers to development, such as road access and demolition of buildings. Supervisor Kader spoke about the need for a conceptualized plan before marketing to developers. The item will be placed on the May 6, 2010, meeting agenda.

#### **AGENCY REPORTS**

- LADCO's Economic Forum will be April 16, 2010, with representatives from Amtrak and Talgo, a train manufacturer;
- Economic Indicators will be April 6, 2010;
- Karl Green, UW-Extension, stated he has been working with the economic development workgroup on housing issues, and has information to present related to the tax issue. Chair Doyle asked that it be placed on a future agenda.

#### **NEXT MEETING – MAY 6, 2010, AT 7:30 A.M.**

#### **FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

No further suggestions than noted above.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

**MOTION** by Ingvalson/Manthei to adjourn. **Motion carried unanimously.** Gasterland, Johnson, Werner excused. Meeting adjourned at 9:50 a.m.

**Approved,** May 6, 2010, Margaret Norden, Recorder