

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

La Crosse County Administrative Center, Rm. 3220

Thursday, August 5, 2010

7:30 a.m.

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Steve Doyle, Steve Burgess, Vicki Burke (7:35), Dirk Gasterland, Gary Ingvalson (7:33), Audrey Kader, Dennis Manthei, Steve O'Malley, Bill Shepherd, Mary Jo Werner

**MEMBERS EXCUSED:** Jill Billings, Tara Johnson

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Don Brenengen, John Wettstein

**STAFF & GUESTS:** Brian Fukuda, Charlie Handy, Margaret Norden, Greg Flogstad, Nicki Thiher, Vicki Markusson, Jenny Kuderer, Karl Green

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

Chair Doyle called the meeting to order at 7:30 a.m.

### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

None requested.

### **APPROVE MINUTES OF JULY 1, 2010**

**MOTION** by Manthei/Werner to approve the Minutes of July 1, 2010. **Motion carried unanimously.** Billings, Burke, Ingvalson, Johnson excused; Brenengen, Wettstein absent.

### **PAYMENT OF VOUCHERS**

Brian Fukuda sought approval to pay an annual maintenance fee to CP Rail of \$7,928.69. Amerhart will be invoiced for one-third of the fee per the development agreement. Fukuda stated that ownership will eventually go to the tenants.

**MOTION** by Manthei/Gasterland to pay CP Rail a maintenance fee of \$7,928.69. **Motion carried unanimously.** Billings, Johnson excused; Brenengen, Wettstein absent.

### **REVOLVING LOAN FUNDS – OVERVIEW/POLICIES/STATUS**

Brian Fukuda spoke about having two policies—if the Fund is making a direct loan to a business vs. the County is asked to service a loan for a federal and/or state agency. He said the main direction staff needed was in the areas of jobs reporting and payment status. Lengthy discussion followed regarding the following: The Fund objective to create jobs; identifying at-risk businesses through monthly jobs reporting, and thus being in a better position to assist businesses with being successful; putting incentives in loan agreements, such as lower interest rates upon reaching a threshold of job creation; setting funds aside to hire consultants; high interest rates being prohibitive to start-up businesses; and the cost of businesses being undercapitalized and having insufficient business plans. Supervisor Burke pointed out that if funds were not loaned out they would go into a sequestered account. Chair Doyle asked staff to explore the idea of incentives and bring back a report to the committee. Staff will also bring back a report on points regarding procedures, per Chair Doyle's previous direction.

### **SKIPPERLINER INDUSTRIES INC. – CHAPTER 128 BUSINESS LIQUIDATION**

Bill Shepherd gave an update on the status of Skipperliner's Chapter 128 business liquidation. The receiver has filed an order for dismissal. A holding company has bought out the position of State Bank and filed suit against Skipperliner for its assets.

## **REGIONAL COOPERATION IDEAS/SUMMIT**

Nicki Thiher, Community Development intern, presented a report on her research on regional collaborations. She gave a Power Point that showed five models and cities that have utilized them: Regional Compacts (Denver, CO, and Madison, WI); Regional Council of Governments (Denver, CO, and Sacramento, CA); Cultural Districts (Denver, CO); Economic Development Programs (Dayton, OH), and Tax Base Sharing (Minneapolis-St. Paul, MN). Further discussion followed regarding tax base sharing, and the need for municipalities to stop competing for economic development, but rather to adopt a regional approach to be able to compete on a national and international basis. Brian Fukuda reported they are working on presenting a regional summit at the 2010 Collaboration Conference. Chair Doyle suggested doing conference planning with the 7 Rivers Alliance.

## **HISTORY OF LA CROSSE COUNTY'S ROLE IN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

Given time constraints, Chair Doyle asked to hold over the presentation to the September 2, 2010, meeting.

## **AGENCY REPORTS**

- 7 Rivers Alliance – Vicki Markusson reported that the Small Business Administration is offering 10-15 regional innovations center contracts at amounts up to \$16,000 per applicant. Their application will focus on the metals industry cluster in the area. She requested letters of support. Chair Doyle asked staff to work with Markusson to draft a letter for his signature on behalf of La Crosse County.
- UW Extension – Karl Green reported on the first meeting of the City of La Crosse Storm Water Task Force on which he sits. They are beginning to review rates for the City's storm water utility. Commonality with neighboring municipal storm water utilities will hopefully minimize relocation or business opposition.
- La Crosse Promise Housing and Community Development Committee – Karl Green reported the committee meets on August 12, 2010.

## **NEXT MEETING – SEPTEMBER 2, 2010, AT 7:30 A.M.**

## **FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

None suggested.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

**MOTION** by Kader/Ingvalson to adjourn. **Motion carried unanimously.** Billings, Johnson excused; Brenengen, Wettstein absent. Meeting adjourned at 8:54 a.m.

**Approved,** September 2, 2010, Margaret Norden, Recorder