

Martin County Economic Development Authority
January 7, 2008, 4:30pm
Commissioner Board Room

Called to order by Chair Sukalski at 4:32pm. Those present were Grupe, Pierce, Boler; others present were Higgins, Ron Strom, and Rex Oberhelman.

Motion by Grupe, seconded by Boler to approve the agenda.

Motion by Boler, seconded by Grupe to approve the minutes of the December 10, 2007 meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

Rex Oberhelman, Blue Ribbon Foundation and Ron Strom were present to follow up on their request for a letter of support from the EDA. The Board requested additional information that included a financial plan, the people involved in the proposed cellostic (switch grass) ethanol production plan, etc. Strom stated that we think we have a great idea and if we pull it off, it will benefit everyone in the area. Strom further stated that we are not asking for money. We are asking for a letter of support from the EDA to encourage us to move forward. This idea is true economic development.

Oberhelman stated that the people working on it are getting nothing out of it. All we are asking if for a letter of for what we are doing.

Sukalski responded that won't provide you with a letter of support; however we need to feel the proposal you presented to us is accurate.

Boler questioned the availability of the enzyme, the legality of using road ditches to produce switch grass, the legality of using CREP land.

Sukalski stated the numbers you have presented to us are in question.

Strom stated Phase #1 will take \$500,000 to do it.

Oberhelman stated that we need to do a proof of concept first.

Strom left the meeting.

Sukalski stated his concern on what was initially presented to the public he believed were not accurate to begin with. Oberhelman responded that everything has changed since then.

Pierce inquired how you go about proving this concept. Oberhelman stated that this is what the EDA Board would do. We want you to tell us what you want and we want to work with you.

Sukalski stated he had followed up on the grant request and found a list of six reasons why it was rejected.

Oberhelman responded that when we started in February 2007, it was just an idea, things have changed since then. The monies are out there, if we do not get hands on it, someone else will. We are asking for moral support.

It was proposed that in order to get a more accurate picture, that Blue Ribbon Foundation start adjust the numbers more realistically.

Boler stated that as a Board, we must make sure we take action on items that are accurate for the sake of credibility of this Board for the future.

Schmidtke arrived at the meeting 5:01pm.

Sukalski inquired of the legality for the use of GMO alfalfa.

Oberhelman stated that there is no problem with it and is ok for use. Oberhelman further stated we got to get our numbers down to a 1, 400,000 gallon plant, get the numbers of acres needed, how much raw material is needed, etc.

After much discussion,

By consensus of the Commission, to have Sukalski review this project in further detail with Oberhelman and to include the Highway Engineer, Commissioner Jack Potter and to report back to the next meeting.

Sukalski thanked Oberhelman for his willingness to work this matter through.

Sukalski updated the Commission on the meeting with RCEF regarding the business facilitation services provided by Bryan Stading. The discussions included the need to bring on additional staff.

Discussion ensued on continued promotion of the IGNITE initiative. It was suggested that IGNITE be a member of the Fairmont Chamber, to set up a booth for the upcoming KSUM/KFMC Spring Expo in March, to place monthly ads in the county newspapers to keep the IGNITE program in front of the public, to talk with the various civic organizations, EDA's, city councils, and Townships within the county about the IGNITE program, to purchase promotional giveaway materials (i.e. key chains, pens, magnets, etc.), to have informational brochures printed, host an event similar to the kickoff event twice a year.

Motion by Grupe, seconded by Schmidtke to approve and authorize registration expensed for the KSUM/KFMC Spring Expo to be held in March at the Five Lakes Center in Fairmont; and approval of expenses for the booth. Carried unanimously.

Higgins would review with the County Auditor/Treasurer about setting up a separate account for the EDA.

OLD BUSINESS

Higgins informed the Commission that the County Attorney has reviewed the proposed By-Laws for the EDA and has recommended changes, which are included with the proposed By-Laws. Discussion ensued regarding the six year term for EDA Commissioners as required by MN State Statutes. By consensus, it was determined to request that the County Attorney attend the next meeting.

REPORTS

- The CY2008 budget was provided in the agenda packets.
- 2008 MAPCED Work Plan
- Copy of Letter of Support to Blue Ribbon Foundation from Faribault County EDA

The next meeting was set for Monday, February 4, 2008 at 4:30 pm in the Commissioner Board Room of Martin County Courthouse.

With no further business to wit, motion by Schmidtke, seconded by Pierce to adjourn. Carried unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 6:18 P.M.

Lawrence Sukalski, Chair, MCEDA

Attest: Chris Pierce, Secretary/Treasurer