

Martin County Economic Development Authority (MCEDA)
March 2, 2009 5:00pm
Commissioner's Board Room

Meeting called to order by President Sukalski at 5:06pm. Those present were: Clark, Pierce, Pribyl, Boler. Absent Grupe and Schmidtke. Also present were: B. Stading, G. Ferguson, R. Wallace, R. Oberhelman, and S. Higgins.

Sukalski introduced and welcomed Pribyl to the Board. Pribyl gave a brief presentation of his background and stated he is looking forward to serving on the Board. Sukalski introduced Ferguson and asked that he go ahead and make his presentation.

Ferguson informed the Board that the Workforce Center, Fairmont Chamber of Commerce, and School Districts within the County are putting together an event called the Area Career Exploration (ACE) for high sophomores. Sponsors of the program include the City of Fairmont, Fairmont School District, DEED, ISIC, and would like to see the Martin County EDA-IGNITE be included. Ferguson further explained that main objective of this program is to educate the students and make them aware of the various career opportunities in our county and surrounding area. This will allow the students an opportunity to talk with people in various professions (i.e. banking, lawyers, schools, government, medical professions, etc.). The event will be held on May 6, 2009 at the Fairmont High School and set up like a vendor fair type event. The County along with the EDA is being asked to have a number of their staff present to talk with students on career opportunities in government. Ferguson further stated that representatives from the surrounding counties are being asked to participate in the program as well.

Wallace presented the booklets that will be handed out to students. Students will take a personal inventory of themselves on what careers might interest them. Wallace requested that a \$2,000 contribution from IGNITE to the program. After further discussion,

Motion by Pierce, seconded by Boler, Be It Resolved that the Martin County EDA-IGNITE participate in the Area Career Exploration (ACE) to be held on May 6, 2009; and to approve a \$2,000 allocation to the event. Carried unanimously.

Motion by Clark, seconded by Pribyl to approve the agenda. Carried unanimously.

Motion by Boler, seconded by Pierce to approve the minutes of the February 9, 2009 board minutes. Carried unanimously.

Pierce gave an update on the Marketplace for Entrepreneurs event held on February 23, 2009 stating that there was mix of entrepreneurs, business resources. It was a good opportunity to network. Boler stated that there were approximately 115 booths and had various conversations with people.

Sukalski asked if there would be another event held next year. Stading responded in the affirmative and that many positive comments received and it was very successful. were received. The classes were well attended.

Sukalski asked that a brief update be given to Mr. Pribyl on the DEED grant for entrepreneur and small business facilitation program and his role as the business facilitator for Martin County. Stading gave an update.

Mr. Pribyl inquired if Stading noticed an upturn in business facilitation.

Stading responded in the affirmative and that the Marketplace event somewhat turned into a career fair for some attendees.

Sukalski also gave a brief update on the \$25,000 grant the EDA received from the Southern Minnesota Initiative Foundation (SMIF) for a BioEnergy related project. Sukalski stated that the grant is being used toward feasibility and commercialization for building of equipment for a Pyrolysis project.

Stading apologized for not have the monthly client reports available and stated that they will be sent out at a later date.

Stading stated the Kevin Lake (Intern for RCEF) is developing a brochure for an upcoming "community asset building" meeting to be held in Martin County. There are three meeting events planned and will give business owners and leaders an opportunity to share what they can offer as a business resource to entrepreneurs and small businesses.

Sukalski inquired of the Board's interest to host another entrepreneurial and small business event similar to the "IGNITE Kick off" event held in 2007. Clark stated that it would be good to do and to include more business professionals and to go with another exhibit type event. Pierce concurred.

Higgins gave an update on the KSUM/KFMC Spring Expo being held at the Five Lakes Centre here in Fairmont- March 6-8, 2009. The format will be similar to last year. KFMC will conduct live remotes with the EDA. A sign up sheet was provided to the Board with a few openings left. The EDA is also conducting radio advertising.

Motion by Clark, seconded by Pierce to approve the bills for March 2009 in the amount of \$554.60 as presented. Carried unanimously.

Higgins reviewed the monthly financial statement for February with a beginning balance of \$56,964.71 and ending balance after receipts and expenses of \$87,924.02.

Sukalski asked if there was any open discussion.

Oberhelman provided a handout titled "Tenhassen Project," which included a number of projects that Mr.Oberhelman's wanted to have accomplished. Oberhelman stated the Blue

Ribbon Foundation of which he is the founder of desires to cooperatively contribute to the creation and production of wealth within the county.

Sukalski asked which project Mr. Oberhelman wanted to focus on. Oberhelman stated that all the projects would intertwine with each other. Sukalski stated again that we will focus on one or two projects at a time and again asked which project was the priority.

Oberhelman responded that the EDA Board should choose. However, he particularly pointed out the cellulose refinery ethanol project as the main focus. Oberhelman stated that there is potential of a \$120,000,000 in loan guarantees for this proposed project and will be meeting with Colleen Landkamer, newly selected USDA Director for Minnesota in a couple weeks regarding the proposed project. Oberhelman requested the EDA's cooperation and letter of support to help get the project done.

Oberhelman stated that he has talked with the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MNDOT) in use of the state road right of ways to be used as test plot in growing of switch grass for the proposed cellulosic ethanol refinery. Stating that MNDOT officials were receptive to the idea and added that we can use the county road ditches to grow the switch grass to be used in ethanol production right here in Faribault and Martin Counties.

Oberhelman stated his frustration that it has taken nine months to get letters of support for this project from Senator Rosen, Rep. Gunther, Congressman Walz, U.S. Senator Coleman, Faribault County, and has not gotten a letter of support from Martin County. Oberhelman stated that the project can be placed anywhere, but would like to see it benefit Martin County. Oberhelman stated that we are not asking for any funding for these projects from the County.

Oberhelman went on to say why the Prairieland Compost facility in Truman grinding up the garbage and hauling it to the landfill when in my estimation 50-60% of the garbage could be sorted out and sell as resource for production of cellulose ethanol. This is creating wealth.

Oberhelman stated that the old Juvenile Resource Center in Fairmont is sitting empty and should be used a medical research center.

Sukalski asked that Oberhelman bring a few individuals to the next board that can speak to the cellulose ethanol refinery project so that the Board members can get a better perspective of the proposed project and to send each board member pertinent material on the project. Oberhelman stated that he would invite Dr. Lance Crombie to speak on the proposed project.

With no further business to wit,

Motion by Boler, seconded by Clark to adjourn. Carried unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 6:23pm.

Lawrence Sukalski, President, MCEDA

Attest: Chris Pierce, Secretary/Treasurer