

Martin County Economic Development Authority (MCEDA)
December 10, 2007, 5:30pm
Commissioner Board Room

Called to order by Chair Sukalski at 5:39pm. Those present were Clark, Grupe, Schmidtke, and Boler. Others present were Higgins, and Bob Wallace, Fairmont Chamber of Commerce, Rural Advantage Intern.

Motion by Grupe, seconded by Boler to .approve the agenda with the addition for Fairmont Chamber of Commerce presentation. Carried unanimously

Motion by Clark, seconded by Boler to approve the minutes of the November 27, 2007 minutes. Carried unanimously.

Wallace congratulated the Commission on the IGNITE imitative and the kickoff event held on November 29, 2007.

Wallace offered the Chamber services to help in any way they can for the County EDA or IGNITE initiative. Wallace further stated that the Chamber offers various workshops and trainings to businesses, a business list of over 500 addresses and much more. Invited the EDA to partner in with a survey to the business community on what issues they may be facing.

Wallace further stated that the Chamber is looking to work in implementing a regional job posting website that would include a thirty (30) miles radius that would include the cities of Blue Earth, Jackson, Madelia, and Estherville. All businesses in these communities are encouraged to be a part of this development. The estimated cost for the website is \$10,000. Wallace stated that they would be asking for contributions of at least \$500 or more and encouraged the EDA to contribute.

Wallace also stated the possibility of starting and developing a county wide leadership program, which would be a nine (9) month program at an approximate cost of \$500-600 to cover expenses.

Kotewa arrived at the meeting at 5:50pm.

Wallace stated that if the EDA has any ideas or suggestions that the Chamber would be willing to look at them and work with the EDA in accomplishing them.

The Commission inquired of Wallace if there were ideas or suggestions he had for the EDA. Wallace stated that the County EDA would serve well in economic development if provided gap funding program for potential business prospects and let the lending institutions provide the financing and loans to businesses.

OLD BUSINESS:

The Commission reviewed further the proposed Bylaws for the EDA.

Boler stated the need to include a non-discrimination clause in the Bylaws due to most federal and state grants require such.

NEW BUSINESS:

Discussion ensued on the letter of support for the Blue Ribbon Foundation for their proposed project in producing ethanol from switch grass.

Sukalski stated his concerns of the numbers presented by those representing Blue Ribbon Foundation during the last meeting. Sukalski stated that he talked with the individual (referred by Oberhelman) at Bradford Financial (Iowa) and they too concurred the numbers need to be accurate. There was discussion on the practicality of the proposal using county ditches to grow switch grass and the time and investment in getting the initial crop and the enzymes needed for the process in switchgrass ethanol production.

Sukalski further stated that the EDA could provide a letter of support to the Blue Ribbon Foundation if the proposed numbers were more realistic. After much discussion,

Motion by Boler to deny sending a letter of support at this time due to the need for more accurate figures in the proposal by the Blue Ribbon Foundation, died for lack of a second.

Clark stated his concern for supporting the project without any type of report and cash flow analysis. After further discussion,

Motion by Boler to not provide a letter of support at this time until further information is provided to include a financial report, the individuals involved in the project, seconded by Clark. Carried unanimously.

Discussion ensued on setting future meeting dates.

By consensus the Commission approved to hold regular monthly meetings on the first Monday of each month at 4:30pm at the Martin County Courthouse.

Door prize drawing held for those who attended the IGNITE kick off event. The winner was Linda Meschke, Rural Advantage.

The Commission discussed the IGNITE kickoff event held on November 29, 2007. Grupe stated that it was extremely positive and comments by individuals stating that the event was awesome. It was also stated that the business providers were able to obtain new business contacts. Sukalski suggested that this should be an annual event.

Clark stated that he was impressed with those in attendance. Clark further stated that we need to obtain more direction pertaining to the business facilitation program from Bryan Stading (RCEF) Facilitator.

Higgins stated that Jerry Rollins, RCEF Board member would like to meet to discuss facilitation services provided by RCEF to Martin County. Boler, Sukalski, and Higgins will meet with RCEF.

Higgins provided information regarding trade marking the IGNITE logo and whether or not the Commission wished to file a trademark for the IGNITE name. After discussion,

Motion by Schmidtke, seconded by Clark to approve trademark of the IGNITE name and logo and to authorize the Chair to sign the required documents to obtain the trademark for IGNITE. Carried unanimously.

By consensus of Commission, next meeting was set for Monday, January 7, 2008 at 4:30 pm Board Room of Martin County Courthouse.

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

Meeting adjourned at 7:09 P.M.

Lawrence Sukalski, Chair, MCEDA

Attest: Chris Pierce, Secretary/Treasurer