

**Board Minutes of the
Martin County EDA
February 6, 2017**

The regular meeting of the Martin County Economic Development Authority was called to order by Chris Pierce at 5:15pm. Those present were Randy Grupe, Larry Baarts, Brent Schultze, Elliot Belgard, Steve Fosness and Dan Schmidtke. . Also present were Scott Higgins, Bryan Stading, RCEF, Mike Murphy, KFMC/KSUM radio Rod Halverson, reporter KFMC/KSUM radio, Jason Sorenson, Fairmont Sentinel Reporter.

Motion by Schultze, seconded by Schmidtke to approve the agenda as presented with the deletion of 3.1-Approval of January 9, 2017 board minutes and 7.1-Bill payments. Carried unanimously.

Pierce introduced the Steve Fosness as the newly appointed board member to the EDA Board.

Fosness gave brief bio stating that he has lived in seven different states and moved back to Fairmont in 1989, retired from the City of Fairmont, now serves as the business representative for the IBEW, served on the HRA Board for many years, and would like to see Fairmont grow as well as Martin County.

Higgins presented the final mockup of the proposed EDA placard to the Butcher Block, stating Congratulation to the Butcher Block “We look forward to your successful business Future in Martin County” , which include IGNITE Logo. By consensus the board gave approval to move forward with the placard.

Higgins presented the final mockup of the project signs having received two proposals-Ad Pros and Designing Signs. After review and discussion,

Motion by Fosness, seconded by Baarts to approve the proposal from Ad Pros (Fairmont) for a construction grade yard sign, with graphics size to be 36” x 24”, with graphics on both sides of the sign; and the sign being made of aluicore, with black steel frame: to include the proposed information, including IGNITE logo, and adding “Project Assisted By:” with orange/red border on top and bottom of sign; and to order three (3) signs. Carried unanimously.

Stading reviewed the January 2017 business consultation report with the Board. There were a total of eleven (11) facilitation sessions for a total of 23 hours.

Motion by Schmidtke, seconded by Schultz to receive and file the January 2017 business consultation report. Carried unanimously.

Stading informed the Board that the ribbon cutting for the Butcher Block is scheduled for February 15, 2017 at 3pm and encouraged the board members to attend.

Stading gave a brief update on legislation that is still being considered for continued funding for business facilitation and would involve the SBDC (Mankato).

Murphy (KFMC/KSUM) reviewed the annual renewal of the EDA radio programming contract for the “shop local” ads, Business Talk and web streaming programs. The objective of the radio program is to not only be informative to the public, but to promote the Martin County EDA.

Murphy stated that for the past two years the Martin County EDA has sponsored the “shop locally” ad campaign in order to spread the message of the importance of patronize businesses in the local communicates. The annual cost for shop local ads I \$5,564, which runs 260 times throughout the y ear at \$21.40/ad.

Murphy continues stating that the second radio program includes interview every Monday morning at 7:25am. These interviews promote the EDA as well as cover timely topics, projects and programs. This program is scheduled to renew May 1, 2017 and expire April 30, 2017. The cost is \$35 per program for 52 weeks per year, for a total of \$1, 820.00 annually.

Murphy further reviewed the KFMC/KSUM home page streaming which includes the IGNITE logo for a total cost of \$600 annually (\$50/month)

The total proposed expense for the EDA radio program is \$7, 984 for the upcoming year.

Pierce stated that we discussed that the shop local ad campaign be run on a seasonal basis (i.e. Christmas).

Murphy suggested that the shop local ad campaign be revamped to make it more effective for the EDA.

Schmidtke suggested that in order to save on budget costs, that the shop local ad be run three times per week, instead of the 5 times per week.

Murphy stated that would reduce the cost from \$5, 564 to approximately \$3,525.

Fosness inquired of the times the ads would run.

Murphy responded informing the board of the ad run times, further stating, however, that it depends on when you want to run them. We don't have to run them on the existing schedule.

Grupe stated that one way to reduce the budget is to look at the allocation to the Convention Visitors Bureau (CVB). I would rather stay with the radio programming.

Grupe inquired if it would be possible to provide some options to the EDA radio programming.

Murphy stated that he would recommend staying with the Monday morning talk show.

After further discussion, by consensus the board asked that options be further explored regarding the EDA radio programming and be brought back to the next board meeting for review and consideration.

Higgins stated that the EDA Officer did meet and reviewed the EDA's strategic plan priority areas, which were established in October 2014. The Officers believed that the EDA's Mission and Vision statements were still pertinent and applicable the EDA.

The recommendations for priority areas for 2017 are as follows: continue the business service facilitation model with RCEF; continue with connecting businesses to financial resources vs establishing an EDA loan fund; to continue with the current version of the County's Business subsidy policy; continue to promote the EDA, including getting more involved with the sponsorships of programs, and events i.e. Bike, Jog, Walk Event on County Trail System, Fishing contests, and County Fair Forums; continue to promote tourism in the county; discussed the shop local radio ad campaign, but maybe on a more seasonal basis; promote the EDA services to local service clubs including sending representatives to the Bureau 14, Chamber of Commerce, city visits, Chamber Ag Business, etc.;

Grupe added additional details regarding EDA sponsorships.

Pierce stated the need to work more closely with CVB on promoting the countywide events activities.

General discussion of the proposed EDA priority areas were positive and to continue the recommended priority areas for 2017.

Higgins reviewed the letter from the Minnesota Employment and Economic Development (DEED) - Office of Broadband announcing Martin County's Border to Border broadband grant in the amount of \$1, 677,823. The grant project is to be completed in two years. The total amount of the countywide broadband project is \$3, 355,646. Frontier Communications will improve their broadband speeds and access in various parts of the county as listed in the grant application. Frontier will also be providing the match requirements of the grant. Higgins further stated that there is a webinar scheduled for February 24th to review the grant expectations, procedures and requirements.

Higgins reviewed the Area Career Exploration Event (ACE) scheduled for April 12, 2017 at the Fairmont High School. . The EDA does sponsor ACE and in the past has allocated \$1, 500 to ACE. Higgins further stated that ACE provides high school sophomores from within Martin County and surrounding counties an awareness of job opportunities in the region; provides face to face interaction with area employers, career options that match student skills and interest. And allows the students to gain information about careers, education and to develop job seeking skills to better understand what employers look for in employees.

No bills.

The Board reviewed the January 2017 Year to date financial reports.

Higgins reviewed the information included in the board packets as follows, Annual membership welcome letter from the Fairmont Chamber of Commerce, Thank you letter from the Southern Minnesota Initiative Foundation (SMIF) for 2017 funding allocation.

The next board meeting is scheduled for March 7, 2017 at 5:15pm at the Courthouse.

With no further business to wit,

Motion by Baarts, seconded by Fosness to adjourn the meeting. Carried unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 6:06pm

Randy Grupe, Board Vice President

Brent Schultze, Board Secretary/Treasurer