

Martin County Economic Development Authority (MCEDA)
May 5, 2014
Board Room-Martin County Courthouse

The meeting was called to order by Pierce at 5:15 p.m. Board members present were: Belgard, Grupe, Clark, S. Pierce, and. Absent: Larry Baarts, and Brent Schultze. Others present: Bryan Stading, Business Facilitator for Martin County EDA, and Scott Higgins, County Coordinator, and Mike Humpal, Fairmont City Administrator.

Motion by Belgard, seconded by Grupe to approve the agenda, with one addition Consider Proposed Business Subsidy Policy. Carried unanimously.

Motion by Clark, seconded by Belgard to approve the minutes of the regular EDA meeting held on April 7, 2014, as presented. Carried unanimously.

Pierce introduced a study called the “Brain Gain of Rural America” which was conducted by the University of Minnesota Extension. Pierce stated that there are people wanting to move back to their hometowns and counties where they grew up.

Schultze arrived at 5:22pm.

Humpal stated that according to the study, the trend is people are moving back to rural communities, primarily from the 30-49 age group. These same people are bringing children aged 10-17. The improved quality of life is the main reason people are returning to the rural communities.

Humpal went on to state that the Fairmont Economic Development Authority (FEDA) is looking to begin a project to conduct a sort of “Come Back Home” campaign. The project is at an estimated cost of \$12, 600, and would ask that the Martin county EDA split the cost and participate in this program as well.

Humpal stated that if we want the area to grow, we need to get people to come back to Martin County, and to work with the local businesses and government leaders.

C. Peirce the program will provide some assistance in recruiting for employers.

Humpal stated that a website would be created, where an individual could confidentially download their resume and businesses would be able to access the resumes through the new website. Using the website to collect the resumes, will help in business buy in to the program.

C. Pierce stated that we need to formulate and develop a plan as to what we want the program to do for us.

Belgard stated concern that we do a lot of various programs and don’t see continuity in the programs once they have been started. How would we sustain the program?

Humpal responded that we would need to make it happen and continue the program and set up the right people to administer the program for continuity. We could work with various folks to administer and market the program.

Belgard stated getting it started is not so bad, it's just keeping the program going is the something that needs to happen.

Clark stated he would like to see the stats the 50% of the people are coming back.

It was suggested we need to list jobs that are available in the county on all community websites. That would be one way to accomplish getting people back to Martin County.

Belgard stated that such a project is part of our (EDA) mission. It is a great idea, but need to make sure we can finish it up.

Humpal concurred and stated that you can run into trouble if you do not have the staff to keep the work going.

S. Pierce the question we need to ask, are we doing a good job at what we do now and how do we maintain what we are doing.

Clark stated he is in support of making people aware of what is in our area, I just think we need to look at it further.

Humpal concurred and stated that we are getting more and more people aware of the opportunities in the region.

Grupe stated it is a great idea. Again, it is the sustainability. Is it the best for us, yet we do not have a program now.

After further discussion, no action taken on the proposed program and to obtain further information on the proposed program.

Higgins presented a draft Business Subsidy Policy for the County, stating that there is a retail project being proposed in the City of Trimont and they are requesting tax abatement for the project. In the past, the Board has discussed establishing a business subsidy policy in the past, no action has been taking on adopting such a policy. The board is being asked to give its review and approval of the proposed Business Subsidy Policy. Higgins stated that a public hearing is required to adopt such a policy, which is scheduled for May 20, 2014 and encourage the Board members to attend the public hearing and/or provide written comment regarding the proposed Policy before the anticipated public hearing.

Clark stated he has reviewed the policy. After further discussion,

Motion by Clark, seconded by Schultze, Be It Resolved that the Martin County EDA, hereby approves and recommends the adoption of the proposed Martin County Business Subsidy Policy as presented. Carried unanimously.

Stading reviewed the monthly client report for the month of April 2014 with total client sessions of 15 for 27.5 hours.

Stading gave a brief review of Southern Minnesota Economic Summit held in Mankato, MN, on April 29-30th. Stading continued that it was an event for entrepreneurs and businesses, and open to the public. Stading stated that there was a good turnout, and invited board members to be a part of the event next year by participating on a panel to provide feedback to potential business proposals. This would help entrepreneurs better their business plans.

Stading reviewed the final draft of the 2013 Annual EDA report. Stading reviewed the revisions discussed during the previous board meeting. The final report will be presented at the next regular County Board meeting on May 6, 2014.

Motion by Pierce, seconded by Clark to approve the 2013 Annual Martin County EDA Report. Carried unanimously.

Motion by Pierce, seconded by Belgard, to approve payment of bills as presented for April 8, 2014-May 5, 2014-April 7, 2014, including payment of \$1,000 to the Fairmont Chamber of Commerce for sponsorship of the ACE program , in the amount of \$2,228.52 (which includes \$1,000 for ACE contribution). Carried unanimously.

Motion by Belgard, seconded by Grupe to approve a \$500 allocation for the sponsorship of the Southern Minnesota Economic Summit held on April 29-30, 2014 held in Mankato, MN. Carried unanimously.

The Board reviewed the monthly CY2014 YTD Financial Statements.

The next board meeting is scheduled for Monday, June 2, 2014 at 5:15pm in the Board room (Martin County Courthouse). The Board reviewed the information and reports included in the board packets. With no further business to wit,

Motion by S. Pierce, seconded by Schultze to adjourn the meeting. Carried unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 6:21 pm.

Chris Pierce, Vice-President, MCEDA

Jerry Clark, Secretary/Treasurer

