

Martin County Economic Development Authority (MCEDA)
August 3, 2015
Board Room-Martin County Courthouse

The meeting was called to order by Brent Schultze at 5:16 p.m. Board members present were: Elliot Belgard, Larry Baarts, Jerry Clark, and Dan Schmidtke Absent: Chris Pierce and Randy Grupe. Others present: Bryan Stading, Business Facilitator for Martin County EDA, Scott Higgins, County Coordinator, Kay Wrucke, Martin County Recorder, Margaret Dillard, President Fairmont Chamber of Commerce, Rod Halverson, KFMC/KSUM, and Desiree Diaz, Reporter Fairmont Sentinel.

Motion by Belgard, seconded by Baarts to approve the agenda as presented. Carried unanimously.

Motion by Belgard, seconded by Schmidtke to approve the minutes of the June 1, 2015 regular board minutes. Carried unanimously,

Dillard gave a brief update on the Brain Gain project in Martin County, stating that the Project received a grant in the amount of \$32,900 from the Southern Minnesota Initiative Foundation. Work continues to work toward strengthening our communities and to get an online presence for Martin County. The purpose is not only to attract those who have lived or grew up in the county and moved away, but also to attract new comers to back to the county. Dillard reviewed the SMIF application Budget. The new website is www.fairmontlife.info

Belgard inquired if the grant can be used for any expenses toward the project.

Dillard responded that there are specific things that the grant funds can be spent on for the project. A goal has been established in the grant to bring back twenty-five (25) families back to the county within the period of grant. Parameters have been set for on line presence to include outlying communities, rather than just Fairmont.

With no further report, the board thanked Dillard for her update.

Wrucke gave an update on some of the Blandin projects that are in progress. Wrucke stated that App Camp is underway, with eleven (11) student participating- eight (8) from Fairmont School District and three (3) from outside the Fairmont School District including Granada School District. Wrucke further stated that \$9,950 dollars were received from the Blandin Foundation to conduct the App Camp. The participants will learn to design and develop a working App. They are working on developing an App to include locations throughout the county to “Shop –Eat-Play.” The participants are learning to do coding. Wrucke stated that the participants receive a tablet and are required to give service back hours to the community. The students will demo the finished app during the County Fair at the Martin County Booth. The next objective will be to market the app and get people to use it.

Wrucke gave an update on second Blandin project-Technology Training. Blandin provided a \$15,000 grant funds to conduct educational and hands on training in using computers, mobile devices, using the internet and online application, social media, etc. These events will be hosted in places such as assisted living facilities, café's, senior centers, schools, etc. The Committee has been developing timelines and locations of these training sessions.

Clark inquired if these training sessions will require computers or lap tops

Wrucke responded that included in the grant is to purchase a few lap tops to be used for hands on training.

Clark inquired if the grant requires matching funds.

Wrucke stated that all the Blandin grants require some level of matching funds, typically 25% cash and/or in-kind contributions.

Higgins noted that the two Blandin projects have not asked the EDA to provide for the match to the grants. At this time, the county is providing the match requirements and any cash match through the Technology Compliance Fund.

With no further report, the Chair thanked Wrucke for the update.

Dillard gave an update on a third grant that was provided by Blandin for the Community Calendar project, which started similar to a school "sports calendar." It is an online platform and the group wanted to enhance such a "calendar "and include any events that would be of interest to the public and make it available to schools, businesses, government, non-profits throughout the county. The grant dollars will be used to help market the Community Calendar and other related expenses.

Dillard informed the board that the Top 20 program is back in Fairmont. There are five planned sessions available to the various professional and leadership sessions including business leadership and civic leadership and will be held August 27 -28, 2015 at the Knights of Columbus Hall. Dillard stated that an invite will be sent to EDA Board members. The Martin County EDA is a sponsor of this program.

Stading gave monthly business consultation report for June 2015 totaling seventeen (17) session for 54.5 hours, and for the month of July 2015 for a total of seven (7) sessions for a total of 23 hours, in addition gave an update with regard to non-client work, which included work on the Blandin Community Broadband program, update on legislative funding for the business facilitation program, planning of "App Camp" (Blandin Grant), and gave an update on the monthly EDA meeting and KSUM radio programming.

Stading informed the Board that the 2015 Competitive Business Development Grant application is being submitted to DEED for the collaboration between the SBDC, RCEF, and the Martin County EDA. The grant will be for a two year period. It requires a match

of approximately \$26,250. The maximum amount of the grant is \$250,000 for the two year period.

After brief discussion,

Motion by Schmidtke, seconded by Clark to authorize and approve letter of support for the 2015 Competitive Business Development Grant Application to DEED; and to approve the required grant match of approximately \$26,250; and the grant to pay for expenses as listed in the grant information including providing direct services, travel (incurred providing direct services) equipment, supplies, business development consultants and other direct expenses. Carried unanimously.

Higgins presented the Blandin Grant Award for Robust Network Feasibility Fund for a countywide broadband feasibility study. The grant is in the amount \$20,000. There is a dollar for dollar match. Higgins stated that it is anticipated that the required match will be provided by the County's Recorder Compliance Fund. Higgins stated that the purpose is to support the cost and research of the feasibility of geographically based broadband networks throughout the county. With the increased need for dependable high speed internet for businesses, schools, and the general public. The process would entail developing Request for Proposals (RFP's) for engineering/architect firms who do this type of work. The work would include gathering data on what broadband infrastructure is available in the county, access and connectivity, recommendations on how to address unserved or underserved areas throughout the county, cost estimates for improvements of broadband throughout the county. The end results of the feasibility study should provide the county with helpful information to help improve not only broadband access and connectivity, but improve our economic vitality in the county.

After discussion,

Motion by Belgard, seconded by Clark, Be It Resolved that the Martin County Economic Development Authority hereby approve and authorize the County Coordinator to sign the required documents for the Blandin Foundation Robust Network Feasibly Fund Grant and follow its requirements. Carried unanimously.

Higgins presented and reviewed the grant award from the Blandin Foundation for the development and implementation of public access to installation of Wi-Fi Hot Spots at various locations throughout the county. The grant award received was in the amount of \$7,350 and requires a match of 25% that can include cash or in kind contributions. The goal of the grant is to provide improved availability of Wi-Fi to citizens and visitors of Martin County. It is anticipated that community partnerships will be formed to create a network of Wi-Fi hotspots, creating new "hot spot" areas, outfitting county transit buses and long route activity busses in school districts throughout Martin County. Participant establishments will be included in marketing materials and a countywide hot spot directory (print and online versions).

After brief discussion,

Motion by Clark, seconded by Baarts, Be It Resolved that the Martin County Economic Development Authority hereby approve and authorize the Martin County Coordinator or the Project Lead-Billee Rabbe to sign the required documents from the Blandin Foundation for the Wi-Fi “Hot Spots” countywide project. Carried unanimously.

Higgins presented and reviewed the PC’s for People Distribution Event. Higgins stated that since Martin County was selected to as a Blandin Broadband Community, the county is eligible to hold a free computer distribution event to those families who are eligible to receive the refurbished computers. At this time, the event is being planned. It is expected that the event will be held in October of this year. Higgins encouraged the board to be a part of the planning of the event and the distribution day.

Motion by Baarts, seconded by Schmidtke to approve and authorize per diems and expenses for EDA Board members who work on the PCs’ for People Event. Carried unanimously.

Higgins presented and reviewed the proposed CY2016 EDA budget, stating that the proposed expenses are projected to be \$93,310, which would require a tax levy of \$93,310. Higgins stated that the major increases include \$20,000 for potential match for the Grant received from the Blandin Foundation for the countywide feasibility study. There was a large increase in consultation services as well.

Clark stated the need for more budget detail.

By consensus of the Board, it was determined that the budget be broke down in more detail and reviewed at the September board meeting.

Higgins informed the board that the County Fair will be held August 17-23, 2015 and that the EDA will again be included with the County Fair Booth and will have promotional items and business information available to the public. There will be a schedule available if the board members wish to sign up for work shift in the fair booth.

Higgins presented the bills to be paid on June 2, 2015-August 3, 2015 in the amount of \$4,920.41.

Motion by Clark, seconded by Schmidtke, to approve payment of bills as presented to be paid for June 2, 2015-August 3, 2015 in the amount of \$4,920.41. Carried unanimously.

The Board reviewed the monthly CY2015 YTD Financial Statements. Higgins stated that the fund balance as of end of June 2015 is \$254,942.62.

The next board meeting is scheduled for Monday, September 14, 2015 at 5:15pm in the Board room (Martin County Courthouse).

With no further business to wit,

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

The meeting adjourned at 6:40 pm.

Brent Schultze, Secretary/Treasurer