

**Martin County Economic Development Authority (MCEDA)**  
**September 8, 2014**  
**Board Room-Martin County Courthouse**

The meeting was called to order by C. Pierce at 5:15 p.m. Board members present were: Elliot Belgard, Larry Baarts, Randy Grupe, Steve Pierce and Brent Schultze. Absent: Jerry Clark. Others present: Bryan Stading, Business Facilitator for Martin County EDA, and Scott Higgins, County Coordinator, Greg Broolsma and Lowell Spee.

Motion by Grupe, seconded by Baarts to approve the agenda with one addition- Consider Sponsorship of Fairmont Top 20 Program. Carried unanimously.

Motion by Pierce, seconded by Belgard to approve the minutes of the regular EDA meeting held on August 4, 2014 as presented. Carried unanimously.

Spee inquired of the status of the real estate data base project. Higgins stated that the data base is up and running. Higgins further stated that letters were sent out to all cities within the county introducing the new program and explaining how to complete the form online. At this time, the county has not received any notification information that has been uploaded.

Broolsma informed the board of the upcoming session of Fairmont Top 20 Program scheduled for November 3, 2014. Broolsma requested the Martin County EDA become a sponsor of the Top 20 program and requested a \$1,000 contribution, stating that it would be good to see the Martin County EDA as a supporter and sponsor of the Top 20 program and with the EDA's good reputation, it could pull more of the local businesses in support of the program. Broolsma further stated that the Fairmont School District includes the Top 20 program in their curriculum.

Grupe inquired if school districts besides Fairmont were a part of the Top 20 program.

Broolsma responded that the other school districts could not make the November 3<sup>rd</sup> date work.

After further discussion,

Motion by Belgard, seconded by Grupe to approve the \$1,000 allocation for the Fairmont Top 20 program. Carried unanimously.

Pierce gave an update on the "Brain Gain" program, stating that a couple of the local businesses have volunteered to keep the program running if implemented, further stating that other businesses have yet to commit to providing some sort of support for the proposed project. We need to have the program countywide for the EDA to support the program.

Belgard concurred with the need to have an individual to keep the program going.

C. Pierce stated that the contribution request to the Board is for \$6,000 for the project.

Belgard stated that the data and research for this program is surprising of the numbers of people coming back to the area.

C. Pierce stated that part of the program is to attract top talent back to the area, which can be difficult. A cohesive message needs to be developed.

Belgard stated that the information that gets posted out on the internet needs to include job listings, which can help attract individuals back to the area. The job listing would need to be updated, which takes someone to make sure that this is done.

C. Pierce stated that the second aspect is to develop “branding” for the area. We need to market the area to attract people back to the area.

Belgard stated that we can be more aggressive than what we are doing now.

Stading suggested that there would need to be a lead on this program, whether it is the Chamber, consultants, or hire an individual to run the program. Stading further stated that interns through RCEF could provide the data entry for the program.

Grupe stated that the Area Career Exploration (ACE) event is a successful program that is letting students know that the area does have jobs they can come back to and that it is safe area.

There was discussion on the Martin County/MVAC Internship program that has shown successes over the last few years in attracting and keeping people here in Martin County.

C. Pierce stated that more discussion is needed on the proposed program.

Stading presented the monthly client report for August 2014 for a total of 10 sessions for a total of 25 hours.

Higgins gave a brief update on the status of the strategic planning session for the EDA, stating that Bruce Schwartau, U of M Extension Education (Economics) has presented a proposal to provide economic data and to facilitate the planning session or \$500. Higgins stated that the EDA Board and County board would be a part of the planning session, along with appropriate county staff, as well as the local EDA’s, Fairmont Chamber of Commerce, and other business leaders. Higgins further stated that a survey would be formulated and sent to all potential participants in the planning session. After further discussion,

Motion by Grupe, seconded by Baarts to approve entering into a contract with the University of Extension for facilitation of the EDA Strategic planning session, with Bruce Schwartau, U of M Extension Educator (Economics) in the amount of \$500; and

to approve the date of October 21, 2014, 11:00am-3:00pm for the planning session. Carried unanimously.

Higgins presented the bills to be paid for August 5, 2014 –September 8, 2014 in the amount of \$3,778.91.

Motion by Belgard, seconded by Pierce, to approve payment of bills as presented to be paid on September 8, 2014 in the amount of \$3,778.91. Carried unanimously.

The Board reviewed the monthly CY2014 YTD Financial Statements.

The next board meeting is scheduled for Monday, October 6, 2014 at 5:15pm in the Board room (Martin County Courthouse).

The Board reviewed the information and reports included in the board packets which included the invitation to the annual Southern Minnesota Initiative Foundation Luncheon scheduled for October 2, 2014, MCIT property and liability Coverage renewal and the approved preliminary EDA CY2015 budget.

Motion by Pierce, seconded by Belgard to approve per diems and expenses to attend the Southern Minnesota Initiative Foundation annual luncheon. Carried unanimously.

S. Pierce stated that the issue of extending broadband is a potential topic for the EDA to consider and discuss in the future.

With no further business to wit,

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

The meeting adjourned at 6:17 pm.

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Chris Pierce, President, MCEDA

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Jerry Clark, Secretary/Treasurer