

Martin County Economic Development Authority (MCEDA)
September 10, 2012
Board Meeting Room

The meeting was called to order by Grupe at 5:20 p.m. Board members present were: Baarts, Schumann, and Belgard. Absent: Pierce, Schmidtke and Clark. Others present were: Bryan Stading Business Facilitators for Martin County and Scott Higgins, Coordinator, Brad Berg, Greater Minnesota Economic Alliance (GMEA), Joe Brown, Superintendent of Fairmont School District, and Scott Geerdes, Fairmont High School Counselor.

Motion by Baarts, seconded by Belgard, to approve the agenda with the deletion of presentation by Bill Meyer (Fairmont Workforce Center). Carried unanimously.

Motion by Belgard, seconded by Schumann to approve the minutes of the August 6, 2012 regular meeting of the EDA as presented. Carried unanimously.

Berg, CEO of the Greater Minnesota Economic Alliance (GMEA) stated that Superintendent Brown, along with Scott Geerdes are present as well, stating that GMEA is working with the Fairmont School District to establish technical/charter schools in the District and stated that this project is something the EDA may wish to be involved with.

Pierce arrived at the meeting at 5:23pm.

Berg presented a proposal to conduct a Business Retention and Expansion study for all the communities in Martin County, which included a few of \$9,200. Berg stated that per the proposal, the EDA may wish to do all communities for only certain communities in the county.

Pierce stated that conducting a BRE study is something the EDA should be looking to accomplish, stating that the last BRE study that was completed county wide was completed in 1994. Pierce recommended that the board establish a subcommittee to review and formulate a recommendation to the full EDA Board.

Grupe stated that he would be interested in being part of the committee.

Grupe inquired if the City of Fairmont was willing to sponsor the BRE.

Pierce stated he had not talked with the city and could be something to approach them with.

Pierce stated that the board will review the BRE proposal and thanked Mr. Berg for his presentation.

Pierce invited Mr. Brown to speak to the issue of proposed charter/technical school for Fairmont.

Brown stated that the District is looking at the possibility of establishing a charter school in order to teach students the work skills needed by local manufacturers and businesses in the area, in order to get good paying jobs. The existing school facilities are only used approximately 15% of the year. These facilities could be utilized more. Many of you are aware of the new Ag Academy that was made possible by fundraising done by the private sector and has a high number of students participating in it. The approach to establishing of charter school would be nearly the same way.

Pierce inquired of the use of the existing school facility and whether the school board would be the landlord and lessor of equipment to the proposed vocational school.

Brown stated in the affirmative and that the District would need to be creative in making it work.

Stading inquired if the program (i.e. welding) would be a certification program.

Brown stated in the affirmative of the need to meet certain hour requirements.

Geerdes stated that we have 175 students signed up for the new Ag Program.

Brown stated the District has sent out a letter to local businesses to find out what skills are needed (i.e. welding).

Grupe stated concern for establishing a charter school due to the funding required for such a program

It was asked how the charter school would coincide with the public schools.

Brown stated that he felt that the two schools would be able to co-exist.

Pierce stated that the charter school warrants further discussion. With no further discussion, Pierce thanked Brown and Geerdes for their presentation.

Stading reviewed the monthly client report for the month of August 2012 with a total of seven (7) client sessions for a total of 21 hours.

Stading gave an update on the radio program (KSUM) stating the need for suggestions for programming. Stading informed the board of upcoming speaker event called "EntreLeadership" featuring Dave Ramsey, to be held on September 21st at Bethany College. Stading also informed the board that Wes Pruitt has signed on to be and independent contractor with RCEF to provide business consultation services in Martin County.

Higgins presented the approved preliminary budget request for CY2013, stating that due to the reduced reimbursement grant for direct client services the budget has been reduced to reflect the change in expenses to for the IGNITE portion of the budget.

Higgins presented the August 7, 2012- September 10, 2012 bills for payment. After review and discussion,

Motion by Grupe, seconded by Schumann ratify and approve payment of bills as presented for August 7, 2012-September 10, 2012 in the amount of \$2, 274.45. Carried unanimously.

The year to date financial reports were also presented and reviewed by the Board.

Pierce stated the need to create some sort of “county branding’ strategy, stating that Martin County has much to offer, including its public hunting lands,, 55 lakes, etc.

It was suggested to work with the Fairmont CVB and Chamber to help develop a county branding strategy.

Higgins reviewed reports/information included in the board packets with the board, which included the Southern Minnesota Initiative Foundation (SMIF) information brochure and the a letter from MCIT 2013 Estimated Contribution Notice to the EDA, ITC notice of public meetings, and Sherburn Civic and Commerce Club meeting notice.

By consensus the next meeting date will be held on Monday, October 1, 2012, starting at 5:15 p.m. at the Courthouse (Fairmont).

Grupe stated the need to look at the proposal for the establishment of vocational school more closely.

Pierce stated that he will send email to set up a committee meeting to review the proposed BRE study, county branding, and vocational schools.

With no further business to wit, Motion by Baarts, seconded by Belgard to adjourn the meeting. Carried unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 6:20 pm.

Chris Pierce, President, MCEDA

Attest: Jerry Clark, Secretary/Treasurer