

**MartinCounty Economic Development Authority (MCEDA)**  
**October 1, 2012**  
**Board Meeting Room**

The meeting was called to order by Pierce at 5:18 p.m. Board members present were: Baarts, Grupe, Clark (via telephone), Belgard, and Schmidtke. Absent: Schumann. Others present were: Bryan Stading Business Facilitators for Martin County and Scott Higgins, Coordinator, and Bruce Schwartau, University of Minnesota Extension, and Bill Meyer, Business Specialist (DEED/Work Force Center).

Motion by Belgard, seconded by Baarts, to approve the agenda, with the addition of Presentation by Bill Meyer, Work Force/DEED Business Specialist. Carried unanimously. Carried unanimously.

Motion by Grupe, seconded by Baarts to approve the minutes of the September 10, 2012 and September 24, 2012 work session as presented. Carried unanimously.

Schmidtke arrived at the meeting.

Schwartau introduced himself and reviewed a proposal by the U of M Extension to conduct a Business Retention Study (BRE) for Martin County and/or its communities. Schwartau reviewed the goals and objectives of a BRE study, stating that the EDA can determine how involved they wish Extension to conduct the study. Depending on what services the EDA purchases, the cost for a total complete study can run for standard rural services at \$12,000 to Premium Urban/Suburban of \$18,000. Schwartau stated that Extension is willing to customize its services to fit the needs of the county. Schwartau provided a BRE study recently conducted for Lyon County and a case study in Faribault, MN. Schwartau informed the board, we can train those who will be conducting the interviews, or assist in formulating the questionnaire, etc.

Clark stated the need to meet with existing businesses and inquired of who will be conducting the interviews and who will serve as the gatekeeper for this situation.

Schwartau stated that we just do not allow just anyone to conduct the interviews. Interviewers are sent out in pairs to meet with the businesses. Surveys are sent out ahead of time can and businesses know the purpose of the business visit. We have found that 85% of the businesses accept the business visit.

Meyer introduced himself to the board, stating that he serves as the Business Specialist with the Fairmont Work Force Center/DEED. Meyer informed the board that his job is to assist and visit with businesses on their needs. Meyer also stated that he also works HR side for the Work Force Center.

Pierce inquired of the existing business environment in the county and surrounding area.

Meyer stated that some of the issue facing businesses is dealing with unemployment insurance, 9 out of 10 employers have vacant position and have had vacancies for 120 days.

With no further questions, Pierce thanked Meyer for introducing himself and the assistance he can provide the EDA and local businesses.

Pierce stated that during the board work session, there was discussion on the need to promote and market the county and create some sort of “branding” campaign. There was discussion of developing a mobile application, billboard signage, a slogan phrase, and other promotional venues. Objectives of branding campaign would be to promote existing businesses and attract new businesses, the recreational attractions that the county offers.

Clark stated the mobile app is a fantastic idea and the need for a budget, and suggested to hire a firm to assist the EDA in the development of an app.

Pierce stated that he has discussed with the Fairmont CVB and this may be something to pursue further in the development of a mobile app.

Belgard stated that if a mobile app is developed, we can add more to the app as time goes on.

Stading stated that he has his staff working on looking at the cost for mobile apps.

There were a number of possibilities of potential information to include in the mobile app discussed, which included archery interests, fishing, hunting, camping, etc. It was determined that further information on the cost to develop a mobile app would need to be explored for discussion at a future meeting.

Discussion ensued on ways to facilitate vocational training needs in the area. Meyer stated that the top five skills needed for the area include, personal home care, Home Health Aides, food service workers, heavy truck/trailer drivers, and billing/accounts collection workers. After further discussion, the board will continue to look at the vocational needs in the area.

Stading reviewed the monthly client report for the month of September 2012 with a total of eight (8) client sessions for a total of 17 hours.

Stading gave an update on the radio program (KSUM) stating that the “Business Talk” program continues and most recently had interviews with Bill Meyer and Wes Pruitt (HR

Stading introduced Wes Pruitt stating that he is an independent contractor for RCEF and will serve as a business facilitator for Martin County.

Wes stated that the need he has observed regarding needs of businesses is the need for succession planning. We need to do a better job at educating employers of the need for succession planning, especially in the light of the baby boomer generation retiring.

Higgins presented the September 11, 2012- October 1, 2012 bills for payment. After review and discussion,

Motion by Grupe, seconded by Schmidtke to approve payment of bills as presented for September 11, 2012-October 01, 2012 in the amount of \$1, 612.78. Carried unanimously.

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

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, November 5, 2012, starting at 5:15 p.m. at the Courthouse (Fairmont).

With no further business to wit, Motion by Belgard, 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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Attest: Jerry Clark, Secretary/Treasurer