

Martin County Economic Development Authority (MCEDA)
October 6, 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, Randy Grupe, Steve Pierce, Jerry Clark and Brent Schultze. Absent: Larry Baarts. Others present: Bryan Stading, Business Facilitator for Martin County EDA, and Scott Higgins, County Coordinator, Lowell Spee (citizen volunteer), Brian Sokoloski (Kahler Automation) Margaret Dillard, Director of Fairmont Chamber of Commerce.

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

Motion by Belgard, seconded by Clark to approve the minutes of the regular EDA meeting held on September 8, 2014. Carried unanimously.

C. Pierce gave a brief update on the “Brain Gain” project and stated that there is a need to put a group together to continue to look into this potential opportunity for the county. C. Pierce stated that there are a few businesses on board.

Schultz arrived at the meeting at 5:19am.

Dillard stated that social media can really be a great tool for the Brain Gain program. Advertisements campaigns can be placed on Facebook as little as \$5.00 per ad or other sites as LinkedIn, etc.

Pierce asked Dillard the new Director for the Fairmont Chamber of Commerce to introduce herself and give a brief statement of her background.

Dillard stated that her background is in social media. Dillard stated that she ran a business since 1991 and her specialty was website development, social media, etc. She stated she is originally from Truman, MN where her family farmed.

Stading presented the monthly client report for September 2014. There were 8 sessions, for a total of 7.5 hours.

Higgins gave a brief update on the upcoming strategic planning session scheduled for October 21, 2014. Bruce Schwartz, U of M Economics Extension Education will provide demographic information and other economic information on Martin County. Higgins presented and reviewed the survey which will be used to help in the planning session. The survey was sent out to economic development authorities; to all the municipalities throughout the county to find out what the EDA is doing well and what it could do better in the future.

C. Pierce stated that recently the Fairmont Chamber sent out an email blast on the need for improved broad band services in Fairmont and potentially the county. C. Pierce further stated that there is a need to get the local broad band providers involved in these discussions.

S. Pierce stated that this issue and we need to continue to look at the potential this can provide for the businesses and the county.

Stading stated the Blandin Foundation does offer technical assistance in the development of broadband as well as funding opportunity through the Blandin Community Broad Band Program (BCBP) of matching grant amounts up to \$100,000. Stading informed the Board that if the board is interested in pursuing the grant, it is due October 17th and will take some time putting it together.

After discussion,

Motion by Pierce, seconded by Belgard to pursue obtaining the technical assistance from the Blandin Foundation in assisting in determining the needs for better broadband service in the county and to assist in the development of establishing a steering committee. Carried unanimously.

Higgins presented the bills to be paid on October 6, 2014 in the amount of \$973.69.

Motion by Grupe, seconded by Belgard, to approve payment of bills as presented to be paid on October 6, 2014 in the amount of \$973.69. Carried unanimously.

The Board reviewed the monthly CY2014 YTD Financial Statements.

The next board meeting is scheduled for Monday, November 3, 2014 at 5:15pm in the Board room (Martin County Courthouse).

Grupe left the meeting at 5:55pm

With no further business to wit,

Motion by Belgard, seconded by Schultze to adjourn the meeting. Carried unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 6:01 pm.

Chris Pierce, President, MCEDA

Jerry Clark, Secretary/Treasurer