

**Board Minutes of the
Martin County EDA
January 4, 2021**

The regular meeting of the Martin County Economic Development Authority was called to order by Brent Schultze at 5:15 pm. The meeting was set up for videoconferencing via WebEx due to the covid19 pandemic. Those present were: Tim Terfehr, Elliot Belgard, Elizabeth Miller, Wes Anderson, and Richard Koons. Those present via Webex: Elliot Belgard. Also present were Bryan Stading, RCEF (consultant), Scott Higgins, Martin County Coordinator, Mike Sheplee, Martin County Assessor.

Schultze called for nominations for election of Board President for the year 2021.

Terfehr moved the nomination of Brent Schultze as Board President for the year 2021, seconded by Fosness, with no further nominations; and to casts unanimous ballot or Brent Schultze as Board President. Carried unanimously.

Schultze called for nomination for election of Board Vice President.

Anderson moved the nomination of Steve Fosness as Board Vice-President, seconded Terfehr, with no further nominations, with no further nominations; and to cast unanimous ballot for Steve Fosness as Board Vice President for the year 2021. Carried unanimously.

Fosness moved the nomination of Tim Terfehr as Board Secretary/Treasurer, seconded by Anderson, with no further nominations, cast unanimous ballot for Tim Terfehr as Board Secretary/Treasurer for the year 2021. Carried unanimously.

Motion by Belgard, seconded by Koons to approve the agenda with the addition Consider Board Appointments to the RCEF Board. Carried unanimously.

Motion by Terfehr, seconded by Fosness to approve the minutes of December 7, 2020 regular EDA Board meetings, with correction to delete “new business tour..”. Carried unanimously.

Sheplee presented and reviewed list of Housing Tax Abatements approved in 2020, stating that since the inception of the countywide Single and Multi-Family housing tax abatement program was put in place this year, there has been eight (8) applications, which seven were approved and one application denied due to start of construction of the home before being approved by the County Board.

Sheplee also presented and reviewed the Business Subsidy Tax Abatements to date, stating that there have been four (4) abatements approved since 2016.

Higgins stated that with the new year and since the inception of the tax abatement for Single and Multi-family housing policy in 2020, this is an opportunity for the Board to review the policy.

Sheplee suggested for consideration to revise the housing tax abatement policy requirement for a “no construction start” prior to the Commissioners public hearing requirement and to revise it to construction can begin at time of completed/accepted application by the county staff. Sheplee stated that due to Minnesota’s short construction season, it can take much additional time to get a public hearing scheduled, along with the required publication time that can hold up construction for weeks.

Koons stated concern for changing the policy and allowing construction without completing the process and that includes Board approval of the application.

Terfehr stated that we want to encourage people to be able to build new homes and be able to take advantage of the tax abatement policy.

Belgard stated he can understand being more flexible with the requirements of the policy, but stated he has concerns with the proposed stated revisions as well.

Terfehr stated that maybe we need to do a better job of advertising the countywide tax abatement program. The time to advertise would be January through April.

Koons stated that if we revise it to allow construction once the completed application has been received, what would be the reason to deny the application.

Higgins stated that the public hearing and approval by the county board is intended to be a part of the process. The question would be how does the applicant move forward not knowing if it going to be approved or not.

Terfehr stated that maybe we need to do a better job of advertising the countywide tax abatement program. The time to advertise would be January through April.

Koons stated that this is the first year of the policy. We took a lot of time putting it together and should give it time to work and not change a policy due to one application not getting approved. Although make every effort to not delay getting the application to the public hearing.

Motion by Terfehr, seconded by Belgard to recommend to the County Board of Commissioner to consider revising the Martin County Single and Multi-Family Housing Tax Abatement Policy to allow construction to start once the application is completed and accepted by county staff. Ayes: Fosness, Miller, Schultze, Belgard, Terfehr. Nays: Koons and Anderson.

Stading presented and reviewed the December 2020 consultation report with the Board. There were a total of three (3) facilitation sessions. Stading further informed the Board that he has worked with the County with the upcoming County Relief Grants program and develop communications with businesses to promote the new county grant program; working in the development of new IGNITE information brochures, including static cling promotional product for the “buy local” promotional program.

Higgins stated that the Minnesota Legislature had recently passed a bill appropriating money for the relief payments and grants to businesses impacted by Covid-19 related restrictions to the Executive Order 20-99. As a result, Martin County is projected to receive a total of \$389,816.31 of which \$9,507.71 are to be used for the administrative fees. This leaves the remaining amount of \$380,308.60 to be disbursed in grants to local business affected directly or indirectly by the Governors Executive Order 20-99.

Higgins further stated that the County has set up a committee to plan and implement the application and disbursement of the grant funds to local businesses within the county, Brent Schultze and Tim Terfehr, along with Commissioner Elliot Belgard has once again agreed to be involved with planning and disbursing of these grant funds. It is anticipated we will implement the grant program similar (with a few revisions) to the CARES Act funds granted to local small businesses. Once the County Board approves the program, it will be publicized.

Stading reviewed a mailer campaign to all county businesses to notify them of the upcoming County Relief Grant Program.

It was stated to advertise in all the local newspapers, along with the mailers. Stading stated he would talk about the County Relief Grant Program during the radio program.

After further discussion,

Motion by Terfehr, seconded by Miller to approve and authorize \$1,000 expenditure for the promotion of the Martin County Relief Grant Program countywide. Carried unanimously.

Higgins stated that annually the County Board sets citizen boards and committee per diems and expenses. It is anticipated the following per diems and reimbursements for Citizen Advisory Boards/Commissions will be as follows (the County Board will meet on Jan.5, 2021).

Per Diems - \$30 per meeting (not to exceed one per Diem per day)
Mileage- IRS rate- .56 cents per mile
Meal Expenses- Not to exceed \$30/day

Motion by Terfehr, seconded by Anderson, Be It Resolved that the Martin County Economic Development Authority hereby approves the following board per diem and reimbursable expenses for CY2021 as follows,

- Per Diems - \$30 per meeting (not to exceed one per diem per day)
- Mileage- IRS rate- .56 cents per mile
- Meal Expenses- Not to exceed \$30/day (15% tip allowance, rounded to the nearest dollar)

Carried unanimously.

Higgins stated that per the EDA By-Laws –Article IV, Section 2-Regular Meeting. The board will need to set the meeting dates and times for the regular EDA Board meetings for the year. Typically the EDA Board has met the first Monday of every month, beginning at 5:15 p.m. in the Board Room of the Martin County Courthouse.

Motion by Terfehr, seconded by Fosness, Be It Resolved that the Martin County EDA, hereby sets the regular EDA board meeting dates the first Monday of each of month, except there will be no July regular board meeting. Carried unanimously.

Higgins stated that for the year 2020 there were two EDA Board members appointed to the RCEF Board. Those appointed were Koons and Anderson. The appointed terms are one year terms. Therefore, for year 2021, the board would need to (re) appoint two members to the RCEF Board.

Motion by Koons, seconded by Terfehr to reappoint Wes Anderson for a one year term to the RCEF Board and to authorize per diem and expenses to when serving that Board. Carried unanimously.

Motion by Terfehr seconded by Anderson to reappoint Richard Koons for a one year term to the RCEF Board and to authorize per diem and expenses to when serving that Board. Carried unanimously.

Higgins presented the bills for December 8, 2020-January 4, 2021 were presented and reviewed by the Board.

Motion by Fosness, seconded by Anderson to approve and ratify the bills for December 8, 2020-January 4, 2021 in the amount of \$238.75. Carried unanimously.

Higgins reviewed the December 2020 Year to Date financial reports, with a listed fund balance of \$300,444.91.

The Board reviewed the information/reports in the agenda packets, which included the MCIT Renewal Letter for CY2021, MCIT Outstanding Loss Ratio Certificate of Excellence, EDA approved CY2021.

With no further business to wit,

Motion by Fosness, seconded by Koons to adjourn the meeting. Carried unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 6:29 pm.

Brent Schultze, Board President

Tim Terfehr, Board Secretary/Treasurer