

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MINUTES

Tri-County Airport
Spring Green, WI

Thursday, August 25, 2011

Members present: Marty Krueger, Peter Murray, Dave Riek, Don Stevens, Joel Gaalswyk, Gerald Lehman
Members absent: Kathy Zowin
Others present: Kathy Schauf, Bill Stehling, Steve Koenig, John McKenna, Gene Dalhoff, Donna Stehling, Sheri Walls, Marc Higgs, Bill Mertens, Dave Radel, Dennis Polivka, Mike Birr, Fred Iasly, Sue Tater, Cecilia Farren, Trish Dickinson, Doug Jones, Brad Hutnik

The meeting was called to order and certification of Open Meeting compliance was given at 6:30 p.m. **The agenda was approved on a motion by Stevens, second by Murray. Motion carried.**

The minutes from prior meetings were approved on a motion by Gaalswyk, second by Riek. Motion carried.

Business Items

Consideration of Tri-County Airport Budget. Marc Higgs presented the Tri-County airport budget. Total request is for \$15,665, a reduction over the prior year.

Consideration of Sauk County Development Corporation Budget. Dalhoff presented the budget and highlighted the changes over the last year. Total request is for \$67,528, a zero percent change budget.

Public Comment – *was received before and after the tour of the community forest*

Trish Dickinson – know you are listening, concerned about not being heard. Concern over the filtration of drinking water that is accommodated through the forest.

Dennis Polivka – The Town and County are studying the forest for potential future use. There has been no discussion about looking at the forest for sale by the Economic Development Committee.

John McKenna, Chair of Citizens Committee – spoke to previous action by other committees and board members. Updated the committee on forested land and density of population in the area. Spoke to volunteer efforts at maintaining the forest. Discussed contamination issues of water and the need for the forest to provide filtration.

Sue Tater - As a landowner it is troublesome that various ideas regarding the use of the forest are posed fairly frequently. Bulk of small homes in the area were originally recreational properties. Provided a letter from a resident of Porter Road.

Doug Jones – shares water quality concerns if the forest were not in place.

Dave Radel – 300 buildable lots available in the Town of Spring Green. Felt that the forest will bring in more economic development than lots.

Fred Iasly, representing the Town of Spring Green Plan Commission – The major portion of the property is sand. Development of the residential additions was encouraged by the presence of the forest (ie: forest contributes to development and encourages development) by providing recreational opportunities. There is no active management plan for the forest. Recommends inclusion in the County Forest Management program. Development of camping (not advocating) and other activities, and marketing it as a recreational resource. Parking areas and signage would be a huge improvement for access and use of the resource. Recommends a holistic approach.

Committee members Murray and Krueger provided clarification of the goals of the study and work being done.

Business Items (continued)

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Discussion of the Community Forest, with stakeholder input.

The committee departed for a tour of the county forest lead by Steve Koenig, Parks Director at 6:15 p.m.

The committee discussed this as an option for consideration - **County Forest Program** – The program provides resources in terms of a .5 FTE and money for development of a plan and making use of the forest property. The Department of Natural Resources representative will plan on presenting information on the County Forest Program at the next regular meeting.

Polivka noted that the forest is an economic engine. The timing of attempting to sell the property for development is poorly timed.

Mertens spoke to the sustainability of the timber harvest, recreation, and wildlife habitat. Mentioned the Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan and the planned use of the facility as it exists to date.

Farren recommended the development of brochures and communication devices that speak to recreational activities in the area.

There is a Friends of the Forest group that could partner with the county and state to develop the asset. This would allow for an under-utilized asset to be developed.

Town Chair Dennis Polivka noted that he had received comments from farmers that indicated that they are less than satisfied on how the forest is managed and maintained. No property or property owners were noticed.

There was discussion of other stakeholders that should be heard from. It was ascertained that the appropriate stakeholders have been heard from. Mark Cupp of the Wisconsin Lower Wisconsin Riverway will be contacted and noticed on meetings. Various individuals agreed to serve as point to foster communication with the committee.

Wis-Mar: Susan Tater
Town: Dennis Polivka
Pinelands: Bill Mertens
Citizen group: John McKenna
Lower Wisconsin Riverway: Mark Cupp

The next special meeting is August 29, 2011, primarily for budget review.

Next regular meeting: Thursday, September 22, 2011 at 6:30 p.m. 1. County forest program – what it does, flexibility, pros and cons. 2. Updates by the Trail Sub-Committee.

Motion by Murray, second by Lehman, to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Donald Stevens
Economic Development Committee Secretary