

MINUTES
CONSERVATION, EDUCATION & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 7, 2018
WOOD COUNTY COURTHOUSE, ROOM #114, WISCONSIN RAPIDS WI

Members Present: Kenneth Curry, Robert Ashbeck, Dave LaFontaine and Bill Leichtnam. Mark Holbrook arrived at 2:10 p.m.

Members Excused: Harvey Petersen.

Staff Present:

Planning & Zoning Staff: Jason Grueneberg and Kim Keech.

Others Present: Dist. #5 Supervisor Adam Fischer, Dist. #14 Supervisor Dennis Polach, Dist. #15 Supervisor Bill Clendening, Marla Cummings (Wood County Finance Department), Josh Miller (City of Marshfield), Krista Coon (Heart of Wisconsin Chamber of Commerce), Jeremy Sickler (Alexander Field Airport), Arne Nystrom (Alexander Field Airport), Rick Bakovka (Regional Economic Growth Initiative), Adam Tegen (City of Wisconsin Rapids), Scott Larson (Marshfield Area Chamber of Commerce & Industry) and Mayor Zach Vruwink (City of Wisconsin Rapids).

1. **Call Meeting to Order.** Chairperson Curry called the CEED Meeting to order at 2:00 p.m.
2. **Public Comment.** None
3. **Review Correspondence.** None
4. **Review and consider approval of Transportation and Economic Development Budget.**
Chairman Curry explained that there was a motion at the Executive Budget Meeting on September 4th to approve and accept the 2019 Transportation and Economic Development Budget sharing that there was no second. He shared that the directive of the County Board Chair was to decrease the tax levy by 1%. Chairman Curry commented that he made a motion at the Executive Committee to send the 2019 Transportation and Economic Development Budget back to the CEED Committee for changes.

Jason Grueneberg shared that the 2019 Transportation and Economic Development Budget was approved on August 27th with a 10% increase from the 2018 budget. There were two new grant requests for 2019 that totaled \$90,000 which were for the Wildwood Park & Zoo Welcome Center Project in the amount of \$50,000 and Wisconsin Rapids Residential Incentive Program for \$40,000. The consensus of the CEED Committee was to prorate and fund all grant requests reducing the share that existing stakeholders would receive by 31% from 2018. Jason Grueneberg shared that the bulk of the Transportation and Economic Budget are for grant requests with a small portion of the budget for mileage and WEDA dues. Jason commented that the CEED Committee needs to act today on the 2019 Transportation and Economic Development Budget to send to the Executive Committee for approval on September 18th.

Supervisor Ashbeck expressed that the Highway 10 Project hurt Milladore and feels that the economic development money should also benefit farmers and the rural area. Supervisor Leichtnam shared that the money should be disbursed equity wide throughout the county. Chairman Curry doesn't want supervisors to vote against the budget because of a grant request. Supervisor Fischer is surprised that Wood County doesn't give more for economic development.

Marla Cummings stated that the CEED Committee can vote on an amount versus who gets the grants.

Josh Miller shared that the City of Marshfield Residential Incentive (MRI) Program partnered with Wood County for a verbal two year agreement. 2019 would be the second year of that program. He commented that there are no funds available to make-up the difference if this program was reduced.

Adam Tegen (City of Wisconsin Rapids) saw an opportunity but would prefer not take away from other organizations. Mayor Vruwink (City of Wisconsin Rapids) commented that there are other ways to make revenue to fund the Wisconsin Rapids Residential Incentive Program.

Jason Grueneberg shared that the Economic Development mission is collaborative in nature and that groups depend on Wood County funding to move projects forward.

Rick Bakovka (Regional Economic Growth Initiative) commented that existing organizations are being cut by 31% by the budget that was approved by the CEED Committee on 8/27/18. He added that the existing partners should be funded at the same levels in the past and to create a new special request fund.

Motion by Dave LaFontaine to approve the 2018 budget amount and add \$90,000 for the two new grant requests to total \$241,500 grant requests. Second by Kenneth Curry. Motion failed 2-3. Voting no was Bill Leichtnam, Robert Ashbeck and Mark Holbrook. Bill Leichtnam would vote for this motion if the money wasn't earmarked for certain organizations. Robert Ashbeck feels that the money should be spread throughout the county. Mark Holbrook asked if the Executive Committee would approve a budget of \$241,500 if they didn't approve a \$166,463 grant request budget. Discussion followed.

Mark Holbrook added that organizations need to realize that when you write a grant they may or may not get funded.

Motion by Mark Holbrook to remove the Marshfield Park & Zoo Welcome Center Project in the amount of \$34,500 from the approved CEED Committee budget on 8/27/18 and to apply \$9,687 of that amount to the Marshfield Residential Incentive (MRI) Program due to a Wood County verbal 2 year commitment in the amount of \$31,250. Second by Bill Leichtnam.

Motion by Bill Leichtnam to amend Mark Holbrook motion to divide the difference between the total 2018 budget requests and 2019 approved CEED Committee budget requests on 8/27/18 to the remaining existing stakeholders for a 21% reduction in grants to existing stakeholders. Motion carried 3-2. Voting no was Kenneth Curry and Dave LaFontaine. Dave LaFontaine feels that there should not be any grant cuts to the Marshfield Economic Development Board. Chairman Curry feels that the CEED Committee should have a blanket Transportation and Economic Development budget commitment figuring out who the grant recipients are later.

Supervisor LaFontaine feels that the CEED Committee should send a future request to the full county board for additional money added to the Economic Development budget. Supervisor Leichtnam proposed that the CEED Committee should consider a resolution to County Board for additional monies for Economic Development at the October meeting.

5. Schedule any additional meetings if necessary.

6. Adjourn. Chairperson Curry declared the meeting adjourned at 3:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Kenneth Curry, CEED Chairperson
Minutes by Kim Keech, Planning & Zoning Office
Review for submittal to County Board by Kenneth Curry (approved on September 26, 2018 @ 2:50 p.m.)