

Antrim County
Economic Development Corporation

Mission Statement: Retain, expand, and promote County-wide economic growth and stability.

June 20, 2023
Minutes

Members present: Rachel Krino, Sherry Comben, Pete Garwood, Dawn LaVanway, Tim Timmer
Members Absent: Cherie Hogan, Kathleen Peterson
Others Present: Chris Bauer and Jessica Lovay from NLEA; Janet Koch

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 9:05 a.m. by Rachel Krino.

2. Public Comment

None.

3. Approval of Minutes

Motion by Pete Garwood, second by Sherry Comben, to approve the May 16, 2023 meeting minutes as presented.

Motion - approved.

4. Corporation Secretary

EDC President Rachel Krino said the EDC's Secretary, Leslie Elrod, had resigned from her position on the EDC.

Motion by Sherry Comben, second by Dawn LaVanway to nominate Pete Garwood for Secretary of the Antrim County Economic Development Corporation.

Motion Passes: 5-Yes, 0-No, 2-Absent

6. Village of Elk Rapids Letter of Support – RAP Grant 2.0

Motion by Tim Timmer, second by Dawn LaVanway, to authorize the EDC President to sign a letter of support for the Village of Elk Rapids RAP Grant 2.0 application.

Motion Passes: 5-Yes, 0-No, 2-Absent

7. Demography Information

Janet Koch, Deputy County Administrator, said she'd attended a workshop by Dr. Jackie Butler, State Demographer, at North Central Michigan College titled "Demographic Trends in Northern Michigan." A big takeaway from the workshop was that due to multiple population trends, our region's workforce difficulties won't be improving any time soon.

Ms. Krino said organizations need to be open to change. Tim Timmer brought up remote work; hybrid work was also discussed. Chris Bauer, Community & Economic Development Manager with NLEA, noted that remote/hybrid work can work well for experienced employees, but it was more difficult for younger and newer employees.

7. Discussion: Strategic Planning

2024 Budget Items

Purchasing more maps was discussed. The group asked to budget a purchase of 2000 maps at a cost of \$5,500, to keep training at \$500, and to keep dues the same with the addition of \$500 for Michigan Chamber of Commerce + round up for dues increase.

The EDC asked to budget \$500 for lunch and learn presentations / Business Connector / topical outreach with speakers on a given subject.

Conducting a survey regarding the EDC was discussed; Ms. Krino said previous surveys had been directed at local units of government and chambers, adding that a future survey should target business owners. Mr. Garwood asked if past surveys had been effective. Ms. LaVanway said she'd like to hear what people have to say.. The group asked for a survey budget of \$500.

Ms. Comben left the meeting at 10:15 am

Microloans were discussed as a possibility. Ms. Krino said Venture North could be a possible partner, adding that the Oscoda County EDC has a microloan program.

Mr. Bauer said NLEA might be able to work with the EDC to do administration, analysis, and underwriting for microloans. It was noted that partnerships with SBDC or SCORE were also possible. NLEA: could administer, not ready yet. He added that \$20,000 of seed money could get a program started. Microloans are not typically attractive to banks. Mr. Garwood mentioned the possibility of leveraging other funding sources.

The group's consensus was to work on developing a plan for a microloan program and bring it to the Board of Commissioners.

Organizational Objectives Approval

Metrics for communication and other items were discussed. Ms. Krino asked for ideas regarding specifics. Collaboration metrics could be organizations the EDC partners with.

Business & Economic Development

1. Broadband: no changes
2. Property Redevelopment: no changes
3. Talent Attraction and Workforce Development: no changes
4. Business Attraction & Economic Development

Regarding item b) Business Owner Meeting Program: Mr. Timmer thought this could be a business owner who is invited to talk to the EDC and make a presentation specific to that business. Jessica Lovay, NLEA's Community Development and Grants Director said a group in Boyne City called "Team Boyne" does that with new business owners. The group chose to change the item title to "Business Owner Invitations" with the intent to work with chambers of commerce and invite new business owners, perhaps with video capacity, which would provide business exposure.

5. Infrastructure: no changes

Outreach Procedures

Tabled

8. Roundtable Updates

Mr. Garwood said he would not be at the next meeting. He spoke well of the Chain of Lakes campground.

Ms. Krino said there are now 3D mammography machines in both Family Health Center locations; grants paid for half of the machines. They are the only facility in 90 miles to have 3D mammography. The Health Center has architectural plans to renovate the old health center, but not current date for construction.

Ms. LaVanway noted that PFN has been awarded the National Telecommunications and Information Administration Middle Mile Broadband Infrastructure Program grant. Ms. Lovay said she'd just received an email that Great Lakes Energy Trustream's ROBIN grant application has been recommended for funding.

9. Various Matters As Appropriate

None.

10. Public Comment

None.

Meeting adjourned at 10:56 a.m.