

COMMITTEE REPORT

COMMITTEE: Ad-Hoc Economic Development Committee
CHAIRPERSON: Steve McIntyre
DATE/TIME: February 3, 2020 at 7:00 p.m.

PRESENT:

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Beth Baranski	<input type="checkbox"/> Emily Legel	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Don Schaible
<input type="checkbox"/> Rod Brandt	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Steve McIntyre	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> John Schultz
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Gary Diedrick	<input type="checkbox"/> Rose Noble	<input type="checkbox"/> Scott Toot
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mike Dittmar	<input type="checkbox"/> Fran Peterson	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Eric Tison
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Janelle Keeffer	<input type="checkbox"/> Wayne Raisbeck	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Nick Tranel
<input type="checkbox"/> Jason Kevern	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Hendrica Regez	

Others: Diane Gallagher, Emily Legel and Dan Reimer

1. **Call to Order** – Steve McIntyre called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.
2. **Roll Call** – A quorum of members was present.
3. **Introductions:** Introductions went around the table beginning with Steve.
 - a) Steve McIntyre, a realtor and former county board member
 - b) Emily Legel, executive director of NW Illinois Economic Development replacing Lisa McCarthy
 - c) Gary – planning and zoning
 - d) Janelle – facilities manager, city of galena
 - e) Hendrica – county board member
 - f) Mike – mayor of Elizabeth
 - g) John – County board member
 - h) Diane – county board
 - i) Don – mayor of Hanover
 - j) Beth – history of being involved with planning and economic / community development
 - k) Dan Reimer – county admin
 - l) Nick – planning and zoning
4. **Approval of Minutes**
 - a) Dan Reimer reported that one of the items on the agenda was to appoint a recording secretary. Two individuals who had left – one did the minutes, and therefore there are no minutes. The last minutes were from April, and those had been approved last year.
5. **Citizen’s Comments – None**
6. **Unfinished Business**
 - a) Discussion and possible action on goals and vision for the Ad-Hoc Economic Development Committee
 - The committee discussed the goals of their existence, reviewing the committee’s mission statement. Discussion included the new actions, missing components, maintenance of existing programs, and room for improvement within the current mission. Steve commented that this could be used as a catalyst for new stuff to move forward. Concerns stated included the current position of the county board, whom the committee answers to (Development and Planning or the county board, with the answer being the county board just like the EMS committee), and the piecemeal statement. Ditmar stated that the

cohesiveness was the job of the new comprehensive plan. Other notes included that the comp plan should be the unifying document, the establishment of the committee, and the desire to accomplish something rather than to fight internally. Regez stated that the county should do a compromise – make a list of objectives to accomplish something at every meeting. Other statements included a possible evaluation of the programs, with Reimer acknowledging that the first few meetings would likely be baseline.

- McIntyre stated that he wants to establish a baseline and direction. Gallagher stated that as the chair of D&P she saw the committee as one to zero in on the specifics of best practices – tourism, industrial and retirement businesses – the county could act upon. Legel stated that she would be doing a survey of businesses and obstacles and asked if that was what Gallagher was asking about. Gallagher stated that she should be asking what the business's needs and challenges were, and how the county could set up that link, that that would be action. Legel stated that a welcome letter to new businesses was on the P&D agenda last month, and suggested that as an action item, with Regez stating that they had discussed that previously.
- Dittmar stated that the biggest challenge in his opinion was the environment, with the county saying no to things while the villages say yes with the exception of adult establishments, citing the case against the Galena Nursery having to pay \$5,000 to stay in business. To build his treehouse, it will cost him \$5,000 in permits and fees alone, and he doesn't want to do that again. When Elizabeth did the community mapping, they focused on the small wins, and the first quick win for the economic development would be to make nurseries be permitted not special use, with the same for wineries. He cited that the two wineries near Hanover were annexed into the village in 2009 due to zoning regulations, and that no new wineries had appeared in the county since. He also stated he would like to be a sub-committee of Development and Planning but would prefer to report directly to the board.
- McIntyre stated that there were two nurseries that had been addressed, with the zoning board approving what they had wanted. The problem was with the process of addressing the non-conforming issue happening during the growing and operating season, with some businesses going elsewhere due to the challenges of operating in Jo Daviess County. There are two ways to write a zoning ordinance – loose (anything but) or tight (only if it fits in the ordinance), and he would argue for the loose method to allow the creation of new uses that the board hadn't thought of.
- Dittmar stated that he had a list of 10 businesses that started at home that wouldn't be allowed in Jo Daviess County due to the limit on the number of employees allowed to work in someone's home or garage, and concluded by asking what the goal was.
- McIntyre stated that the committee needs to take a look at the issues that stop businesses from coming to the area. It's part of the mission to look at the aspects of economic development and address them to make it easier. The county wants growth and they need it. The county can increase revenue in two ways – by raising the number of businesses paying property tax or by increasing taxes.
- Reimer stated that the County is subject to the Property Tax Extension Limitation Law, and property tax increases are limited to CPI plus new property/construction. The EAV for new property increased approximately \$5.1 million in 2019. This is the lowest increase

since the great recession. Total taxable EAV is approximately \$750 million, which is still less than pre-recession totals.

- Baranski stated that it wasn't a comparison from the bubble. McIntyre stated that no one is buying homes because it's cheaper to renovate than to build. Apple Canyon Lake has 100 lots on the market, with 52 selling in 2019 due to people quitting the property not selling but quitting due to not wanting to pay dues. Tison stated that 3 or 4 homes were built. M stated that there were 42 months of inventory of lots, with 14 – 15 months of inventory of homes (11 months at Apple Canyon Lake), 30-40 homes, Galena territory 140 (past few years 200-300 homes). People aren't building to increased lumber and building costs. The county needs to attract businesses to start rebuilding the EAV.
- Legel stated she was running out of land to use for a new business like TKI, noting the action item under unfinished bus. She also stated that the companies we see coming in aren't bringing in jobs the way they used to with Honeywell automating jobs.
- McIntyre summarized the discussion. The committee has identified the obstacles to stop businesses from coming, the job force issue, the businesses needing access to 4-lanes (an obstacle unlikely to be seen in his lifetime). John Schultz stated that the area should be pushing for 3-lane or a passing lane. McIntyre stated we are missing certain aspects and these should be brought to the county. Acknowledging that Google and Amazon aren't likely to come, we can get more done by focusing on the quick wins – what businesses are looking to come to the area and how we can help them. Baranski stated that one action item for the last meeting was to see what could be done with the existing sites.
- Schaible acknowledged the growth of hemp in the old Hanover building and noted that the code could be changed. The existing zoning code was pulled up and Tison explained the difference between conditional use and permitted use in the ag zoning district, with other board members commenting that there had been many, many hours of discussion going into the zoning code. Discussion included the plat act required by the state and the protection of existing industry, and the comprehensive plan, the mixing of tourism and agriculture, the impact of zoning and agriculture on tax revenue, and the impact of the long-term service costs on the budget
- Discussion also included the topic of taxes and revenue – whether the county can bring in revenue through development or through the raising of taxes. Reimer pointed out new building had dropped since the recession, with the increase in Estimated Annual Value decreasing to \$5.1 Million in 2019
- Finally, the committee discussed action items for the next meeting, including shovel ready projects, site availability and workforce issues. Regez suggested the committee create a list of obstacles for business, with the secretary bringing the list to the following meeting, and McIntyre agreed that we need the list of obstacles and knock them out.

a) Discussion and possible action on a marketing plan for Jo Daviess County

- McIntyre and Reimer stated that they had wanted to make a marketing plan for businesses with Gallagher suggesting the creation of a blue book and a capital campaign for the county with shovel ready sites like the county had had in the past.
- Legel stated that she had a website with a list of sites available

- The committee pushed this discussion to the next meeting, with Legel offering to open her site and present at a future meeting
- Don Schaible noted that the Enterprise Zone committee would also be marketing the zone and that he would report back at a future meeting
- Keefer noted that Rose Noble would be likely helpful in making the marketing plan, with the committee suggesting that Noble be appointed to the committee
- Dittmar noted that there could be a conflict in marketing the county when we already have two other organizations working, with the committee being tasked with fixing the process, with McIntyre noting the opportunity of the pipeline workers and a welcome packet for new residents either of new businesses or for expansion of existing businesses
- The importance of relationships was also noted, with Gallagher wanting to go door to door, and some members reminding the committee that NWILED already goes door to door, and Legel requesting help. Gallagher and McIntyre noted these existing businesses as a quick win.
- McIntyre asked for a quick win. One committee member brought up the opportunities rather than the negatives, such as fiber and bringing new businesses, as well as the coordination of workforce tools to keep people here and educated, with the need to bring someone from the workforce into the room. Legel noted that NWILED has a program for workforce.
- Baranski requested an outline of existing programs for the next meeting. Dittmar noted the budget issue in the schools and the need for grants for the CTE, and needing the quick wins. Legel noted action items – the need for help in site visits, or the creation of a \$5-10,000 grant program, with some noting the existing dual credit programs. The county also has a job boom with missing workforce, and Legel noting that this isn't a quick win
- For the next meeting
 - Bring a list of business issues
 - Bring a list of opportunities

b) Discussion and possible action on a presentation of attracting the millennials

c) Discussion and possible action on identifying “shovel ready” locations

7. New Business

a) Discussion and possible action on appointment of Recording Secretary for Ad-Hoc Economic Development Committee

- Legel offered to be the secretary if she was appointed the committee
- Baranski made a motion to add Emily Legel to the meeting, Schultz seconded the motion, motion carrying unanimously
- The Committee discussed the possibility of adding additional members to the Committee. Legel suggested that the committee add business owners, with Dittmar suggesting Bill

Vincent, and Keeffer suggesting Sulcanna, and Legel suggesting the LRA and Reimer suggesting a representative from the Port Authority.

- McIntyre recommended that Rose Noble be added to the committee. Regez made a motion to add Rose Noble to the Committee, Schultz seconded. Dittmar offered an amendment to make it Noble or someone from Greater Galena Marketing. Schultz seconded the motion. The committee approved the motion as amended. The revised motion passed.

a) Discussion and possible action on a timetable for the Ad-Hoc Economic Development Committee

- McIntyre suggested that the committee meet the first Monday of the month. Keefer asked why the others weren't there and Regez asking why the date had been changed.
- Dittmar moved to have the meeting on the first meeting of the month at 7 PM and Gary seconded, motion passing unanimously.
- The next meeting will be Monday, March 2nd
- Baranski moved to make Emily Legel recording secretary, Dittmar seconding, the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

8. Staff Reports

a) NWILED

- Legel gave an overview of current projects from the Honeywell Plant to the Bi-State Port Study, her strategic plan, finance workshops upcoming and working on filling the empty Dura Plant. She also promoted her annual meeting – Thursday March 12, 9 AM at Eagle Ridge.
- She also requested feedback if anyone had any on her report. None was offered.

b) Planning and Development

- Tison noted that he would be tweaking and expanding the scope of services for the Comprehensive Plan update, especially with regards to public input. He asked the committee to help get word out when it comes to that.

9. Citizens' Comments – None

10. Committee Concerns

- Gallagher noted the homework to review the economic development website
- Dittmar emphasized the need to act. He also noted the changes to the economy and the relevance of the zoning code since the recession, with a small change having a major impact.

11. Next regular meeting – the committee decided to schedule meetings on the first Monday of the month. The committee will meet again on Monday, March 2, 2020 at 7:00 p.m.

12. Adjourn – Meeting adjourned at 8:33 p.m. following a motion by Nick Tranel and seconded by Beth Baranski.