

Antrim County

Economic Development Corporation

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

April 16, 2019 Minutes

Members present: Sherry Comben, Pete Garwood, Rachel Krino, John Meeske, Dave Heeres,
Veronica Welter, Kathy Peterson, Mike Allison

Members Absent: Bonnie Robbins

Others Present: Andy Hayes, Buck Love, Ed Boettcher, Margie Boyd, Mark Haynes

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 9:00 by Mike Allison.

2. Public Comment

Mr. Allison said he was happy to see so many people at the meeting.

3. Approval of Minutes

Motion by Dave Heeres, seconded by Kathy Peterson, to approve the minutes of February 16, 2019 as presented.

Motion passed - unanimous

4. Northern Lakes Economic Alliance (NLEA) Update

Andy Hayes, President of the NLEA, introduced Buck Love to the committee. Mr. Hayes gave a brief presentation showing what the NLEA is and what it does for the member counties. He told the committee that they will continue to update the EDC on a quarterly basis. Jessica Lovey, NLEA Grant Administrator, will be at the July meeting to talk about how the NLEA works with its member counties on grant writing. Mr. Hayes indicated that he would be presenting the organization's annual report to the Board of Commissioners at their April 18, 2019 meeting.

Buck Love spoke to the committee about the NLEA's work to assist base employers located in member counties with business retention. They are also working with smaller companies dealing with potential expansion and growth. Mr. Love also touched on the NLEA's collaborative effort with North Central Michigan College that resulted in a mobile computer numeric control (CNC) lab. The lab travels to various locations throughout the member counties, including high schools, as part of an effort to assist companies with recruitment and expansion.

Dave Heeres asked about the status of the NLEA situation with Emmet County. Mr. Hayes indicated an ad hoc committee has been put together to consider a solution that will work for Emmet County and the NLEA. If an agreement cannot be reached, Emmet County will not be a member county. The ad hoc committee meets on April 16.

5. Area Chambers of Commerce

At the February meeting, there was discussion about the possibility of the EDC joining local area chambers of commerce. Rachel Krino expressed surprise at the cost of membership for the East Jordan Chamber. Pete Garwood, County Administrator, said there was nothing in the 2019 budget for memberships, but it was possible to look at the budget and possibly shift monies around. Ms. Krino said she was interested in considering memberships for the 2020 budget.

Mr. Allison expressed interest in inviting area chambers in to talk to the committee. Veronica Welter asked how becoming a chamber member would relate to the mission statement of the EDC, to “retain, expand, and promote County-wide growth and stability” and if there was a possibility of having chamber executives come to EDC meetings on a regularly scheduled basis. Ms. Krino indicated that is something that she does as a Bellaire chamber staff member with other organizations.

Ms. Krino said she would contact the East Jordan Chamber regarding the cost of membership for the EDC.

Mr. Allison tabled the discussion until more information can be gathered. This topic will be put on the May agenda.

6. Request for Letter of Support: Affordable Housing Study

Mr. Allison requested a letter of support from the EDC for an affordable housing study in the Village of Mancelona. The Village has received a number of grants that will be put toward the cost of the study.

Motion by Sherry Comben, seconded by Rachel Krino to direct the Administration Office to write a letter of support for an affordable housing study in Mancelona.

Motion passed - unanimous

Mr. Garwood asked that Mr. Allison provide his office with more information on the study.

9. Various Matters

Facilities Master Plan Forum

Ms. Krino said the Village of Bellaire is working with the Bellaire Downtown Development Authority (DDA) and they have developed a committee, the Bellaire Economic Development Committee (BEDC), that would like to come to a future EDC meeting. It was the consensus of the committee to invite the BEDC to attend a meeting. Ms. Krino will have a representative of the BEDC contact the Administration Office.

Mr. Garwood reminded the committee about the Facilities Master Plan forum on April 23rd at Meadowbrook Medical Care Facility in Bellaire. Ms. Krino indicated the BEDC will be attending the forum.

Road Map Update

Mr. Garwood updated the committee on the status of the Antrim County road map. He indicated there will be more parks featured on the map.

10. Public Comment

Mr. Boettcher spoke to the committee on the issue of affordable housing. He said it was important to consider transportation in discussions related to affordable housing.

Ms. Krino indicated the Chamber of Commerce has hired a new executive director. She will be introduced to the public at the annual chamber dinner on May 14, 2019. The current executive is retiring. Ms. Krino also said a representative from the Pure Michigan campaign will be coming to Bellaire to do a training session with chamber members on May 20, 2019 at Shanty Creek Resort in the Cedar River Hotel.

John Meeske said he is concerned with the number of golf courses that are currently closing around the country. Given the number of courses in the area, he said there is a very real possibility of area home values being negatively affected.

Ms. Peterson said the Elk Rapids Chamber of Commerce is holding a Business After Hours at 7:00 pm on April 18, 2019 at the Blue Heron Gallery.

Mr. Allison said a grant has been submitted to the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR) for upgrades to Palmer Park. He said the Redevelopment Ready process continues.

Motion by Dave Heeres, seconded by Veronica Welter to adjourn the meeting.

Motion passed - unanimous

Meeting was adjourned at 11:10 a.m.

DRAFT