

Minutes
Swift County RDA Board Meeting
Thursday, October 11, 2007, DeToy's Benson, MN

Members Present: Eric Rudnigen, Jon Erickson, Belinda Sanders, Ed Ulmaniec, Paul Kittleson, Tim Wengler, and Jason Heinecke.

Members Absent: Pete Peterson, Ann Delgehausen

Staff Present: Jennifer Gruis RDA Executive Director

Others Present: Rob Wolfington City Manager- Benson
President Ulmaniec called the meeting to order at 7:00AM.

100 Agenda

No items were added to the Agenda

200 Minutes

The **Minutes of the 9-13-07 RDA Regular Board Meeting** were reviewed. Need for a Correction was noted by Ed regarding the next meeting date. **MOTION** by Tim second by Belinda to approve the **Minutes of the 9-13-07 RDA Board Meeting** as amended. Motion carried.

300 Financial Report

The Board reviewed the August 2007 financial statement for the RDA as prepared by Conway Deuth and Schmiesing. The balance sheet showed \$455,709.36 in total liabilities and equity on 8-31-07. Statement of revenues, expenditures and fund balances showed a net income (loss) of \$146.29 for the period 1-1-07 to 8-31-07. Revenue and Expenses for the period 1-1-07 to 8-31-07 were \$42,044.96 and \$42,191.25 respectively. Available to lend on 8-31-07 was \$39396.04 and available to operate was \$154,681.23. Ed questioned the totals on the Budget to Actual which did not appear to YTD as stated. Belinda noted that we needed to do something with the Roggatz loan. **MOTION** by Paul second by Belinda to approve the June 2007 financial statement as presented. Motion carried.

400 Discussion Items

401 Tax Abatement Policy - Jennifer was notified that ECONAR was seeking tax abatement from Swift County for expansion of their facility in Appleton, and presented the details she was able to gather from Bob Thompson. Appleton already approved city abatement.

Belinda questioned what the standing of the RLF loan was with ECONAR and noted there should be a loan report for the County loan included in the financial packet. Jennifer state she would research and include that information going forward.

Members further discussed the merits of the ECONAR request noting that the expectation is that the benefits to the County will at least equal the cost to the County and:

The expansion will increase the tax base; will provide an estimated 5-10 new job, construction of a 1.1 million dollar facility in Appleton. Jason, Tim and Paul all noted the benefits this expansion would bring to Appleton. **MOTION** by Ed for staff to recommend "For Abatement" to the Commissioners, second by Jon. Motion carried.

Jennifer expressed frustration with the process and stated a formal County Policy for business subsidies was needed. Rob provided context for not approving a more formal policy in the past. Jennifer stated she would review other County policies to use as models to

define a policy draft for Swift County.

402 Swift County Market Analysis - Jennifer reviewed her meeting with Ryan Pesch U of M Extension and the economic development tools available including Retail Trade Analysis and Development, Small Store Success Strategies, business Retention and Expansion Program, and Trade Area Analysis. Discussion regarding the benefits of each tool ensued. **MOTION** by Tim second by Ed to pursue no study at this time and revisit following Retreat-Goal Planning. Motion carried.

500 Discussion Items

501 Annual Retreat Agenda - Ryan Krosch was approached to facilitate the RDA Annual Retreat but declined due to conflict of interest given his current position. While he recommended others that might be interested and very capable Jennifer requested the Board consider focusing more on defining SMART goals that would enable her to better prioritize today, and revisit having a more formal Vision/Mission planning Retreat in 6 months. After much discussion Members decided this made sense and a formal facilitated Retreat could be postponed. The Board decided on a lunch time November meeting with a short goal planning session to follow in Appleton.

502 RDA Website Design - Customer Centric - Jennifer mentioned she had a presenter at DEED review the Swift County RDA website and there was a recommendation that the site be made more customer centric including sections for those seeking sites and financing. Ed noted that sites were available through the JobZ site. Jennifer will work with BackStreet to add loan documents to the RDA site.

600 Information Items

601 Interim Executive Director Report - Members were provided a copy of the Director's report for the previous month. Additional comments were shared on several items. Among them included: a) potential Kerkhoven assisted living facility and new facilities being built in Willmar; and b) the State Demographer's presentation.

602 Significant Correspondence - Significant incoming and out-going mail since the last Board meeting was routed past members.

603 Blue Ribbon Commission - Jennifer recapped her formal meeting with the Blue Ribbon Commission and action by the RDA on the BRC report. Comments were shared about the posting for an Agriculture and Renewables focused Coordinator for Willmar/Kandiyohi.

604 Highlights from DEED Conference and E Academy - Jennifer noted highlights and brought materials from the DEED Conference and EA. Highlights included BioPet and Gopher from the MN CEE and CORE a grant fund for Youth Entrepreneurs. Jennifer would like to link the MN CEE sites from the RDA website, and has distributed information about CORE to County Superintendents, principals, Extension 4-H and Youth Programs.

Rob shared information about the Fibrominn Tour, and changes at Agralite.

700 Adjournment

The next regular meeting of the Board will be on Thursday, 12-13-07, at 7:00AM at DeToy's.

MOTION by Tim second by Jon to adjourn the meeting at 8:12AM. Motion carried.

Approved by: _____
Ed Ulmaniec, President Belinda Sanders, Secretary-Treasurer

Prepared by: _____
Chuck Koenigs, Interim Director Date