EUP RP&DC Commission Meeting  1  10/26/11

Eastern U.P. Regional Planning & Development Commission
Board Meeting
Wednesday, October 26, 2011
12:00 p.m. Maple Ridge Restaurant, Eckerman, MI

Members Present:
Barb Lisiecki, SSM  Dean Reid, Private Mackinac  Jill Maki, Luce County
Don McLean, Chippewa County  Michelle Walk, MSU Ext.  Billie Jo Hermanson, Private Luce
Eric Becks, LSSU  Jim Hill, Mackinac County  Mike Herbst, Luce County
Dick Timmer – Workforce Chippewa  Diane Patrick, Mack County
Bill Ferguson – Townships Chippewa

Guests:
None

Staff:
Jeff Hagan
Ellen Benoît
Nathan Fazer

CALL TO ORDER
Meeting was called to order at 12:08 p.m, by Chairwoman Hermanson.

AGENDA APPROVAL
D. Timmer moved to accept the agenda as presented, supported by D. Reid, motion carried unanimously.

MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING
There were no changes to the minutes as presented, except for a spelling error on page 3 in paragraph Legislation of Note where Direction should have been Director. A motion to accept the minutes was made by E. Becks and seconded by B. Lisiecki. The motion passed unanimously.

FINANCIAL REPORT -
E. Benoît delivered the Financial Report to the Board for the 4th quarter of the 2011 fiscal year, which ended September 30, 2011. Two reports were presented, one breaks down each of the funding programs from their start date to the end of the 4th quarter showing the percent of time and expenses. The second financial report shows the financial situation for all programs over the Fiscal Year October 1, 2010 to the end of the 4th quarter, September 30, 2011. There were no questions on the financial report. Motion was made by J. Maki to approve the financial report, and was supported by D. Reid. The motion carried unanimously.

DIRECTOR’S REPORT
EDA Economic Development District
The revised Regional Growth Strategy has been completed by Summit PR, and will be placed on the Commission’s website. A formal unveiling was done during the New Economy 401 Session on Monday, October 24th, at LSSU. D. McLean is very interested in next steps and what the Commission can accomplish utilizing the Regional Growth Strategy, Director Hagan will make presentations during 2012 to boards and committees across the region.

Staff attended one public input session conducted by Northern Lakes Economic Alliance during their development of an Economic Development Strategy for Mackinac County. We also provided numerous pieces of background information for the development of this strategy, including the Regional Economic Development Strategy (CEDS), the Regional Innovation Plan (RIP/Upward Report), and the Regional Growth Strategy. I also participated in a one-on-one interview with NLEA staff to discuss further our historical involvement with Mackinac County with specific regard to Economic Development.
Staff attended the Small Business Association’s Roadshow during early August; sessions included presentations from SBA clients, one an owner of a hotel in Munising and another from the owner of the Mackinac Straits Fish Company. Breakout sessions covered various topics including exporting, small business finance and the various USDA programs.

Staff attended the fall Upper Peninsula Economic Developers Association in Copper Harbor at the Keweenaw Mountain Lodge, this day long membership meeting featured presentations from the Michigan Manufacturing Technology Center, the UP Collaborative Development Council, Michigan Works! The Jobforce Board, Tourism Sault Ontario and Northern Initiatives.

**SOLID WASTE**
The Commission has received a Siting proposal for the Blue Waters Recycling center in Dafter Township. State law requires that the Regional Solid Waste Planning Committee conduct a meeting and render a vote on the proposals consistency with the Region’s Solid Waste Management Plan. This meeting took place on October 18th, at 10 a.m., at the Chippewa County Courthouse Annex, the Committee unanimously deemed the proposal to be consistent with the Regional Solid Waste Management Plan and further concurred that all of the required elements in the siting process were submitted, this information was submitted to DEQ on Wednesday, October 20, 2011 for a final determination of consistency.

**LEGISLATION OF NOTE:**
At the September 19th meeting of the Michigan Association of Regions, a unanimous vote was cast by the State’s Planning and Development Region’s (8 of 14 present) to oppose the Regional Councils Act as drafted. There are numerous flaws, inconsistencies and erroneous assumptions in the current draft which make it impossible to endorse or support at this time. The Michigan Association of Planning’s Law Committee is seemingly unfazed by the opposition presented and moved ahead with webinars during September and a break out session at their Annual Conference in October on this legislation. The UP Association of County Commissioners, as well as the Chippewa County Board have issued resolutions of non-support for this draft legislation.

A resolution opposing this legislation is offered for Commission Board consideration, noting opposition for the following reasons, which the Board identified at its’ July meeting and Executive Committee meetings in June and September:

- Does not strengthen existing regions
- One year grace period and 5 year review period for boundary changes will effectively paralyze regions from doing any business, what grant funding or organization would invest in the Commission if they do not know if we would be in business in a year?
- Taxation should be struck from the draft; the general public will not support a tax for planning services.
- Regional framework plan required is going to end up being another unfunded mandate, the Regions already do comprehensive economic development strategies, and the drafters of this legislation should utilize existing plan elements.
- No specific funding offered in the legislation other than via taxation.
- Opportunity to own parks, museums, etc. could open up liability for the Regional Commission in that if a local entity wanted to get rid of an underperforming park, museum, etc. they could opt to have the region assume that liability and maintenance, etc. There is no set structure in the draft legislation for how this transfer would occur and who would fund the region to take on these assets.
- No meaningful discussion takes place in the legislation with regard to what would happen to our EDA EDD designation if this legislation goes through, board structure needs to adhere to EDA regulations. EDA should be consulted on this matter.

Motion by D. Reid, supported by D. Timmer to accept the resolution as drafted, a roll call vote was requested:

YEAS: Timmer, Reid, McLean, Patrick, Hill, Herbst, Walk, Mai, Ferguson, Hermanson, Becks, Lisiecki

NAYS: none.

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Resolution adopted unanimously. D. McLean also directed that copies of the resolution be sent to our member county’s and our State Legislators.

**HEALTH CARE LAW**
The Governor has signed into law legislation that will cap the amount that local governments can pay for employee health care. The new law, PA 152 or 2011, impacts employee contributions for health care plans that begin after the first of the year and does not disrupt existing health care contracts. The board by a yearly 2/3’s vote can opt out of the employee payment requirement. Because the penalty for failure to comply with this act will result in the State Treasurer reducing each Economic Vitality Incentive Program payment by 10% (EVIP, PA 63 of 2011) for the period of non-compliance, action under this act does not certify or disqualify you for regular EVIP payments, the Commission is not a legally eligible recipient of EVIP payments; my recommendation is to vote to opt out of this requirement for 2012.

A motion was made by D. Timmer, that by definition this law does not seem to apply to EUPRP&DC and as such no action should be taken on it. D. McLean seconded the motion and it passed with a roll call vote:


**UPCOMING EVENTS**
Asset Management Conference – Thursday, October 27, 2011 Escanaba, MI
November 2, 2011 – Tahquamenon Scenic Heritage Route Advisory Committee meeting – Paradise (TBD)
UPEDA Meeting, Iron Mountain, Thursday, November 3rd, 2011
Regional Exporting Strategies Webinar – Friday, November 4th, 9:30am-12:30pm, LSSU
EUP Local Food Summit – Thursday, November 10, 2011, 8:30am-4pm, LSSU Cisler Center, $15
MEDA Fall Program, Tuesday, November 29th, 2011, Lexington Hotel, Lansing. “Incubate, Garden, and Grow”

**Board Membership** – Director Hagan has been in communication with the City of St. Ignace for a new representative to replace City Manager E. Dodson. Also, Leisa Mansfield resigned her position as she has left the Chamber of Commerce; the EDA grant requires that we have 35% of our Governing Board composed of a combination of higher education, workforce development, private sector and chambers of commerce in the region, and we were fortunate enough to have a representative from EACH, it is not required that we replace the Chamber of Commerce rep, we still have the required percentage with our remaining appointees. B. Lisiecki also mentioned her future retirement and that she will talk to SSM City Manager regarding a replacement. D. Hagan mentioned that K. Clause from City EDC is Barb’s alternate and would move into the position for the interim until a permanent replacement is approved by the City.

**2012 MEETING DATES:**
Proposed meeting dates for 2012 as follows (all meetings @ noon unless otherwise noted):

At their Committee meeting on 9/21/11, the Executive Committee established their meeting dates for 2012 as follows:
December 7, 2011 – Mackinac County Airport conference room
March 7, 2012 – conference call
June 6, 2012 – SSM (TBD)
September 5, 2012 – Newberry (TBD)

**MI Works Representation** – J. Hagan was nominated to serve on the EUP MI Works for another 2 year term if the Board so approves. A motion for J. Hagan to sit on the MI Works Board was made by E. Becks and seconded by D. Reid. The motion passed unanimously.
NEW BUSINESS
D. Timmer reported that Bay Mills Community College received funding to start an early Headstart/Headstart program. They also are doing infrastructure improvements extending sewer lines and developing a wastewater treatment plant.

D. Reid mentioned the Forest Service is working on a lot of road improvement projects.

OLD BUSINESS
Nathan Fazer passed out information on the MI Locator on-line tool and explained how it can be useful in presenting geographic information about the region.

Chairwoman Hermanson asked if there were any questions or discussion on any of the staff program reports that was part of the meeting packet.

D. McLean brought up discussion regarding the next steps to achieving goals set in the Regional Growth Strategy. After some discussion, a motion was made by D. McLean to authorize Director Hagan to research potential funding opportunities that will help take the document to the next level in achieving some of the recommendations. D. Timmer supported the motion, mentioning that promotion would be a key element and thought the Conservation Districts, Farmer’s Bureaus, MI Association of Timbermen would be some stakeholders that should get the document. The motion passed unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENTS
None received.

ADJOURNMENT
Motion made by D. Timmer to adjourn the meeting, supported by J. Maki. Meeting adjourned at 1:49 PM.