

ECI REGIONAL PLANNING DISTRICT
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING – 3rd Quarter / 2016
TUESDAY, AUGUST 9, at 2:00 P.M. – DELAWARE COUNTY
Innovation Connector – 1208 W White River Blvd - Muncie

Present: Bill Hess, Bill Walters (proxy for James King), Chris Matchett, Marta Moody, Mike Burton, Ralph Frazee, Mayor Randy Geesaman. Staff present: Brad Bookout and Pam Price.

1. Welcome / Introductions

Board President Bill Hess called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone.

2. Approval of May 10, 2016 minutes

Minutes were reviewed and Mayor Randy Geesaman moved approval, Bill Walters seconded. The minutes were approved unanimously.

3. Treasurers Report through July, 2016

Treasurer Mike Burton reviewed the Treasurer's Report. Pam Price reported she just deposited \$36,000, which puts us in better shape. Hess asked if we had received the 2015 funds from Hartford City or Blackford County – Price reported no, and Hess said he would try to get action. Ralph Frazee moved to accept the treasurers report, Mayor Geesaman seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

4. Board President Report

Bill Hess indicated based on Pam Price's pending retirement, he has asked her to review the job description and determine what should be added or removed. Hess said they need to establish a panel to interview at the appropriate time. Marta Moody asked when Price was going to retire, Price responded May of 2017, unless health issues cause retirement earlier. Hess said that without proper preparation we might lose some Counties. Hess said a committee should be put together to confirm the job description and then review resumes and select the two or three to bring before the Executive Committee. Price said one of the concerns is salary, if the new overtime regulations go into effect, there would need to be a bump in the salary to make the position exempt – only \$400-500/year, but trying to bring in someone from outside the region for \$47,000/year is not going to be realistic. Moody agreed. Price said there is certainly not money available to pay relocation expenses, so we need to concentrate on east central Indiana residents to fill the position. Hess said there are some very qualified people locally to fill the position. Brad Bookout said the Committee should include a representative of each county, Hess agreed. Moody confirmed the charge of the committee would be to post a job description, review applicants, interview applicants and make a recommendation to the Executive Committee of final two or three candidates. Price said the Executive Committee should make a recommendation to the full board for

their approval. There was agreement from the Executive Committee that this was the way to handle filling the executive director's position.

Hess asked if the current officers would continue in their positions for another year as we work through this transition. Burton agreed, Ralph Frazee indicated he doesn't know if he will be reappointed, but if he is reappointed, he would serve. Should Frazee not be reappointed, Mayor Geesaman agreed to serve as Secretary. Walters agreed to continue as vice president. Bookout suggested the committee get together soon to begin the process. Hess suggested each of the officers serve as the committee, and Bookout suggested Kevin Knott serve as a member of this committee representing Henry County. Bookout and Price will serve on the committee as well.

Hess indicated we need to get the Road Shows going again. Bookout said we have met with the Knightstown Town Board, and are meeting with Nate LaMar and Ed Yanos tomorrow, so we have reached out in a loose fashion. Price reported Corey Murphy wants to do the Road Show as part of a Local Elected Officials dinner in August or September, so we are working on that. Mayor Geesaman said that would help bring in CEDS information, and assist with our lobbying effort.

5. Executive Director Report

Pam Price reported the following:

- a. The Regional Cities continues to meet. Not much is happening, but at least it facilitates communication among the participants.
- b. Washington Fly-In was very successful; we had a great meeting with Senator Donnelly, of course, typical meeting with Messer. Representative Brooks was called away to an FBI briefing on the Orlando shooting, but she had a staff member meet with us. We met with David Lloyd at EPA; there is a huge disparity between the number of applications and the number of grants awarded. For example, Maine applied for 18 grants and was awarded 15; Indiana applied for 15 grants and got one. Lloyd indicated there was no favoritism involved. Beth Grigsby, our SME consultant, as well as a consultant for Kansas State University's (KSU) Technical Assistance Bureau (TAB) participated in the Fly-In. Grigsby got a call from her boss at KSU departing Washington. He reported that he was made aware of our questioning the disparities. Grigsby has suggested we separate our Counties and doing individual applications for this year for Grant, Jay and Delaware Counties (Henry County currently has a brownfields assessment grant).
- c. Bookout wrote an article for the Indiana Association of Regional Councils on Tax Increment Financing, which I forwarded to everyone. If you don't recall seeing the article and are interested, please let me know.
- d. Brad Bookout, Lisa Bookout, Bill Walters and I met with a lobbying firm while in Washington, and currently Bookout and I are talking with the Counties to see if they would participate and fund this effort, as ECIRPD cannot cover the cost. Price met with Tim Eckerle in Grant County yesterday, and Mayor Geesaman pointed out that Portland was the first local unit of government to sign on. One of the questions that Eckerle brought up was who would make the decision on what projects we would submit, and it made sense to me to give the Executive Committee the final decision. Bookout stated Portland's commitment of \$15,000/year for two years really kicked things off. The Delaware County Commissioners will make a decision Monday as to participation, and meetings have taken place with Grant County Council members.

Mayor Shon Byrum in Winchester is also interested. It requires a consortium of funders; to hire a Washington firm cost will be approximately \$90,000/year. We investigated them, and Keller McIntire (KM) worked successfully with the City of Marion and Indiana Wesleyan University to get \$1.3M towards water and sewer lines to the University, as well as \$900,000 for the IWU's nursing program. KM not only works for grants, KM also works with the Appropriations Committee staffers to inform them about projects so when legislation is written, a specific project is in mind. Overall, we don't know if there will be success, but it is worth a try. We would look at the CEDS for projects and put in two projects for each County. This will put us in front of 16 federal agencies whereas now we are dependent upon EDA and EPA for funding.

- e. We reported previously that we were working with a developer that wants to put a new restraint in Jay County, and that is moving forward. Price asked Mayor Geesaman if the developer had acquired the property, and he said it was kind of stalled out because they need additional property, so they may look at a different location.
- f. I have scheduled our subject classes that Bill Walters and I need to take for our CDBG grant administrator's certification.
- g. I've been working on a grant for an elevator at the Jay County Senior Center, and am still looking for help. Indiana Housing and Community Development Authority thinks that they may have some money to help.
- h. I transferred the property in Albany to Arnold's Lawn Care – we mentioned this project in our last meeting. We now have several property transfers pending. In Daleville (Real America / Salem Place Apartments) and one in Selma (on Muncie Street), and another in Gaston. Bookout explained that we are helping local towns take properties that are tax delinquent, developing and advertising a Request for Proposals, and then transferring the property from the town to ECIRPD, then on to the successful RFP respondent. This helps get properties back to the tax rolls, creates jobs and promotes new investment..
- i. I attended the Grant County LEO Dinner, Portland City Council and the Knightstown Town Board meetings. Kevin Knott indicated they were very pleased that Brad and I attended their meeting.
- j. Overtime regulations – Price sent information out to everyone, but particularly for cities, towns and counties it could have an impact on overtime for truck drivers that are plowing during the winter, but less time in the summer. Even Price is subject to the overtime rule, but committed to never work any overtime. Something that everyone needs to be aware of, there are many possibilities of what could happen between now and December.

6. New Business

a. By-Laws update

Information was sent to everyone, the only changes were removal of Blackford County from the by-laws. Mayor Geesaman moved to accept the proposed changes, Walters seconded. The vote was unanimous. Frazee asked if we were going to add Winchester or Randolph County to our organization. Price explained that Randolph County has joined the newly formed Eastern Indiana Regional Planning Commission; therefore, Winchester cannot join ECIRPD. The mayor of Winchester, however, does want to participate with ECIRPD, and we have extended an opportunity for Winchester to join as an affiliate member. They have not responded.

b. Employee Handbook update

Price said she discovered recently that since we changed our name to ECI Regional Planning District, we have not changed the name on our employee manual from Energize-ECI Regional Planning District. Price removed all the “Energize-” and Frazee pointed out a grammatical error on page 5, under “Payday” changing “for” to “of the.” Moody moved for approval, Frazee seconded. The motion was adopted unanimously.

7. Old Business

None

8. Roundtable Discussion

Mayor Geesaman asked if Bookout was part of the Regional Cities initiative, as IEDC’s President, Jim Schellinger was in Portland last week and he said it will carry over and we’ll have a shot at it. Schellinger expected details would be out quickly.

9. Adjournment