

BLACKHAWK HILLS



Resource Conservation and Development
Jo Daviess ● Stephenson ● Carroll ● Ogle ● Whiteside ● Lee

COUNCIL MEETING
Monday, May 18, 2009
Carroll County Courthouse
301 North Main
Mt. Carroll, IL

MINUTES

Attendance

Edie Block, Carroll County Board
Ed Juracek, Carroll County SWCD
Cathy Brunner, Carroll County Area Rep.
Kim Monk, Jo Daviess County Board
William Tonne, Jo Daviess County SWCD
Bridgette Stocks, Jo Daviess County Area Rep.
Isaac Mercer, Lee County Board
Thomas Millard, Lee County SWCD
Ron Colson, Ogle County Board
Samuel Newton, Stephenson County Board

Della Moen, Stephenson County Area Rep.
Charles Moen, Stephenson County SWCD
Glen Kuhlemier, Whiteside County Area Rep.
Karen Nelson, Whiteside County Board
Tim Keller, Whiteside County SWCD
Dave Dornbusch, RC&D Coordinator
Julie Jacobs, RC&D Program Assistant
John Huggins, Blackhawk E&I
Michele Miller, SBDC-SVC
Brian Borger, SBDC-HCC

Call to Order

William Tonne, RC&D President, called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

Introductions

Mr. Tonne had everyone introduced themselves since there was a new Council Member, Ed Juracek, present. There were also three guests in attendance.

Minutes

Minutes to the April 3, 2009 Council Meeting were either emailed or mailed out to the Council Members prior to the meeting. Chuck Moen made a motion to approve the minutes as written. Della Moen seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Finances

The Financial Reports were handed out. Dave Dornbusch explained that the financial report was for the first quarter of the RC&D Council's fiscal year and the last quarter of the Economic Development District's fiscal year. The staff will look into what the RC&D would have to do to change their fiscal year of April 1-March 31 to match that of the District's fiscal year of July 1-June 30. Della Moen, Budget Committee Member, pointed out that the Council does have reserves funds invested in Certificates of Deposits that is not included in the budgets. Cathy Brunner made a motion to place the Financial Report on file. Chuck Moen seconded the motion. Motion carried. The Financial Report will be placed on file.

Fiscal Year 2010 Budget was handed out. Dave Dornbusch reported that the Budget Committee and staff met last week to discuss the FY2010 Budget. Dave explained that the budget shows the RC&D figures and the Economic Development District figures individually and there is a column with cumulative figures. Julie Jacobs' salary is shown being charged to the District and RC&D to balance the budget. If all of her salary would be charged to the District side there wouldn't be enough funds for everything else. Dave gave an explanation of the projects that will have some financial transactions this coming year. In the proposed budget Dave had included a raise for the staff but the Employee Committee still needs to meet to do staff evaluations. Dave also spoke about the Economic Development Administration (EDA) would like for us to apply for a three year planning grant versus a one year planning grant. They will allow us to apply for one year but would like for us to eventually go to three years. We would have to get the County Boards approval. There maybe an opportunity this year to ask for an extra \$10,000 from EDA. Chuck Moen made a motion to approve the 2010 Budget. Cathy Brunner seconded the motion. Motion carried. Julie Jacobs added that future financial reports will include a spreadsheet with the Project figures.

Unfinished Business (Progress Reports and Actions)

Coordinator's Report – Dave Dornbusch's report was shared with the Council Member prior to the meeting. Dave added to his report that he thought we wouldn't be able to use up all of the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency 319 grant funds but recently received some last minute request that we are getting closer and closer to using up the funds.

Economic Development Professional Report – Theresa Wittenauer's report was shared with the Council Members prior to the meeting. Theresa was attending the Greater Rochelle Economic Development Corporation Annual Meeting this evening and was unable to be at the Council Meeting. Cathy Brunner asked what Theresa had talked to Norm Walzer about on stimulating tourism. Cathy will contact Theresa.

New Business

Small Business Development Center (SBDC) Presentation – Michele Miller, SBDC, gave a presentation about what the SBDC does and spoke on their funding issues. If funding is cut the SBDCs at Sauk Valley Community College and Highland Community College would be closed on June 30. Brian Borger, SBDC, handed out a copy of Ms. Miller's presentation and information on the SBDC grant. Dave Dornbusch has been working with Michele on how Blackhawk Hills RC&D could help the SBDC if the Colleges cease to fund them. The SBDCs could open as Service Centers on a fee structure bases. Blackhawk Hills could help Michele and Brian to setup a new organization. Dave was hoping that the Colleges would continue funding the SBDCs until December but he found out today that they will only fund them until June 30. Cathy Brunner stated that the SBDCs will strengthen our umbrella. It would also strengthen the County Boards. Tri-County Economic Development Alliance is doing something similar but it only covers two of our counties. This effort could help with the training in Workforce Investment Board. Blackhawk Hills would be the fiscal agent for the next six months. Della Moen asked what the downside is of doing this. Dave replied just the lack of time to organize it. Kim Monk added customers would get what they pay for. Dave said the new organization would be set up as not for profit since the income would be rolled back into the program. Cathy Brunner made a motion to give the staff permission to investigate the funding and move forward with assisting the SBDCs. Ron Colson seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Committee Selection – William Tonne stated that only seven Council Members returned their Committee Selection sheet. Julie Jacobs put in the Council Members' packets the Committee Selection sheets for the Council Members that still need to respond.

Summer Job for Youth – Julie Jacobs asked the Council's permission to apply for a summer worker through the Workforce Employment Solutions' Summer Youth Program. This program has not been available for ten years but the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act has made funds available for this program. The summer worker salary would be paid for by Workforce Employment Solutions. All we have to do is supervisor the youth, complete timesheets and attended an Orientation. Chuck Moen made a motion to apply for the Summer Youth Program. Karen Nelson seconded the motion. Motion carried.

New Measures –The following measures were presented to the Council for approval.

Regional Greenways and Trails Plan – Dave Dornbusch reported that he has met with George Bellovics, Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR), to discuss doing a Regional Greenways and Trails Plan. Blackhawk Hills RC&D would apply for a \$60,000 IDNR grant. The grant would be matched with the State Planning funds we received. The grant would for a two year period. Blackhawk Hills will earn some administration fee and are working to contract some of the work out. Glen Kuhlemier made a motion to approve as a new measure. Cathy Brunner seconded the motion. Motion carried.

2010 Earth Day Event – The Driftless Area Initiative has done an Earth Day Celebration the last couple of years and Blackhawk Hills RC&D will host the 2010. The Chief of the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) participates in the event. The Illinois NRCS State Office will help us plan the event. Four states make up the Driftless Area and the other three states have already hosted the event. Chuck Moen has a DVD of the first event held in Coon County, WI. Chuck Moen made a motion to approve as a new measure. Glen Kuhlemier seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Committee Reports

Marketing Committee – M45 will be doing the Marketing Plan for Blackhawk Hills. Edie Block asked that the minutes on the website be updated. Julie Jacobs will take care of that. Della Moen expressed her desire to continue to serve on the Marketing Committee.

Chicago/Rockford International Airport – Ron Colson stated that Marcia Heuer was in Springfield and unable to attend tonight's meeting. Ron reported that flights to the upper east coast from Rockford will start soon.

Illinois Association of RC&Ds – Cathy Brunner stated that the association did not meet this month. Cathy is willing to continue to serve as Blackhawk Hills Representative to the State Association. The Association's website will be updated. Cathy would like to see the RC&Ds be a part of the Illinois Institute of Rural Affairs Annual Conference. Since Prairie Rivers RC&D covers the Peoria area, Kim St. John, RC&D Coordinator, will be asked to participate as a speaker at next year's conference.

Regional CEDS Committee – Bill Tonne reported that the CEDS Committee met last Friday.

Galena Trail & Coach Road Society – Tim Keller reported that the committee met last Tuesday. They are battling with the positioning of signs. Tom Millard added that the signs posted in Lee County that the top part of the signs are getting stolen. The committee will meet again on June 13 in Mineral Point, WI.

US Route 20 – William Tonne stated that the capital bill in Springfield isn't done yet and is a match for the federal funding. Everything is ready to go. Kim Monk went with Galena Chamber of Commerce to Springfield to gain State approval for this project.

Highway 30 – Karen Nelson did not attend the last meeting. She did report that Betty Steinert, Whiteside County Economic Development, went to Washington again this year. Glen Kuhlemier added that the Consultant group is finalizing some of the details. The state will decide in the end with the committee's input on the route.

Driftless Area Initiative – Della Moen had new brochures for members to take to their SWCDs. The DAI Board is expanding from 6 to 9 members. To be on the board you have to pay a \$500 due. They estimated the expenses to just maintain the organizations to be \$11,000-\$12,000. The Executive Director position is funded by a grant. Chuck and Della Moen would still like to be involved with the DAI.

Next Council Meeting – The Council decided that the next meeting will just be a meeting, no picnic. The meeting will be held on July 27, 2009 at the Lanark Heritage Center at 6:00 PM.

Broadband Taskforce – William Tonne gave the history of the Broadband Taskforce. There is \$7.2 million in the recovery money for Broadband. The group met in November and formed a Taskforce. The Taskforce met again in January. A meeting with providers was held in March. Jo-Carroll wants to do broadband with their members. A letter of support to TriRivers Health Partners was in the Council Members' packets. The letter expresses our support of the creation of the Health Information Exchange. It is being recommended that Blackhawk Hills RC&D apply for a grant to expand the broadband infrastructure throughout our 6-county region and bring access to a number of our communities which currently do not have access. The grant is an 80-20 match but we can apply for a waiver of 100% grant funding. Northern Illinois University (NIU) constructed a draft map showing where the lines would be installed if the funding goes through. Application notice should be given to Governor Quinn. The grant would be \$25-\$35 million. Della Moen asked what would it be the downside of apply for the grant. Bill replied the 20 percent match. John Huggins added because of our demographic the 20 percent match could be waived. This has been done in other places. The smaller providers are willing to work with us. Chuck Moen made a motion to send a letter to Governor Quinn with our intentions of applying for American Recovery Reinvestment Act funds for broadband construction. Cathy Brunner seconded the motion. Motion carried. NIU will write the letter for us.

Round Table Discussion

Cathy Brunner announced that she has been hired by the Rock Falls Tourism. She started her new job two weeks ago.

Glen Kuhlemier reported that the bids were opened for the Rock Falls Sewer Plant construction and Force Main project. The lowest bid was for \$23.3 million and was \$2.7 million less than expected.

Ron Colson reported that the bids for the Ogle County Courthouse remodeling also came in less than expected. The lowest bid came in at \$5.4 million which is \$2 million less than expected.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 8:20 PM.