

BLACKHAWK HILLS



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

COUNCIL MEETING
Monday, September 28, 2009
Lanark Heritage Center
106 South Board Street
Lanark, IL

MINUTES

Attendance

Edie Block, Carroll County Board
Cathy Brunner, Carroll County Area Rep.
Kim Monk, Jo Daviess County Board
William Tonne, Jo Daviess County SWCD
Isaac Mercer, Lee County Board
Thomas Millard, Lee County SWCD
Ron Colson, Ogle County Board
Lynne Kilker, Ogle County SWCD
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
Theresa Wittenauer, Economic Development Professional
Julie Jacobs, RC&D Program Assistant

Call to Order

William Tonne, RC&D President, called the meeting to order at 6:02 PM.

Introductions

There were no new introductions.

Minutes

Minutes to the July 27, 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. Isaac Mercer seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Finances

The Financial Reports were handed out. Julie Jacobs explained that we had two CDs that were up for renewal on September 4th. She called Freedom Bank, Community State Bank, US Bank, Fifth Third Bank, Sterling Federal Bank and Amcore to see who had the best rate. The two CDs (\$10,000 and \$15,000) at Freedom Bank were moved to Community State Bank. A three month CD in the amount of \$10,329.68 at an APY rate of 1.25 and a 12 month CD in the amount of \$15,494.51 at an APY of 1.98 were opened up. We had earned a total of \$824.19 in interest from the two CDs we had at Freedom Bank. Bill Tonne asked about the donations that the RC&D has received for the Broadband project. Julie Jacobs explained that the \$2,000

that has been received is reflected in the Financial Report under the RC&D Council Funds Account. Chuck Moen made a motion to place the Financial Report on file. Karen Nelson seconded the motion. Motion carried. The Financial Report will be placed on file.

Unfinished Business (Progress Reports and Actions)

Coordinator's Report – Dave Dornbusch's report was shared with the Council Members prior to the meeting. Dave gave an update on the IL Environmental Protection Agency 319 Grant. We spent all but \$17,000 and we should earn \$8,000 in administration fee. We will not be doing another 319 Grant this year. Dave is meeting next Friday with the invested groups wanting to retain the Small Business Development Centers (SBDC) in our area. A past SBDC employee is interested in working for us. Dave is waiting to hear on the State's decision on the SBDC. The RC&D Coordinators met on September 23rd to discuss how the coordinators can work on Conservation Security Program and how the RC&D might help. Dave will be off the first part of November. A notice will be sent to Council Members informing them of when Dave's baby is born.

Economic Development Professional Report – Theresa Wittenauer's report was shared with the Council Members prior to the meeting. Theresa added to her report that the Riverlands group had an emergency meeting to discuss Dr. Mark Drabenstott's, University of Missouri, work and how the remaining \$45,000 should be spent. The group feels that there is enough expertise amongst the group that they can complete the work and come up with strategies. The October 13th Riverlands' meeting has been postponed to November. Theresa also reported that John Huggins year as the VISTA volunteer will be up and he can sign up for another year. Mr. Huggins would have to raise funds to continue the program. Blackhawk Hills has about \$2,500 to use towards this project. Last year we were able to use \$5,000 from the Regional Planning grant we had received. Cathy Brunner felt positive that John could raise the remaining funds. John worked with the Entrepreneurs and Inventors Club and with communities to do websites. Most of his work was done in Carroll County but he will key on the other counties this next year. Cathy Brunner has encouraged past clients of John's service to donate to our VISTA program. Cathy gave a personal donation. Chuck Moen made a motion that we continue with the VISTA program as long as funds are raised. Cathy Brunner seconded the motion. Motion carried. Don Henry of the Northwest Regional Entrepreneurship Center (NWREC) has asked that Blackhawk Hills write a letter of support to DCEO to continue funding for the Center. Theresa passed around an email and grant proposal from NWREC. Lynne Kilker made a motion that Blackhawk Hills RC&D Council write a letter or support for NWREC. Tom Millard seconded the motion. Motion carried. Theresa also announced that the Economic Development Administration will be doing an evaluation on our District.

Executive Secretary Report – Julie Jacobs' report was shared with the Council Members prior to the meeting. Julie Jacobs added to her report that Cathy Brunner had won the trivia contest at our RC&D Open House. If a Council Member had submitted a check with their registration for the IL Association of RC&D Areas Annual Meeting, she will return it to them since Blackhawk Hills will pay for the Council Members to attend. Six hundred dollars had been budgeted for this meeting.

New Business

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

Jo Daviess Economic Development Summit – Theresa Wittenauer reported that Pat Leitzen Fye has asked Blackhawk Hills to assist them with their Summit. We would help with advertising and registration. Theresa will be meeting with Pat next week. Theresa may use our display at the event.

Project Adoption for 2010 – Dave Dornbusch presented a list of projects that need to be approved by the Council on a yearly basis. The projects on the list are: Economic Development District Funding 2010, Grazing Workgroup 2010, Forestry Workgroup 2010, Riverlands Phase II, and Update to the Lee County Greenways and Trails Plan.

Blackhawk Statue Birthday Celebration – The Oregon Trail Days Festival Committee is planning a celebration to honor the 100th birthday of the famous Lorado Taft Monolith Statute. Ron Colson stated that Beth Henderson, who submitted the proposal form, runs White Pines Inn and the Wedding Canyon and that she does a nice job of planning and organizing things. Julie Jacobs explained that the group has applied for their 501(c)3 status but in the meantime we may have to administer donation for them.

Cathy Brunner made a motion to approve all seven measures. Ron Colson seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Client Service Plan – Dave Dornbusch explained that the plan is similar to last year's but Broadband was added. Dave will email it out to the Council Members. If a Council Member has comments on the plan, they should contact Dave. The plan includes SMART goals, strategic, measurable, attainable, realistic, and time sensible. Lynne Kilker made a motion to approve the Plan. Glen Kuhlemier seconded the motion. Motion carried.

EEO – Dave Dornbusch provided the Council Members a handout on Equal Employment Opportunity, Sexual Harassment and steps to file a complaint. All the information is posted on a bulletin board in the office. Dave asked the Council Members to put the handout in their RC&D binders and to sign a paper stating that they received the documents.

Committee Reports

Marketing Committee – Cathy Brunner reported that M45 has completed our Marketing Plan. The Marketing Committee will discuss the plan and then it will be shared with the full Council at the next meeting.

Chicago/Rockford International Airport – Ron Colson reported that the Air Show was a success and business is down like everything else.

Illinois Association of RC&D Areas (IARCD) – Cathy Brunner reported that the State Association's website is updated. The Association made a donation toward the Blackhawk Hills' VISTA program for the work John Huggins did on the website. Blackhawk Hills RC&D Council is hosting the IARCD Annual Meeting and Training Session. It's a good opportunity to showcase what we do. William Gradle, Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) State Conservationist and Karen Woodrich, Assistant State Conservationist, will be present. Donna Hunter from the National Association of RC&D Office will be presenting at the meeting. Cathy invited Council Members to attend the meeting and/or the social event in the evening. The event will be held on October 14th and 15th at the Candlelight Inn in Rock Falls, IL. If a Council Member is interested in attending the event they should let Julie know. Julie Jacobs announced that John Haugen is the new Executive Director of the National Association of RC&D Councils Inc. Mr. Haugen replaces Bobbi Jeanquart. The announcement on Mr. Haugen was in the Council Members packets.

Regional CEDS Committee – Ron Colson reported that discussion at the last meeting was on Broadband. Ron Colson was unclear at to what was happening with the Milledgeville EDA grant. Theresa Wittenauer stated that the company that was planning to move into the Industrial Park has not said yet if they are going to pull out. They have concerns with the proposed Senate Bill 43 which pertains to Prevailing Wage. Julie Jacobs added that more information on the Bill can be accessed at the IL Enterprise Zone Association website: www.ieza.org. The next Regional CEDS meeting will be November 20th. Theresa is looking for a speaker for the meeting.

Galena Trail & Coach Road Society – Tim Keller announced that there will be a Forestry Workshop this Saturday at 10:00 AM north of Sterling at the Clayton Linscheid's property. Also this Saturday at 9:00 AM there will be a dedication ceremony at the Hennepin Canal railroad bridge in honor of Dick Linville. The Galena Trail Society now has a website: www.galenatrailsociety.org. Signs are still going up. The next meeting will be October 3rd in Mineral Point, WI.

US Route 20 – Kim Monk stated that Route 20 will loop around Galena.

Highway 30 – Karen Nelson reported that Betty Steinert, Whiteside County Economic Development, is still keeping in contact with Legislators for funding for the next phase. Glen Kuhlemier added that in tonight's newspaper it was reported that Morrison City Council will revisit the plan to widen Route 30 to three lanes through town.

Driftless Area Initiative (DAI) – Della Moen provided a handout with possible new projects for the DAI. At the August 10th DAI Meeting a presentation was given to the board on the Driftless Area Food Systems. A presentation from Crawford Stewardship Project on Karst Mapping in SW WI was also presented. Crawford Stewardship has asked the DAI to join them in approaching the McKnight Foundation for assistance in writing a grant for funding to do the mapping required. A letter is being drafted to the McKnight Foundation. Her report also had a link to the Illinois Geological Survey concerning the Tradition Dairy location in Jo Daviess County, a link for the DAI DVD, and information on the new Mississippi River Basin Healthy Watersheds Initiative.

Broadband Committee – Bill Tonne reported that the Broadband grant was submitted on August 13th. It was also sent to the State. There will be three waves of grant awards: early October, November, and January. If you are not awarded in the first wave they will let you know what needs to be improved and you will get a chance to make the correction. William is receiving a lot of emails from companies/groups that want to work with us on this project. Ron Colson asked about the dark fiber including Dubuque, Iowa. William stated that our Broadband proposal did not cross over to Dubuque. Crossing state lines would complicate things and the Corp of Engineers would have to be involved.

Next Council Meeting – The next Blackhawk Hills RC&D Council Meeting will be November 23, 2009 at 6:00 PM at the Lanark Heritage Center.

Round Table Discussion

Karen Nelson stated that there is a lot of road construction going on in the Rock Falls-Sterling area.

Ike Mercer announced that Greyhound service is back in Dixon at the Senior Center. Working to have the buses stored by I88/Route 26 Industrial Park.

Tom Millard reported about a Wind Farm project in Lee, Whiteside and Bureau Counties. A company is contacting landowners wanting them to sign a contract. There are a lot of questions that need to be answered. Two meetings have been held to educate the landowners.

Glen Kuhlemier reported construction on Route 30 west of Rock Falls is completed and the road has been resurfaced. Construction on Route 40 in Rock Falls has begun and is being done at night. The construction of an 80 pound road off Route 30 has begun. The road will be for the new sewer plant. Rock Falls has obtained for their new sewer plant a \$20 million Illinois Environmental Protection Agency loan, \$5 million is federal stimulus money that won't have to be repaid. The total cost of the sewer plant will be \$26 million. The City will need to raise \$6-7 million. The plant should be in operation in two years. The Save A Lot store will be moving into the Rock Falls Market building. The Holiday Inn changed hands. A management group from Chicago was hired and they are hoping to have a national prominent restaurant to locate at the hotel.

Tim Keller is looking for people to help pick seeds at the natural areas in Whiteside County.

Chuck Moen states that Route 20 was closed for the construction of the Extreme Makeover Home.

Della Moen announced that the Conservation and Agricultural Partners will be hosting a Barn Tour on October 11 from 1-5 in the Pearl City area. For tickets contact the Stephenson County Farm Bureau or the Stephenson County SWCD. It's an interesting event and you go at your own pace. Chuck and Della will be hostess at the first stop.

Kim Monk announced that the Country Fair is in two weeks and that this weekend is October Fest in Galena by the Railroad Depot. There will be a Weiner dog race. The first year there were 20 dogs in the race and last year there were 300 dogs.

Lynne Kilker reported that the Northern Illinois Municipal Power Agency will be hosting a Renewable Energy event on Wednesday, October 7th at the Rochelle Country Club. For more information you can call 815-562-7279.

Ron Colson reported that the restoration of the 1891 Courthouse is moving along. The contractor is doing high quality work. The Autumn on Parade in Oregon is this weekend. It's a good time if looking for something to do.

Sam Newtown reported that the Extreme Makeover Home in Stephenson County is completed and a Sonic restaurant opened up in Freeport.

Cathy Brunner stated that she has spoken to Norm Walzer about having the RC&D Program a part of the Rural Affairs Conference. Chris Merit, Illinois Institute of Rural Affairs, is interested in having the RC&D on the program. Kim St. John, RC&D Coordinator in the Peoria area would be asked to present at the conference, possibly doing a break out session.

Karen Nelson reported that the Whiteside County Health Department addition for a Mental Health Clinic will start on November 1. The Sauk Valley Food bank is the recipient of the Governor's Hometown Award.

Glen Kuhlemier reported that the State passed law legalizing payout poker machine within communities. There have been no rules set yet. If a community opts in they can not opt out.

Dave Dornbusch reminded Council Members to keep the staff informed what their board (County and SWCD) earmark for the RC&D Program. Dave will be meeting with Ogle County Administrator to discuss their donation to the RC&D. There is nothing new to report on the federal budget yet.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 7:47 PM.