

Hardee County Economic Development Council/Industrial Development Authority
Regular Meeting Minutes
June 14, 2016
Hardee County BOCC

Vanessa Hernandez- Chair-P
Gene Davis- Vice Chair-P
Dottie Conerly-A

Donald Samuels-A
John O'Neal-P
Lory Durrance-P

Diana Youmans-P
Monica Reas-P

The meeting was called to order by Chair Hernandez.

Visiting: Jessica Newman, Olivia Minshew, Terry Atchley, John Davis, Mike Carter, Roy Brown, Kenny Lambert, Bruce Stayer, Henry Kuhlman, Cindy Weinstein, Don Chancey, Grady Johnson, Rhonda Cole, Jim See and Clay Cobb

County Attorney: Ken Evers

County Commissioners: Colon Lambert, Mike Thompson, Sue Birge and Russ Melendy

Press: Michael Kelly

Staff: Bill Lambert, Sarah Pelham and Kristi Schierling

Agenda: Monica Reas made a motion and was seconded by Gene Davis to approve the agenda as presented. Motion passed unanimously.

Minutes: Gene Davis made a motion and was seconded by Monica Reas to approve the 5/10/16 minutes. Motion passed unanimously.

FYE 2015 Draft Financial Audit presentation

Mike Carter, CliftonLarsonAllen(CLA), was here today to present the draft financial audit. CLA gave an unmodified opinion. We had \$22.4M in assets at the end of the year. There was \$7.3M in cash and \$13M in capital assets. There was one finding which was a material weakness in the amount of \$87k related to monies that should have been a receivable instead of an expense at year end. All findings from prior year(s) have been cleared except for one which is partially corrected related to the grant advances.

Lory Durrance made a motion and was seconded by John O'Neal to accept the audit. Motion passed unanimously.

Florida Pomegranate Association presentation

Cindy Weinstein, President of the Florida Pomegranate Association, was here with a presentation. She is a Hardee County resident and has a pomegranate orchard. She started out with 40 varieties and is now up to 140 varieties on 6 acres. Pomegranates do have a fungal problem due to the humidity. There is a huge marketing capability for this fruit and the whole tree is usable. Her presentation consisted of different varieties and their qualities. Cindy's orchard is open for tours by appointment only.

Request from Community Redevelopment Association

Jessica Newman, Community Redevelopment Association (CRA) Director, was here before the board today. She has submitted a letter and proposal. There have been many workshops within the County relating to the housing market. The CRA issued two separate RFP's in April 2016 that were geared towards vacant properties and retrofitting/renovating property in Downtown Wauchula which would

include a residential element. There were two responders, one for each RFP. The CRA board reviewed each submittal at their workshops as well as interviewed the developer/builder of each and determined that both projects meet the needs of the community and were worth trying to accomplish. Jessica Newman is here today asking the board if they would partner with or contribute to the CRA. Her request is for \$400,000. The CRA is putting in \$300,000. The developers have a combined total of around \$1.65M invested. These projects would take place in '16-'17 and '17-'18.

Director Lambert would like the contract to be between the IDA and CRA and take the next 30-60 days to come up with something. Lory Durrance abstains due to the fact that the developers have or may have a banking relationship with his employer.

Gene Davis made a motion and was seconded by Monica Reas to accept the CRA's proposal and fund them. Lory Durrance abstains and the motion passes.

The contract will come back before the board for approval.

*A break was had from 9:56-10:10am

Brown Property Purchase Agreement

Ken Evers reviewed the agreement with the Board. He did note that the legal description needs to be changed to Lot 7, south ½ of Lot 6 and Lots 17 and 18. The IDA will be paying all normal costs. There is no due diligence period in this contract. Phase 1 on the property has been completed and it noted that there is a junk yard north of the property and recommends completing a Phase 2. This is up to the board. The purchase price is \$250,000 net to the seller subject to proration of 2016 real property taxes. Director Lambert recommends to proceed with the purchase.

John O'Neal abstains due to his employer's working relationship with the seller.

Lory Durrance made a motion and was seconded by Monica Reas to accept the purchase and sell agreement with the legal description changes and the authority for the Chair to sign all closing documents and appropriate the funding. John O'Neal abstains and motion passes.

US 17 South Utilities Extension

This is for water/sewer infrastructure on southbound Hwy 17 and Will Duke Rd. and looping back up North on Hwy 17. The EDA grant that was just awarded was in the amount of \$750,000 and the GMP came back at \$964,600. We need to make up this deficit with IDA money. We would not be able to submit for an EDA grant for this deficit since the expenses would incur before the start date of the grant if we were so awarded and we would like to start this project as soon as possible.

Monica Reas abstained due to her business being on Will Duke Rd.

Lory Durrance made a motion and was seconded by Diana Youmans to appropriate up to \$214,600.

Monica Reas abstains and the motion passes.

EDA grant submissions

The EDA cycle this year will be June 1- June 30. We will be submitting 4 applications. They will be for EDC funding, water/sewer corridor, incubator and pretreatment facility. We do not have the final totals on the amounts for some of the submissions. We will have those by the next board meeting and can let the board know the final amounts that were requested in the grant applications.

Lory Durrance made a motion and was seconded by Gene Davis to approve the grant application submissions. Monica Reas abstains due to her business being on Will Duke Rd. Motion passes.

Project Updates/Chair Updates

Director Lambert told the board that he would like to submit a written report in the next few weeks. PFM has a damaged circuit switch and is unable to run any of their equipment. It was damaged by either lightning or voltage fluctuation. The cost to repair is about \$62,000. We first need to determine the cause of the failure before any repairs are made. TechRiver is at 95% capacity. Caresync is at 150 employees and have vacancies of about 20. They have put up billboards in Hardee and Highlands County. The Botanicals and Olives are moving forward and the land has been cleared. The olive bids have also been received by the office. The Sheriff would like to construct a building behind the Command Center for equipment. Director Lambert will work with him on the drawings and make sure that it fits the architectural style of the Commerce Park.

Chair Hernandez said in the last meeting that she would bring back job descriptions from the County that would be comparable to the duties and pay grades for our office. Sarah Pelham would be placed in the pay grade of 32 which is \$57,074.46 and Kristi Schierling would be placed in a pay grade of 23 which is \$33,956.00. Chair would like for the board to consider adopting the grades and salary ranges for these grades and to also bring Sarah Pelham to an appropriate salary level. She has worked here for 8 years with no salary increase.

*short break to review County step plan 11:25-11:32am.

Discussion was had on where to place Sarah Pelham in the step plan.

John O'Neal made a motion and was seconded by Monica Reas to bring Sarah Pelham to grade 32 year 8 and Kristi Schierling to grade 23 year 5 to begin in the next payroll cycle and to follow the county step plan as a guideline. Motion passed unanimously.

Financials

There is a special revenue budget amendment adding Project Olive and Florikan additions into the budget and removing Project Malinda from the budget.

Diana Youmans made a motion and was seconded by Lory Durrance to approve the special revenue budget amendment. Motion passes unanimously.

The EDC/IDA financials were accepted as presented with a motion by Monica Reas and a second by John O'Neal. Motion passes unanimously.

Announcements

The Chamber of Commerce has requested that the EDC/IDA sponsor a Lunch N Learn. The cost is \$500. There is no board approval needed for that amount. The Florida Hospital Groundbreaking was held at the end of May.

**The meeting was adjourned at 12:03pm by Chair Hernandez.