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DeKalb County Government  
Sycamore, Illinois

**Economic Development Committee Minutes  
February 2, 2016**

The DeKalb County Economic Development Committee met on Tuesday, February 2, 2016 @ 7:00p.m. in the DeKalb County Administration Building's Conference Room East. Chairman Brown called the meeting to order. Members present were Mr. Faivre, Ms. Polanco, Mr. Porterfield, Mr. Pietrowski, Jr., and Mr. Whelan. Ms. Leifheit was absent. Others present were Mr. Gary Hanson and Rhonda Gillespie.

**APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES**

It was moved by Ms. Polanco, seconded by Mr. Whelan, and it was carried unanimously to approve the minutes from January 5, 2016.

**APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

It was moved by Mr. Faivre, seconded by Mr. Whelan, and it was carried unanimously to approve the agenda as presented.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

There were no public comments.

**BUSINESS INCUBATOR PROGRAM DESIGN UPDATE**

Mr. Gary Hanson, DeKalb County Administrator, presented three documents for the Incubator to the committee. The first form to review is the Pre-Application document. The committee discussed changing question #8.) to include per day, per week, per month. Some other suggestions were to include the number of hours, for example, would be if a person needed to work the hours of 4:00p.m. to midnight, or maybe a person just needed to work 5 hours a day.

They then reviewed the Selection Criteria document. The committee discussed that one of the questions should be if the applicant will utilize the Fiber Optics that are offered. Another question is whether or not the venture is a woman owned business or minority owned. They decided that this item would be seen as a plus and that it doesn't need to be on the application.

Chairman Brown asked about #3.) to be expanded to what other items would the applicant need, like equipment, materials, office compatible.

Another suggestion is whether or not the business is a home based business and has the person already run a business before.

Under the Policies and Procedures document the committee agreed to add the times of 8:00a.m. to 5:00p.m. under item #10.

Ms. Polanco and Mr. Pietrowski both suggested that to use the wording “sexual orientation and gender “disability” instead of handicap.

Chairman Brown said that we should include in the document somewhere that the applicant respects the other applicants in the incubator space and their boundaries.

The committee then reviewed the Rental Agreement and discussed that they did not want any county board members or county employees in the Incubator. Their family members could apply but not them.

Ms. Polanco said that there should be a complaint process that they applicant could go to complain about something. She is suggesting a Complaint Policy to be included. They also discussed that a member should do to keep the space clean and orderly.

They also talked about no political or religious activity and to add that to the Policies and Procedures document too.

Another addition is equipment like, copy machine, fax machine, phone, printer, etc.

Mr. Hanson passed out the Space Rental and Amenities document showing what would be included in the actual work space and the actual rental amounts for various spaces in the Incubator. Mr. Hanson also included a diagram of the actual space. The committee discussed having a space where the tenants could sit and collaborate and brainstorm together.

Ms. Polanco said that maybe we should think about drawing up a business plan for our Incubator too.

Under the Member Application, Ms. Polanco suggested that we remove the wording asking what the personal income is and ask for a range instead.

With regards to the Lease Agreement, Ms. Polanco suggested that we separate it into two documents as the Participant Agreement and Lease Agreement.

They discussed what would happen to the applicant if they did not pay their rent in 30 days and that it should also be included in the Lease Agreement.

Is there a spokesperson for the Incubator yet? Mr. Hanson said that we have a lot happening yet because we are still in the planning stages. However, people should be directed to speak to Ms. Supple if they have any questions about the Incubator.

The committee discussed on whether or not they wanted to include co-working space. They said that in the beginning they want to fill the office space up as soon as they can.

They discussed that they would need to think of who the people will be that sit on the Advisory Committee and that their terms should only be for 2 years. It was suggested that 2 county board members, one from each party, should sit on the committee.

The committee decided that they would like to finalize the documents at the March meeting.

### **SUMMARY OF EXISTING ABATEMENT PROGRAMS**

The committee discussed the handout from Mr. Hanson that summarizes the various tax abatements that are being processed now. This way if the county board members are asked questions about them they will have the answers now on the amounts and who received them.

### **AVENUES TO ASSIST SMALL BUSINESSES WITH REGULATORY COMPLIANCE**

Mr. Steve Faivre approached the committee about helping small businesses with unfunded mandates expenses from the State of Illinois like ADA compliance and Sprinkler Systems. He is suggesting that the Economic Development Committee work with the Planning & Zoning Department and explore the feasibility of what the costs would be. He said that he is talking about really small businesses too.

**It was moved by Mr. Faivre, seconded by Mr. Porterfield, and it was carried unanimously to work jointly with the Planning and Zoning Department regarding the possibility of helping small business to comply with ADA Compliance and Fire Suppression.**

Someone asked Mr. Faivre if the County could do this? He said that possibly we lower property taxes for them for a short period of time.

### **REPORTS ON ARTS COUNCIL AND VISITORS BUREAU**

Ms. Mary Supple, DeKalb County Coordinator reported to the committee that the Convention and Visitor's Bureau held their Strategic Planning Meeting recently at the Red Roof Inn. They will reconvene that meeting on Thursday, February 8, 2016.

The Arts Council met last evening and discussed a Public Sculpture Program that was presented to them by Mr. Jason Mangum, Executive Director of the DeKalb Park District. He said that this idea came out of the DeKalb Leadership Academy and his group. They would commission an Artist to create a sculpture and display it for one year in the City of DeKalb. He said that maybe we would pay them \$1,000 for this piece of artwork. They are still working on the funding of this project and hopefully they would begin this program this year.

The Arts Council also discussed that they are looking at Art Walks to take place this fall right after CornFest. They would like to have it happen sometime in September so that that during CornFest they can advertise for the event. They would like to start with the City of DeKalb and then grow the Art Walks to other towns in the County.

The creation A.C.E. Corridor will be going before the DeKalb City Council in February and then they will come before the County of DeKalb with a resolution of support.

Finally, the Arts Council discussed holding various workshops over this year. They will be held on Monday evenings in between the City Council meetings. They will cost \$10 per workshop or \$50 which can be donated to the DeKalb Arts Council for the year 2016. This donation will make the person eligible to attend all of the workshops then for 2016 for free. They will hold the first 4 workshops on March 21, 2016, April 18, 2016, May 16, 2016 and June 20, 2016. The fall schedule is still in the planning stages. The March 21, 2016 workshop is "Doing Business in DeKalb County." The April 18, 2016 workshop is "Promoting Yourself or Organization." The May 16, 2016 workshop is "Protecting Yourself Legally." The June 20, 2016 workshop is "Ticketing Your Event and Marketing Opportunities in DeKalb County." The locations for these events will alternate between the DeKalb and Sycamore Public Libraries.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

It was moved by Mr. Whelan, seconded by Mr. Porterfield, and it was carried unanimously to adjourn the meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

  
Chairman Robert Brown

  
Mary Supple, Recording Secretary