

Note: These minutes are not official until approved by the Economic Development Committee at a subsequent meeting. Please refer to the meeting minutes when these minutes are approved to obtain any changes to these minutes.

DeKalb County Government
Sycamore, Illinois

**Economic Development Committee Minutes
April 3, 2018**

The DeKalb County Economic Development Committee met on Tuesday, April 3, 2018 at 7:00 p.m., in the Administrative Building's Conference Room East in Sycamore, Illinois. Chairman Bagby called the meeting to order. Those Members present were Mr. Brown, Mrs. Emmer, Mrs. Haji-Sheikh, Mr. Osland, and Chairman Bagby. Mr. Faivre was absent. A quorum was established with five Members present and one absent.

Others present were Jolene Willis and Tim Hughes.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

It was moved by Mrs. Haji-Sheikh, seconded by Mrs. Emmer, and it was carried unanimously to approve the meeting agenda as presented.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

It was moved by Mr. Osland, seconded by Mr. Brown, and it was carried unanimously to approve the minutes from the March 6, 2018 meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no public comments.

BUSINESS INCUBATOR UPDATE

The Committee welcomed DeKalb County Economic Development Coordinator Jolene Willis to the table to provide them with an update on the Business Incubator at their Advisory Board. Ms. Willis began by passing out the Business Incubator's newest flyer to all. She additionally shared that the Incubator's Advisory Board's role is essentially completed. The Board was put together to serve as an advisory role for when the Incubator began in the summer of 2016 and throughout that time they helped create the application process and approve business applications that have come forward. They also provided a lot of mentoring to the Community Development staff and getting Ms. Willis ramped up in her role over the past year. Through feedback from the Board, Mr. Willis shared that they felt they wanted to help the County in any way they could but they also felt their role was essentially completed. Meeting quorum has also been a huge challenge amount the Board in order to actually meet. Ms. Willis explained that through the challenges and feedback, she felt it was a good time to take a step back and release the Incubator Advisory Board of their duties at this time. Each have agreed to be available as ongoing mentors on a one-on-one capacity if needed going forward.

Ms. Willis asked the Economic Development Committee if they wanted to assume the role of reviewing and approving Incubator Tenant Applications as they come in. She added that they

currently did not have any pending right now and unfortunately had one but lost it to another space because the Advisory Board was unable to make quorum when they needed to approve that application. Ms. Willis also added that she had heard through other County channels that they would be okay with staff (Community Development Director Derek Hiland and Ms. Willis) making those decisions but she wanted to know what the Committee felt comfortable with.

Chairman Bagby asked Ms. Willis if she felt there were any parts of the application process that need to be changed. She noted that she felt the process was pretty lengthy and thought that the pre-application and the application could be condensed and many of the pre-questions could be covered in a preliminary general meeting with the applicant.

There was a consensus among the Committee that they would be interested in seeing a revised and more stream-lined version of the Business Incubator application and that they were leaning towards having the Community Development staff determine the approval of the tenant applications.

Ms. Willis was also very excited to share with the Committee that NIU's MGMT Class 421 (Global Social Venture Consulting) will be doing a presentation of the DeKalb County Business Incubator business model and marketing plan on Wednesday, April 25th at 9:00 a.m. in Barsema Hall on campus. The object of the class's project is to identify differences and opportunities between other incubators and the DeKalb Incubator in terms of application process and marketing. A second objective is to help the incubator create a marketing plan and business model. Lastly, they will be exploring and taking advantage of the partnership capabilities with the NIU community and help acquire tenants. Ms. Willis noted that this is a great opportunity for the DeKalb Incubator and she invited Committee Members to attend the presentation and will also report back to the Committee on the class's findings.

Ms. Willis additionally shared a few Economic Development-related community updates with the Committee. There were updates provided on the CEDS project, DeKalb County Small Business Team that is meeting once a month now and the Community Foundation Development Grant Program that is currently in progress.

The Committee thanked Ms. Willis for updating them on the Incubator and many noted that they were interested in coming to the NIU presentation regarding the DeKalb County Business Incubator on the 25th.

DISCUSSION ON CULTURAL OPPORTUNITIES IN DEKALB COUNTY

Chairman Bagby shared that at the next meeting they will be joined by Executive Director Alex Nerad of the Egyptian Theatre. The Chair noted that although the County cannot help with any type of funding due to budgetary restraints they will discuss additional ways that they can help the Theatre.

COMMITTEE MEMBER COMMENTS

Mr. Brown shared his thoughts on a recent program he attended at Kishwaukee College, Building Bridges Our of Poverty.

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Mr. Osland briefly commented on how the antique shows and shops really help and promote the downtown area of the City of Sandwich and encouraged others to find way to continue to promote those shows to help the area as a whole.

Mrs. Haji-Sheikh shared that she attended the recently held DeKalb-Sycamore Community Expo as well as shared many upcoming community events that are happening throughout the DeKalb, Sycamore, and County-wide areas.

ADJOURNMENT

It was moved by Mrs. Haji-Sheikh, seconded by Mr. Osland and it was carried unanimously to adjourn the meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Chairman Tim Bagby

Tasha Sims, Recording Secretary



DEKALB COUNTY BUSINESS INCUBATOR

DEDICATED
WORKSPACE
•
TRAINING &
SUPPORT

Fostering Creativity & Innovation

The DeKalb County Business Incubator features private furnished offices and conference rooms to meet your business needs. Contemporary common areas allow you to collaborate with your team, other tenants and provide a professional atmosphere for client interaction.



Contact Us

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Amenities & Services

- Fully-furnished private offices
- Business Internet
- 24/7 Secure Access
- 1.79 mi Bike Path
- Unique Common Areas
- Free, On-site Parking
- Product Design, Engineering, CAD, Commercialization & Prototype Development Services – NIU EIGERlab
- Conference Rooms
- Cleaning Services
- Printer/Copier/Fax
- Professional Events
- Advisory Board Mentors
- Free Wi-Fi
- Fiber Optic Telecomm
- Mail Service, Professional Address
- Break Room
- Storage Space
- Business Consulting Resources
- TransVAC Green Line Bus Service

Pricing & Process

Our workspaces are designed to provide stable support as you launch your business or transition between projects. Entry level shared desk space is available at \$75/mo. with fully-furnished offices ranging from \$250 - \$600 per month with a two-year flexible lease. To begin the process of joining the Center, visit www.dekalbcounty.org/incubator to view our application and policies.

DeKalb County Creative Center Business Directory

DeKalb County Community Gardens: Mr. Dan Kenney-DeKalb County Community Gardens (DCCG) is an innovative approach to end hunger and food insecurity in DeKalb County, by providing access to fresh, local, sustainably-grown organic vegetables for all in need.

Salguero Law Office: Attorney Omar Salguero's law office is focusing on the immigrant community by providing a full range of legal services.

Executive Authors: Ms. Abrahamson helps executive authors generate game-changing business growth results from creating a book that showcases their expertise through applying her concepts, advice, insights, ideas, information and resources to their book and business in order to ensure both are congruent with actively building strong momentum toward the same goals.

Comprehensive Rehabilitation Services, Inc., Mr. Matthew Sprong-Comprehensive Rehabilitation Services (CRS) provides rehabilitation expert services with a concentration on persons with chronic illness or disability.

DeKalb County Business Incubator Advisory Board Mentors

Jennifer Bristow, Board Chair, Marketing
Jerry Foster, Banker
LaCretia Konan, Workforce Education
Sandra Polanco, DeKalb County Board

Anita Zurbrugg, Non-profits
JeaNae Remala, Accountant
Mike King, Information Technology
Jeff Whalen, DeKalb County Board

