



**MARATHON COUNTY
EXTENSION, EDUCATION & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
MINUTES**

Thursday, April 1, 2021 at 4:00 p.m.

Courthouse Assembly Room, (B105), Courthouse, 500 Forest Street, Wausau WI

Members	Present/Web-Phone	Absent
Chair Sara Guild	W	
Vice Chair Ka Lo	W	
Gary Beastro	W	
Becky Buch	W	
Tom Rosenberg	X	
Rick Seefeldt	W	
Chris Voll	W	

Also Present: Lance Leonhard, Jason Hake, and Toshia Ranallo.

VIA Web or Phone: Craig McEwen, Jean Maszk, John Robinson, John Happli, Vicki Resch, Ralph Illick, Jason Hausler, Renee Krings, and Ann Herda-Rapp.

1. Call Meeting to Order

Chair Guild called the meeting to order at 4:02pm.

2. Public Comment (15 Minutes) - None

3. MOTION BY ROSENBERG SECOND BY LO TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MARCH 4, 2021 EXTENSION, EDUCATION & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MEETING. MOTION CARRIED.

4. Policy Issues Discussion and Potential Committee Determination

A. Greater Wausau Prosperity Partnership request for funding for economic impact study – should this committee recommend funding and forward this matter to the HR, Finance & Property Committee?

Discussion:

Renne Krings an Economic Development Specialist with the Greater Wausau Chamber of Commerce, gave a presentation requesting \$2500 for an economic study as part of a recreation assessment for Rib Mountain State Park. The full presentation can be accessed [here in the packet](#). She further explained how this project aligns with their Strategic Plan goals as well as Marathon County's objectives below:

- 5.2 (Promote sound land use decisions that conserve and preserve natural resources in decisions with economic development and growth)
- 10.6 (Ensure the future availability of a skilled and flexible workforce prepared to meet the needs of both existing and emerging industries and technologies.)
- 10.8 (Encourage development and redevelopment of key employment centers in areas that possess strong market potential, provide good transportation access for workers, and promote the efficient movement of goods.)
- 10.10 (Create an innovative atmosphere to foster an entrepreneurial-supportive environment.)

Supervisors questioned whether or not the State of Wisconsin and the Town of Rib Mountain have contributed to these efforts. The State of Wisconsin had designated funds to gather expertise in mountain biking and alpine skiing, but when the pandemic hit, they had to reallocate those funds. The Greater Wausau Prosperity Partnership offered support to keep that process moving. The Town of Rib Mountain was not approached to contribute funds for the economic impact study.

Administrator Leonhard provided additional background and informed the committee he and Parks Director Jamie Polley have been involved with the guiding task force team. He further explained the expansion being considered is important to the Strategic Plan and the priorities the County Board has identified, as well as the Comprehensive goals. There is a lot of opportunity to make Marathon County an outdoor recreational focal point envisioned in the Greater Wausau Chamber of Commerce Strategic Plan as well as the Marathon County's Comprehensive Plan. An estimated 1000 jobs would be created as well as an increase in tax revenue. A significant portion of this study is working to identify opportunities to link resources from Rib Mountain State Park and the Granite Peak Ski area, to Marathon County 9 Mile Forest Park. The ask of the committee today is to identify whether or not there is value in using county funds to pursue an economic impact analysis which will provide our State partners with the best information when making decisions. If so, further discussions would be

forwarded on to the HR Finance Committee. The Impact study could also be utilized to benefit other municipalities or groups seeking funding in the future.

A motion was made by Rosenberg to amend the motion below to include *the Greater Wausau Prosperity Partnership does additional outreach to other affected communities (Wausau, Rib Mountain, Weston, Rothschild and Schofield.)* Due to a lack of a second, the motion for amendment failed. However, it was suggested and encouraged the other municipalities are made aware in hopes they would contribute appropriately.

Action:

MOTION MADE BY BUCH; SECOND BY VOLL TO APPROVE A RECOMMENDATION AND FORWARD IT TO THE HR FINANCE & PROPERTY COMMITTEE TO FUND THE \$2500 REQUEST TOWARDS THE ECONOMIC IMPACT STUDY. 6 YES 1 NO, MOTION CARRIED.

Follow-up:

Forward to the HR Finance & Property Committee to be discussed at their meeting on Tuesday, April 6, 2021.

5. **Operational Functions required by Statute, Ordinance, or Resolution:** None

6. **Educational Presentations/Outcome Monitoring Reports**

A. Strategic Plan Objectives Progress (8.7, 10.6, 10.8, 10.10)

Discussion:

1. What was accomplished in 2020 by this committee relating to implementation of the Strategic Plan?

Objective 8.7

- Broadband Expansion is still an ongoing goal to be met.

Objective 10.6

- UWSP Campus (housing, security cameras, CIP funding) – The number of students enrolled are positive.
- Revisiting Westside Master Plan (future development)
- Working with the North Central Workforce Development Board (Nov 2020 presentation)
- Regional Planning Commission Board on Regional Recovery Work (Feb 2021)
- Renewed membership with the WI Extension Association
- Support state funding in the Governor’s Budget for Workforce Development Expansion
- UWSP – What they need to be successful and partner with the County to meet those needs; Internal internship Program

Objective 10.8

- Today’s Economic Impact Study Presentation
- MCDEVCO – (\$41,000 small business grants and Private Onsite Waste System Grants)

Objective 10.10

- Marathon County Library Updates
- MCDEVCO – Dolphin Tank (entrepreneurs pitching ideas and receive constructive criticism)
- Today’s Economic Impact Study Presentation
- MCDEVCO – Moved to the EEDC Center and transformed the educational programs.
- EEDC Contract is now MCDEVCO contract

2. What are the plans for 2021 relating to the implementation of the Strategic Plan?

- Extension Situational Analysis (Feb 2021) creating policies, support staffing and resources
- Westside Master Plan – (UWSP Dormitory)
- Marathon County Public Library Board to Seek Membership in the South Central Library
- Broadband – (MCDEVCO to support broadband initiative)
- MCDEVCO – (Continuation with Educational Programming)
- North Central Workforce Development Board (Committee engage w/staff)
- County to receive 13.1 million dollars under the American Rescue Plan – Focus on economic recovery; broadband expansion and engaging Towns

3. Does this committee understand their role for implementing the Strategic Plan?

Chair Guild pointed out the EEED Committee doesn't have a county based department compared to other committees such as the ERC. Although, the EEEDC has great relationships with partners, the EEEDC members need to identify what should be done and bring it to the partners to help achieve strategic goals. How can we support our current partners and finding new opportunities worth exploring?

B. Reports from Committee-Affiliated Departments and Organizations – The following April 2021 reports can be viewed in the packet located on our [website here](#).

1. Marathon County Public Library
2. MCDEVCO
3. UW-Madison Division of Extension
4. UW-Stevens Point Wausau

7. Next Meeting Time, Location, Announcements and Future Agenda Items:

A. Next meeting: **Thursday, May 6, 2021 at 4:00 pm**

8. Adjournment

MOTION BY LO SECOND BY VOLL TO ADJOURN THE MEETING AT 5:52 P.M. MOTION CARRIED

Respectfully submitted by
Toshia Ranallo