



MARATHON COUNTY EXTENSION, EDUCATION & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

MINUTES

Thursday, June 4, 2020, at 4:00 p.m.

Courthouse Assembly Room, 500 Forest Street, Wausau WI

Attendance:	Present	Absent
Sara Guild, Chair	W	
Ka Lo, Vice Chair	W	
Gary Beastron	X	
Becky Buch	X	
Tom Rosenberg	X	
Rick Seefeldt	W	
Chris Voll	W	

Others Present: Lance Leonhard, Mary Palmer, Jason Hausler, Vicki Resech (W), Ann Herda-Rapp (W)

1. **Call Meeting to Order**

The Extension, Education & Economic Development Committee meeting was called to order at 4:03 p.m. by Chair Guild.

2. **Public Comment:** The Public Comment portion of the agenda has been temporarily suspended, pursuant to Marathon County Resolution # R-18-20, dated March 17, 2020.

3. **Approval of the Minutes** of the May 7, 2020, Extension, Education & Economic Development Committee (EEED) Meeting.

MOTION BY ROSENBERG, SECOND BY BEASTROM, TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MAY 7, 2020, EXTENSION, EDUCATION AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MEETING. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

4. **Policy Issues Discussion and Potential Committee Determination:** None

5. **Operational Functions required by Statute, Ordinance or Resolution:**

A. Discussion and Possible Action by Committee – None

B. Discussion and Possible Action by Committee to Forward to County Board for its Consideration
– None

6. **Educational Presentations and Committee Discussion**

A. Strategic Plan Status Review – Review of Strategic Plan strategies and outcomes statuses. Discussion regarding potential priorities and next steps for achieving the Committee's assigned Strategic Plan goals.

Discussion:

Chair Guild briefly recapped last month's discussion on the Strategic Plan. This month Chair Guild developed a working document of the objectives assigned to the Extension, Education and Economic Development Committee, explaining where we are at and discussing the next steps.

Objective 8.7 – *Strive to provide affordable, reliable, high-speed internet access throughout the County* was given the most attention over the past year. Guild put forward a request to find the next step. Due to funding we may need to review these ideas for redevelopment.

Over 10 years ago the County did a study on Broadband and it didn't go anywhere. The new Taskforce is a good idea to keep things moving. Outcome Measure 1- Frontier received a lot of money for Broadband in 2018 to increase service to 9,800 households by 2019, but this didn't

happen.

Strategy A – we have a comprehensive approach, but is it the right approach to follow? Resech sent information on COVID grants for this purpose to our phone/network carriers. Carriers (partners) are looking for Grants not low interest loans. Is the County a funding source and/or what role will the County play? The Broadband Task Force will report to the Infrastructure Committee.

Objective 10.6 – *Ensure the future availability of a skilled and flexible workforce prepared to meet the needs of other existing and emerging industries and technologies.* The committee should look at this together.

Chair Guild gave a broad overview on the Workforce Development Board and what they do.

Outcome measures are greatly impacted by COVID-19, but we still need to look at how we can make an impact.

Objective 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 efficient movement of goods.* A Feasibility Study was done and that consulting group will work with and make a presentation to the Greater Wausau Prosperity Partnership. We could possibly have Kurt Gibbs or the North Central Wisconsin Workforce Development Board (NCWWDB) chair speak on this objective.

Vicki Resech, talked about what Infrastructure may look like in various municipalities. There are also agreements between municipalities to assist each other if a key player is incapacitated due to COVID.

MCDEVCO will be sending out a survey to business on what is going well including during COVID. Vicki will reach out to Dave Mack on the transportation issue expanding to Weston and Rib Mountain.

Objective 10.10 – *Create an innovative atmosphere to foster an entrepreneurial-supportive environment.* Strategy A had to do with funding for various studies such as website for the Chamber on workforce retention, and the family friendly work place study through the Wisconsin Institute for Public Policy and Service (WIPPS), when this committee had funding.

Are there policies/strategies in the County that this committee should take a critical review? Entrepreneurial Center received funds through this committee which is still happening. MCDEVCO is another entity to review.

Strategy B recommends EEED to evaluate opportunities to better support farms through policies and/or funding.

If there is anything committee members would like to see come back to the committee for review or further discussion, let Chair Guild know.

Follow Through:

Members of EEED who may want to be on the Broadband Taskforce let Chair Guild know if you are interested.

Melinda Osterberg from UW-Madison Division of Extension will do research on the Connect American Fund (CAF) 2 funding and see if we met our goal of 9,800 households through Frontier.

B. Reports from Committee-Affiliated Departments and Organizations

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

Discussion:

1. UW Madison Division of Extension

Jason Hausler went through the [Educator Report](#) highlighting, FoodWise Education, 4-H Community Connections, Camp in a Box (174 participants), Community Development Education, Horticulture and Gardening as a therapeutic tool, and their work on updating the Marathon County Strategic Plan. Also an update on Agriculture in Marathon County.

2. UW-Stevens Point Wausau

Ann Herda-Rapp – The security camera project came in lower than anticipated. Planning to open the campus this Fall and phasing in for employees returning to work. Prioritizing face-to-face classes that cannot be done online is being worked on. An announcement should be coming relatively soon on reopening. They are looking at how they can use facilities to recruit students.

3. MCDEVCO – Marathon County Development Corporation

Vicki Resech – She gave a report on various funding MCDEVCO has available for a variety of different groups including funding for Private Onsite Wastewater Treatment Systems (POWTS), GAP financing and financing to help with small business loans. They also received a grant to give out 40 - \$1,000 grants for small businesses. Other funds are available. Vicki represents Marathon County on the Central Wisconsin Economic Development (CWED) Board as a member-at-large.

4. Marathon County Public Library

The [update](#) on what is happening at the Library is in writing in the packet.

Follow Through:

None needed at this time.

7. Announcements, Next Meeting Date and Time:

A. Future committee calendar

The next meeting will be Thursday, July 2, 2020 at 4:00 p.m. Let Mary Palmer and/or Chair Sara Guild know if you are unable to attend.

No announcements.

8. Adjourn

There being no further business to discuss, **MOTION BY ROSENBERG, SECOND BY LO TO ADJOURN THE MEETING. Meeting adjourned at 5:31 p.m. MOTION CARRIED.**

Minutes prepared
by Mary Palmer