

**City of Crystal Lake Economic Development Committee**  
**August 25, 2015 – 7:30 a.m.**  
**Municipal Complex – City Council Chambers Conference Room**

**Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 a.m. by Mr. Fowler.

**Roll Call/Attendance**

Members Affrunti, Dalzell, DeHaan, Haleblian, Maule, Reece, and Fowler were present. Members Leech and Saidler were absent.

James Richter II, Planning and Economic Development Manager, was present from staff. Julie Courtney and Jeffery Poynter with McHenry County Workforce Network Board were also present.

**Approve Minutes of the July 28, 2015 Meeting**

Mr. Haleblian moved to approve the minutes from the July 28, 2015 EDC meeting as presented. Mr. Reece seconded the motion. On voice vote, members DeHaan, Haleblian, Maule, Reece, and Fowler voted aye. Members Affrunti and Dalzell abstained. Motion passed.

**Public Participation**

There was no one present who wished to speak.

**McHenry County Workforce Network Presentation (Jeffery Poynter, Julie Courtney)**

The Committee members introduced themselves to Ms. Courtney and Mr. Poynter. Mr. Poynter said they listen to employers to find their workforce needs and put potential employees in touch. Ms. Courtney said this network is funded by the U.S. Department of Labor. Mr. Richter asked if the funds get funneled through the State. Ms. Courtney said yes. They were without funding until the Governor signed a bill the other day to allow payments of pass-through grants that don't require matching funds from the State. Mr. Poynter said there are several networks throughout the state that are like theirs. Also there are networks that combine a few counties together. The money each receives is based on the needs of that County. Mr. Poynter said that under a new Act the Networks works closely with the local communities' Economic Development group, McHenry County Economic Development and local businesses. They listen to the needs of the businesses and work with them to fill those employment needs.

Mr. Richter asked when should the City include the Workforce Network into the process of attracting new businesses to the area. Mr. Poynter said they can be active from the very beginning. They have information that can be helpful to both the City and prospective new businesses such as wage reports, demographics, etc. Ms. Courtney said they would be able to be brought in at any time. When recruiting the business, they would be able to provide the business with information on potential employees that have training similar to what they need and also provide the additional training needed to bring the potential employee up to speed. It also depends on what the business wants. If they want the employee trained to a certain stage and then the business takes over from there. It varies depending on each business.

Mr. Courtney said they also hold job fairs. This is at no cost to the business since their funding is through tax dollars. They also help dislocated workers to find another position in their area.

Mr. Richter asked how the training programs work. Mr. Poynter said they work with several different sources such as MCC, First Institute, etc. depending on the training required for the job. During the training, they can help off-set the total cost of the employee that includes the wages as well as the insurance, etc. Ms.

Courtney added that they also can pay traveling expenses for the trainers travel to the business. There are variety of things that they can do for a business and the employees. Mr. Poynter said this resource is not just for manufacturing but also for banking, office workers, sales, health care, IT, etc.

Mr. Richter asked if there is an approval process a business must go through to obtain the services of the McHenry County Workforce Network Board. Ms. Courtney said there is paperwork that needs to be filled out and it takes about 2 to 3 weeks to complete the process. It can be done faster but that is the preferred response time. She said businesses can also refer an employee to their training if certain criteria are met.

Mr. Fowler asked if the business is reimbursed during the training. Ms. Courtney said yes for up to six months. The business is reimbursed monthly after the proper documentation is provided. There is also an internship program available for up to 12 weeks. The internship can be used by students that need an internship to complete their educational requirements for graduation. She added that they have worked with Think Ink in Crystal Lake in the past and it has worked out very well.

Mr. Fowler asked at what point in the process the Workforce Network Board should be brought in for a possible business relocation. Ms. Courtney said when the City first sits down with the company. They are able to inform the business of what they can provide and tailor things to the business' needs. Mr. Poynter said after the meeting they will be able to provide the business with reports and information they need.

Mr. Richter asked how can they find out about the grants the Network receives which makes funding available for programs. Ms. Courtney said they usually do a press release.

Mr. Poynter said next week is "Workforce Development Week" and they will be hosting several events including an open house with several State Representatives attending. He will e-mail additional information to Mr. Richter to send out to the members.

Mr. Reece said he has used this service for his last two hires and it has worked out extremely well.

Mr. Richter thanked Mr. Poynter and Ms. Courtney for attending the EDC meeting.

### **Business Anniversaries**

Presentations are tentatively scheduled for September 15 but that date may be pushed back to October 6.

Mr. Fowler suggested Brenco Machine and Tool on Factory Road who has a sign up stating they are celebrating 35 years. Mr. Richter said they also have not toured that facility.

Ms. Maule said the Chamber recently gave a plaque to WalMart for 25 years.

### **McHenry County EDC Business Champion Award Nominees**

Mr. Fowler said the annual MCEDC dinner is coming up and he would like the EDC to nominate at least 1 business for each category and possibly do a press release stating that the City has nominated those businesses. Mr. Affrunti said General Kinematics has been nominated in the past but has not won. Mr. Haleblian said G & M would also be a good nomination. Mr. Fowler suggested TC Industries for the larger category.

Mr. Fowler asked if they could pay someone to put the applications together for the businesses. Mr. Richter said he could look into it.

Ms. Maule said the Northwest Herald is going their own Business Champion and doesn't believe they will print a press release promoting the MCEDC awards.

Ms. Maule suggested Boltswitch. Mr. Reece said they are very low-key and not sure they would want to be nominated.

Mr. Richter asked if the members wanted to nominate more than one per category. Mr. Fowler suggested only one. Mr. Reece agreed that we don't want our businesses competing against each other.

### **Manufacturer Tour Update**

Mr. Richter said they don't have any tours currently scheduled. They have put in orders for the Community Investment Awards for Martin Chevrolet, and Regal Theaters and Inland Realty Company for the movie theater renovation. He will be scheduling award plaque presentations in the near future.

Ms. Maule suggested Express Employment Professionals as a candidate for a tour or Community Investment Award.

Mr. Haleblian suggested First Institute. Mr. Richter said they could possibly invite them to the meeting to learn more about what they do, but that there wouldn't be a benefit to touring their building. Mr. Reece agreed.

Mr. Fowler suggested a tour of the Mathews Company since they are now within the City limits. Mr. Richter agreed that was a good idea.

### **Business Development Update**

Mr. Richter reminded the members of a business that wanted to relocate to Crystal Lake but had difficulties negotiating with the bank. He added that they were looking for another site for the business and that staff was working with them to relocate the business from Cary.

Mr. Richter stated that the other business they spoke of at the last meeting is currently doing their due diligence on the property on Route 176. Staff has also been in contact with the Union Pacific regarding a rail road spur.

Mr. Affrunti said the special needs school on Route 31 is looking to relocate since their lease is up next year. Mr. Richter said he has been in contact with them and trying to find a location that would work with their budget.

Mr. Dalzell asked if Willow Creek was purchasing the former Oak Industry building. Mr. Richter said yes. Mr. Reece said that will take that property off of the tax rolls. There will be a lot of traffic in that area on Sunday. Ms. Maule believes this will mirror the facility they have in Barrington.

### **I Shop Crystal Lake Update**

Mr. Richter said they are working on a contest for more engagement on-line. They will be asking for short videos to be submitted to the City about why they shop in Crystal Lake. There will be small prizes. The EDC can determine the winner after the City reviews the entries for content.

### **Comments and Suggestions From The Committee**

Mr. Dalzell provided Mr. Richter with a report on video gaming. He believes that this issue will go to referendum and the public will decide. He added that if video gaming goes well the City will be able to reduce the taxes.

**Organization reports:**

Downtown Crystal Lake

Mr. Dalzell said the parking lot is complete. The City did a good job educating the patrons of other places to park that are not a far walk. Ms. Maule said the signs were great directing people to other parking.

Mr. Richter asked how the “3<sup>rd</sup> Thursdays” were going. Ms. Maule said she has spoken with Chamber members downtown and they were happy with it.

McHenry County Economic Development Corporation

Mr. Richter said he has requested Ms. Cumpata to attend the EDC meeting but she has a conflict with another meeting. He will try to get her to attend a future meeting.

Chamber of Commerce

Ms. Maule said they will be hosting Congressman Roskam tomorrow. There will be a multi-Chamber mixer at MCC on September 22. There are many new people at MCC and this will be an opportunity to meet them. She added that on September 11 they will be renaming the Chamber building to honor Bob & Rosemary Blazier.

City of Crystal Lake (Staff)

Mr. Richter reviewed the items that recently were reviewed by the Planning and Zoning Commission: BMO Harris Bank both the Route 31 and Route 14 locations; Petersen Paving; Crystal Spa; Crystal Lake Park District Main Beach – Boat storage building; and Verizon cell tower in the industrial triangle. These items will be moving forward to City Council on September 1.

**Adjourn**

The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 a.m.