

**City of Crystal Lake Economic Development Committee**  
**July 31, 2012 – 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.

**Roll Call/Attendance**

Members Affrunti, DeHaan, Haleblian, Hymes, Reece, Saidler and Fowler were present. Members Riley and Dalzell arrived at 7:35 a.m.

James Richter II, Assistant Director of Economic Development, and Michelle Rentzsch, Director of Planning and Economic Development, were present from staff. Dr. Vicky Smith, President of McHenry County College; Mary Miller, Chairperson of the MCC Board of Trustees; and Laura Brown, Vice President of Institutional Advancement for McHenry County College were also present.

**Approve Minutes of the May 15, 2012 Meetings**

Mr. Reece moved to approve the minutes from the May 15, 2012 EDC minutes as presented. Mr. Affrunti seconded the motion. On voice vote, members Affrunti, Dalzell, Haleblian, Hymes, Reece, Saidler and Fowler voted aye. Members Riley and DeHaan abstained. Motion passed.

**Public Participation and Comment**

There was no one present who wished to speak.

**McHenry County College Presentation**

Dr. Smith handed out news briefs and the annual report for MCC. There were approximately 75,000 county residents who used the college last year. That includes full time students, continuing education students as well as other wanting to learn using non-credit hour classes. Dr. Smith said when she came to the college she realized that they were missing classes on manufacturing and health care. At that time there was a small offering for construction and had just started the nursing program. They have created a facility master plan and compared MCC's campus size per student to others in the area. She said MCC is 97 square feet; College of Lake County is 169 square feet, Harper is 131 square feet, and Elgin Community College is 114 square feet. Some programs could not be accredited by the State since there are restrictions as to where the classes could be held, as far as off site. Dr. Smith said MCC can handle the space needed for general subjects such as English and math but they need to expand the labs for health and science classes. Even now the biology classes are very limited and even though they are required classes for Associate Degrees, they are not always available to the students.

Dr. Smith said building a campus is expensive and they are not asking for a referendum for the amount of the complete renovations. They will use other financing as well as private/public partnerships first before going to referendum. She said they are currently in the process of condemning 20 acres next to the campus and the 10 and 40 year plan show how much acreage would be needed in the future for expansion. Dr. Smith said they are very lucky since MCC is surrounded by open land. The other Community Colleges in the area are surrounded which makes expansion more creative and limiting.

Mr. Saidler asked if anything on the master plan can be put somewhere else such as utilizing the two fine arts facilities in our area. Dr. Smith said she has not spoken with the Raue Center in Crystal Lake or the Opera House in Woodstock regarding the use of their facilities or partnerships with those groups. She added that the area proposed for fine arts also includes art studios for ceramics, etc.

Mr. Saidler asked if there is anything that MCC is providing that another Community College in the area is and more successful at. That space could be renovated to be used in other areas. Dr. Smith said they are always reviewing their curriculum and making the needed changes. Ms. Brown said they have only 26 students in their nursing program because of limited space and there is a very long waiting list for that program. Their graduates from this program all have passed their boards and have a 100% employment rate.

Mr. Saidler said he doesn't see MCC around the area. They have a lot of work to do to convince the public about the community value of MCC. Dr. Smith said they are launching a new brand on August 16<sup>th</sup>. Mr. Saidler said it isn't out there and no one knows it is coming. There is no buzz about it. Dr. Smith said MCC is known in the community and they do let people know what is available.

Mr. Saidler said people believe this Master Plan is the first step to a referendum. They look down the line and see that it is coming. Dr. Smith said MCC is a major education provider for the area and as a public institution they are focused on serving the community. She said they need to develop and expand the health and science program. Mr. Affrunti said it is especially needed now with the new hospital coming to the area. Dr. Smith said that building alone will be \$56 million and that will be only for biology classes. Mr. Haleblian asked if they were going to pay for that on their own. Dr. Smith believes it can be built with a public/private partnership. Ms. Miller said they have a cooperative agreement with the other Community Colleges in the area so if they don't offer certain classes, the student can attend the other Community College at a resident rate. She added that MCC has an accredited robotics program that other colleges don't offer.

Mr. Haleblian asked how long the waiting list is for the nursing program. Dr. Smith said that are approximately 60 students on the waiting list and that is over a year wait. She said they review their programs every 5 years and class every year.

Mr. Hymes asked how MCC determined that manufacturing and health care programs were needed. Dr. Smith said manufacturing companies were invited to attend three sessions to discuss what training those companies are looking for so the programs could be tailored to their needs. Mr. Hymes said he works in manufacturing and did not receive any invitation.

Mr. Fowler said it is most important to meet the companies within the City. It is one of the goals of the EDC to tour businesses to find out what they need from the City and believes it would be beneficial for representatives from MCC to go along on the tours.

Mr. Affrunti said he supports MCC and it is important to know how the partnerships will work.

Ms. Brown said their first goal is how to fund different things. They are always open to others getting involved.

Mr. Richter asked if the College completed a survey of its students, faculty or residents to determine the need for new facilities. Dr. Smith said it is part of the feasibility study which should be completed in about 4 weeks. They would prefer to use partnerships and not build things from scratch. She added that they have started talking with Huntley High School so students will be able to take dual credit courses.

Mr. Fowler said they have an I Shop Crystal Lake program that small businesses can have a website that is hosted through our site. Most small business owners are not internet savvy and they were in contact with a class from MCC to help the business owners create their site. They were to get extra credit for doing it and

none of the students took advantage of it. Mr. Richter explained that the information needed to put on the City's website would take only 15 minutes. Dr. Smith suggested that it become an assignment and not optional. She will speak with the people at MCC.

Mr. Haleblian suggested that the EDC take a tour of MCC. Mr. Fowler agreed and said it is great to have MCC in the City. Dr. Smith said that could be arranged.

Dr. Smith asked about the widening of Route 14 in front of the college. She said IDOT will be making two of the entrances right in – right out only, move the traffic signal to Lucas Road which they will be charged for moving, and not increase the lanes to get in or out of the college at Lucas Road. Ms. Rentzsch asked if they had spoken with Pam Althoff our state representative for this area. Dr. Smith said she had and Representative Althoff said there is nothing she could do. Mr. Richter said he will talk with the Engineering Division about the plans for MCC road improvements.

Mr. Fowler thanked the MCC representatives for coming to the meeting.

Mr. Fowler asked what needs to be discussed at this meeting since it is getting very late.

#### **Economic Development Incentive Programs for FY 2012-13**

Mr. Richter said there are a few changes suggested for the program and he had contacted several other communities regarding their incentive programs. Current the program doesn't have any minimum threshold for upgrades to businesses. The information the members received is for a three-tier program. The original intention of this program was to bring new businesses to Crystal Lake to help with the vacancy rate.

Mr. Fowler asked how a new business can prove that they do \$5 million in sales. Mr. Richter said that the businesses sign an Illinois Department of Revenue release form to release that information to the City and their responsibility to meet minimum taxable sales thresholds is contractual.

Mr. Dalzell asked about existing retailers and doesn't see why the City doesn't want to keep their existing businesses as well as attract new ones. Mr. Reece suggested that the program be modified to include existing businesses. He added that for any business to receive the incentive, they must pay prevailing wage as approved by the City. Mr. Dalzell asked if the program covered equipment as well. Mr. Fowler said this is for retail and not manufacturing. Mr. Dalzell said there are many retailers who have expensive equipment/machines. He said they need to make this fair for all businesses.

Mr. Hymes said businesses are holding the City hostage to get into the program whether they plan to move or not. He would prefer that they not offer anything to existing businesses. The existing businesses will erode the City's tax dollars. Mr. Richter said if the requests become too burdensome for our budget, we may need to discontinue the program.

Mr. Fowler said that due to the hour, he would prefer that this be tabled until the next meeting.

Mr. Hymes moved to table this discussion until the August 28, 2012. Mr. Reece seconded the motion. On voice vote, all members voted aye. Motion passed.

**McEDC Business Champion Awards Nominations**

Mr. Richter said the deadline for nominations for the McEDC awards is today. He said the members received a list of possible nominees in their packet. Mr. Fowler said he is ok with the list. The members agreed.

Mr. Reece moved to approve that nomination applications for the McEDC Business Champion Awards be submitted for the following businesses: Chicago Plastic Systems (Small); General Kinematics (Large); Aptar (Large); Knaack Manufacturing (Large); and Covidien (Large). Mr. Haleblan seconded the motion. On voice vote, all members voted aye. Motion passed.

The remaining items on the agenda will be moved to the next agenda on August 28, 2012. There was no objection from the members.

**Adjourn**

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:20 a.m.