

IRON COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MEETING
Iron County Courthouse
Wednesday, February 26, 2025

1. **Call to Order:** Meeting called to order at 6:00 pm by Larry Youngs.

2. **Pledge of Allegiance:** Recited.

3. **Acknowledge proper meeting posting:** Larry Youngs acknowledged.

4. **Roll Call:**

Iron County Board of Supervisors: Larry Youngs, Roy Haeger, Rick Boes, Paul Mullard, Jamey Francis

Chambers of Commerce: Gary Pelkola- Hurley Chamber of Commerce

Business Owners: Autum Hill, Karl Zinsmaster, Brooke Gilbertson

Community Members: Joel Enking

5. **Public Comment:**

None.

6. **Approval of minutes from January 29, 2025, Economic Development Committee Meeting:**

Motion by Boes, seconded by Francis. Motion carried unanimously.

7. **UW-Extension Rural Entrepreneurial Venture Application Review**

The UW-Extension Rural Entrepreneurial Venture Application was presented to the committee by Chairman Youngs. UW-Extension Community Development Educator Joseph Miller completed much of it, but needs more information from the prospective REV Core Team. Miller will submit the application to UW-Extension upon completion.

Motion by Francis to submit the application when complete, seconded by Pelkola.

Motion carried unanimously.

8. **Presentation of plaque to Kelly Klein for distinguished service to Iron County**

The Iron County Economic Development Committee presented a plaque to Kelly Klein to recognize his 20 years of service of economic development in Iron County. Klein was not present at the meeting, so Joel Enking received the award on his behalf and will send it to him. The committee thanked Klein for his service.

9. **Discussion of press release regarding economic development in Iron County**

Committee members discussed a press release for the new economic development committee. A rough draft was created by Miller as a template, with members adding their ideas. Francis made a motion to share the press release after Miller makes the updates, seconded by Pelkola. Motion carried unanimously.

10. Request to add Economic Development Zone Council funds to Committee Budget

Joel Enking reported that the Economic Development Zone Council dissolved. After paying all the bills, there was \$9,801.50 left in the account. After checking their bylaws, the EDZC has returned those funds to the county. Since this committee was started with limited funds, Francis made a motion to ask the County Board to allocate the remaining EDZC funds to the Iron County Economic Development Committee, seconded by Boes. Motion carried unanimously.

11. Social media communications plan and website development discussion

The EDZC Facebook page has been renamed to Iron County Economic Development Committee. A brief update was shared, explaining that this committee assumed responsibilities of the EDZC. The committee discussed what type of communications the group might be suited for. Suggestions include:

- Sharing quotes from county business owners about what makes working and operating a business in Iron County worthwhile.
- Short videos of business owners introducing themselves and their business or organizations that offer business support services.

12. Bertram Communications request for BEAD endorsement

BEAD Grant application has closed. Bertram Communications, located in Random Lake, WI, approached the committee via email for a county endorsement of their BEAD application. UW-Extension Educator Joseph Miller met with Sarah Lawrenz, Strategic Partnership Manager, to find out what their plans were. The presentation mostly focused on Bertram's history, service locations, and capabilities but offered few details regarding the specifics of their plan for a BEAD-funded project in Iron County. Youngs shared that the major advantages Bertram had were local labor and an in-house fiber manufacturing facility. However, their experience with fiber-to-the-home was lacking, with small scale operations in Utah, Wisconsin, and Illinois.

13. Appointment to NWRPC Visions Committee and Revolving Loan Fund

Youngs stated that he must appoint a member of the committee to replace Kelly Klein on the Northwest Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission's (NWRPC) Visions Northwest committee. Brooke Gilbertson plans to investigate what the committee does and to gauge interest. Youngs appointed Gilbertson and Julie Doucette to the NWRPC Revolving Loan Fund.

14. Questions/Comments from Committee Members

The committee discussed having a brochure made for the Heritage Days Festival. Karl Zinsmaster and Autumn Hill will put something together and bring it to the next committee meeting. Members discussed looking into a food truck rally.

15. Next meeting date and time: date to be determined.

16. Adjourn: Meeting adjourned at 7:10 pm by Larry Youngs.

Minutes recorded by Larry Youngs, reviewed by Rebecca Holm