

Winnebago County Industrial Development Board

November 8, 2023 Meeting Minutes

Room 119, David Albrecht Administrative Building, 112 Otter Avenue, Oshkosh, WI

Board Members Present: Rob Keller, Tom Egan, Amber Hoppa, Morris Cox, Mary Anne Mueller, Elizabeth Hartman (via Zoom), George Dearborn, Jon Doemel, Bryan Stafford

Board Members Excused: Nate Gustafson, Andy Buck

Others Present: Jerry Bougie, Casey Bryant, Tricia Rathermel, Brian Noe, Art Rathjen (via Zoom), Ellen Skerke (via Zoom), Adam Dorn, Julie Rosenau

Meeting called to order at 1:00 pm by Board Chair Rob Keller.

Board Chair Keller requested an amendment to the agenda to allow for Public Comment to be added to the agenda. Morris Cox moved to add Public Comment to the front of the agenda with a 2-minute limit on any comments. Mary Anne Mueller seconded the motion. Motion passed 6-0. Rob Keller further requested to move original agenda item #4 to after item #6. Mary Anne Mueller made a motion to move original agenda item #4 to after #6. Tom Egan seconded the motion. Motion passed 6-0.

(Board member George Dearborn arrived to the meeting).

1. Public Comment: Board Chair Keller opened the meeting for public comments. Brian Noe, Chairman of the Town of Omro, provided comments relative to the per capita funding policies and questioning the requirement to have paid staff in order to be eligible for funding under this program and indicated that he has had conversations with the County Executive regarding this requirement. Tom Egan commented that the IDB should address the Town of Omro's funding allocation once and for all at the next meeting.
2. *(Renumbered from 1 to 2)* Approval of Minutes: Morris Cox made a motion to approve the minutes from the June 22, 2023 meeting. Motion seconded by Mary Anne Mueller. Motion passed 7-0.
3. *(Renumbered from 2 to 3)* Board Action to elect officers: Board Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary/Treasurer.
Jerry Bougie indicated that according to the IDB's bylaws, Board officers require reappointment annually.

Nominations were opened for election of Board Chair. Tom Egan made a motion to nominate Rob Keller as Board Chair. Morris Cox seconded the motion. Additional

nominations were requested. None were received. Motion to elect Rob Keller as Board Chair passed 6-0-1, with Rob Keller abstaining.

Rob Keller requested nominations for Board Vice-Chair. Tom Egan made a motion to elect George Dearborn as Board Vice-Chair. Mary Anne Mueller seconded the motion. Additional nominations were requested. None were received. Motion to elect George Dearborn as Board Vice-Chair passed 6-0-1, with George Dearborn abstaining.

Rob Keller requested nominations for Board Secretary/Treasurer. Mary Anne Mueller made a motion to nominate Amber Hoppa as Board Secretary/Treasurer. Morris Cox seconded the motion. Additional nominations were requested. None were received. Motion to elect Amber Hoppa as Board Secretary/Treasurer passed 6-0-1, with Amber Hoppa abstaining.

4. (Renumbered from 3 to 4) Board discussion and action on pledging a funding match not to exceed \$25,000 from the IDB's reserve fund for US Internet's Wisconsin Public Service Commission Grant Application.

Jerry Bougie reported that Dan Kesselmayer from US Internet is requesting a \$25,000 matching support for their most recent application to the Wisconsin Public Service Commission (WPSC). Jerry indicated the IDB has provided two prior \$25,000 matches for US Internet's previous successful grant applications to the WSPC.

Dan Kesselmayer provided the Board with an overview on their current grant application which is to serve over 900 rural area homes and businesses in the northwest part of Winnebago County with fiber to the home internet service. Dan reported that US Internet will invest \$3.7 million for this latest project coupled with the \$4.4 million grant request from the WPSC for the cost to install fiber optic cable in this area. Dan indicated that the \$25,000 matches by the IDB help bolster the application with the WPSC by improving the grant application scoring.

(Board members Bryan Stafford and Jon Doemel arrived to the meeting).

Discussion pursued on US Internet's request. A motion was made by Tom Egan to approve the \$25,000 matching grant for US Internet contingent upon US Internet being awarded the grant by the WPSC. Motion seconded by Morris Cox. Motion passed 9-0.

5. Board review and approval of 2023 & 2024 COVID 19 Rapid Recovery Loan Program contracts with Greater Oshkosh Economic Development Corporation (GO-EDC).

Jerry Bougie reported that the contracts with GO-EDC are for the administration of the Covid Loan Program which began in March of 2020 with the purpose of providing low interest loans to small businesses to help keep them afloat with the onset of the

pandemic. Jerry indicated the program was closed down by the IDB in March of 2022 after issuing 37 loans totaling \$343,000 over the course of two years and the final loan paybacks will occur in 2024. Therefore, contract approval with GO-EDC for 2023 and 2024 is necessary to complete the administrative activities of the loan program. Tricia Rathermel from GO-EDC provided a summary of the loan program activities. Discussion pursued. George Dearborn made a motion to approve the contract renewals with GO-EDC for 2023 and 2024. Motion was seconded by Jon Doemel. Motion passed 9-0.

6. Review and discussion of the 2024 IDB budget.

Jerry Bougie provided the Board with an overview on the 2024 budget for the IDB. He said it includes an allocation of \$170,000 from the County Board during 2024 budget deliberations which is a small decrease of \$2,542.00 from the '23 budget. Other changes include a small increase in interest revenue on the Board's reserves, a small increase in travel and small decrease in property and liability insurance. Jerry indicated that any surplus on an annual basis goes into the IDB's reserves. Discussion pursued. Morris Cox suggested the Board receive a reporting on the reserve funds at a future meeting(s), which Jerry Bougie will follow-up on with the County Finance Department.

7. *(Renumbered from 4 to 7).* Board discussion on Winnebago County IDB Per Capita Economic Development Grant program and policies.

Jerry Bougie provided the Board with an overview of the program and some of the issues surrounding it and summarized a report detailing the where and how the IDB grant allocations have been made over the past 5 years. He indicated the current program policies have been in place since 2012. The Board discussed whether the current policies are working for the program or if any changes need to be made to it. Board members had a lot of discussion regarding the program with discussion centered around how and where the funding should be allocated, such as additional funding to rural areas, targeting economic development projects, the criteria used to determine eligible projects and programs, setting up a special project fund and so on. Jon Doemel suggested the IDB bring in local communities and other interested parties for a workshop meeting to gain their input on the program. Discussion pursued. The general consensus of the Board was to have additional meeting(s)/discussion and to gain the input from local communities on the program in early 2024.

8. *(Renumbered from 7 to 8).* Next meeting and adjournment.

Jerry Bougie indicated he will be inventorying the Board for the next meeting in December. A motion was made by Jon Doemel to adjourn the meeting. Motion seconded by Morris Cox. Motion passed 9-0. Meeting adjourned at 2:39 pm.

Submitted by,

Jerry Bougie, Recording Secretary