

**Minutes of the March 11, 2024 meeting of the Sawyer County
Economic Development and UW-Extension Committee
Of the Sawyer County Board of Supervisors
Board Room; Sawyer County**



Voting Committee Members Present:

- ☒ Chair: Tom Duffy
- ☐ VC -- John Righeimer - excused
- ☒ Stacey Hessel
- ☒ Brian Bisonette - virtual
- ☒ Chris Rusk - virtual

Others Present:

- | | |
|-------------------------|------------------|
| Andy Albarado | Molly Lank-Jones |
| Lynn Fitch | Linda Zillmer |
| Adam Lamoreaux | Bridget Rongner |
| Donna Knuckey - virtual | |
| Lori Baltrusis | |

Call to Order – Chair Duffy called the meeting to order at 8:30 am.

Certification of Compliance with the open meeting law was met. Roll Call was taken. Quorum was met.

Meeting Agenda --

Public Comments – Linda Zillmer

Minutes from previous meeting – A motion was made by Ms. Hessel; second by Mr. Duffy approve the minutes of the February 5, 2024, meeting; second by Ms. Hessel. Motion carried without negative vote.

Sawyer County Agricultural Fair Association Report – no update

University of Wisconsin-Extension Department Report -

Ms. Rongner provided an update of the agricultural efforts in the County. They will be starting a school garden at the Hayward School system, involving students with planting and harvesting, as well as use of the food in the school meals. An update on the Strong Bodies class was provided; it is an evidence-based class directed toward aging adults.

Hayward Lakes Visitors & Convention Bureau -

No update

Northwest Regional Planning Commission Report -

No update

Economic Development Corporation Report -

Mr. Lamoreaux provided a verbal update. The IDLE grant program grants through the SBA are due May 6th. They met with WEDC and the Diverse Development and received some resources to share with local business owners. He continues to work with the Thrive grant program to develop a Sawyer County incubator for local entrepreneurs.

Airport Master Plan Update -

Mr. Albarado reviewed the two recent meetings that were held with the public. The type of jet traffic is changing at the airport and could create some safety issues that would need to be addressed with this plan. Another public meeting will be held this fall and then the Master Plan comes back to the board to submit recommendations for the airport. The County is the “sponsor” of the airport but the FAA is the primary entity driving the Master Plan recommendations. The Master Plan was last updated in 1996 and this Plan will cover the next 10-20 years. The video recording of the meeting is available on the website.

Library Updates -

Ms. Lank-Jones advised that the Hayward Library is gearing up for the summer reading programs. Displays are set up for National History month. They are assisting people on Mondays with technology equipment skills. The Hayward writers' group is ongoing. On March 19th a Wills and Trusts programs will be held.

Ms. Knuckey advised that they continue to develop programs that engage families. They also have a one-on-one tech support program available at the library. Recent fund-raising revenues continue to pay down the grant for the basement repairs. They are connecting with the Winter School District to develop this summer's reading program, working with the reading specialist for a collaborative incentive-program.

Motorized Trail and Non-Motorized Trail Report -

Mr. Albarado read a statement sent by Ms. Cathy LaReau -- All Sawyer county forest, Federal forest and Flambeau River state forest trails are currently closed for spring thaw other than the Tuscobia State Trail and the attached 9-mile loop. Road routes are still open as well.

We are gathering a lot of responses from our NoRTAC ATV survey and are excited by the results so far, hopefully next month I'll be able to put together a mid-survey report.

There is a push by our county businesses to open more roads to ATV access to provide for connectivity - ATVers could not legally reach several of our businesses this winter, to help with the loss of revenue from the lack of sleds, and business owners are angered by this.

Mr. Duffy provided a verbal update from Ben Popp on the snowless Birkie. They hosted lots of events despite having no snow.

Broadband Update -

Mr. Albarado advised that BEAD funding information is still slow in coming; the last round of grants have been reported out.

LCO Update -

Mr. Bisonette advised that he has not heard of any problem issues with the development of the health center. Mr. Rusk said the build is going well and ¾ of the interior floor is poured and another ¼ will be poured this week.

Historical Society -

No update

Meeting Date/Time – The next meeting of the Economic Development and UW-Extension Committee will be Monday, April 8th, at 8:30 am in the Board Room.

Meeting adjourned at 9:07 am

Minutes recorded by Lynn Fitch, County Clerk