

**Minutes of the May 6, 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:

- ☐ Tom Duffy - Excused
- ☒ John Righeimer
- ☒ Stacey Hessel
- ☒ Steve Kariainen
- ☒ Randy Neumann

Andy Albarado
Lynn Fitch
Donna Knuckey
Lori Baltrusis
Jim Ferguson
Adam Lamoreaux

Others Present:

Molly Lank-Jones
Cathy LaReau
Ann Larson
Sherry Beckman
Linda Zillmer

Call to Order – County Clerk Fitch 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.

Elections – Clerk Fitch read the rules of the election for Chair and Vice Chair and opened the floor for nominations. Ms. Hessel nominated Mr. Righeimer for position of Chair; there being no further nominations a voice vote was called and Mr. Righeimer was appointed unanimously as Chair. Nominations were opened for Vice Chair. Mr. Righeimer nominated Ms. Hessel for the position of Vice Chair; there being no further nominations, a voice vote was called and Ms. Hessel was appointed unanimously as Vice Chair.

Meeting Agenda --

Public Comments – Linda Zillmer

Minutes from the previous meeting dated: April 8, 2024

Motion to approve made by: Ms. Hessel Second by: Mr. Neumann
Motion carried without negative vote.

Sawyer County Agricultural Fair Association Report –
June Dairy Month will be held at the Fair Grounds.

University of Wisconsin-Extension Department Report -

Ms. Baltrusis provided an overview of the UW-Extension division with the community being the classroom for their services. 4-H enrollment has been growing under the current leadership of Ms. Knuckey.

Hayward Lakes Visitors & Convention Bureau -

A written report was provided and highlights were reviewed by Ms. Beckman. Area businesses provided a gift basket valued at \$750 at the Governor's Fishing Opener that was held this past weekend. New marketing initiatives were highlighted, as well as the June WCCA Conference plans. Monday, April 29th at 1 pm the Northwest Regional Planning Commission will present the Wisconsin Outdoor Recreation & Tourism Opportunity Study for Northwest Wisconsin

Northwest Regional Planning Commission Report -
No update

Economic Development Corporation Report -

Mr. Lamoreaux provided a verbal update. They are working on the Thrive grant for \$25,000 over a two-year period. The funds, if received, will be used to open an incubator for start-up businesses. The LCO University would be used

for this purpose. May 6th is the last day for business to submit fund requests for IDL to assist with the slow winter business cycle. Tamarack Health plans for the new housing units on their property have set a summer of 2025 goal for opening the units. The EDC will begin hosting business socials for new businesses as they open their doors. Two of the top economic issues in our area include a lack of housing and daycare.

Library Updates -

Written reports were provided. Ms. Larsen reviewed the highlights of the Weiss Community Library report. They have received a grant of \$4,000+ from the US Forest Service for one of their ongoing youth programs. Ms. Knuckey provided an overview of the Winter Library and their programming. They are receiving \$1500 in grant funding from IEEE SKPL to support the STEM kit program.

Motorized Trail and Non-Motorized Trail Report -

Ms. LaReau provided a verbal update; all the ATV/UTV trails opened on May 1st. They will be requesting in May to open more County road routes leading to the trail system. An economic impact study identified that \$4.2B was spent in Wisconsin. There are four main trail systems in Sawyer County and all require road access to connect the trails together. She read a list of all the surrounding counties that have opened their county roads to access.

Broadband Update -

Mr. Albarado advised that the broadband map identifying BSL service status as of June 30, 2023 shows what is currently considered "served" or "underserved". The estimated underserved, unserved and no service locations without enforceable funding commitments is now at 4,913 units. The BEAD map showing service areas will likely reflect our county as being underserved due to the large amount of county forest land being included in the map. Additional state funding to continue extending coverage will be forthcoming.

LCO Update -

No update

Historical Society -

Mr. Ferguson reported that they are preparing for summer hours which begin after Memorial Day. During the Lumberjack Show there will be trolley tours on Friday of the event. They are also working on a fundraiser for the Totem Pole restoration project.

Mr. Albarado provided a review of the partnering agencies that help offer loan programs to county business owners and how they relate to this committee.

Meeting Date/Time – The next meeting of the Economic Development and UW-Extension Committee will be Monday, June 10th, at 8:30 am in the Board Room.

Meeting adjourned at 9:01 am

Minutes recorded by Lynn Fitch, County Clerk