

**Minutes of the January 6, 2025 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: John Righeimer
- ☒ Vice Chair: Stacey Hessel - virtual
- ☒ Tom Duffy
- ☒ Steve Kariainen
- ☐ Randy Neumann

Andy Albarado
Lynn Fitch
Mindy Simons
Ann Larson

Others Present:

Adam Lamoreaux
Lori Baltrusis
Jim Ferguson
Donna Knuckey

Call to Order – Chair Righeimer 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 the previous meeting dated: **December 9, 2024**

Motion to approve made by: Mr. Duffy Second by: Mr. Kariainen
Motion carried without negative vote.

Sawyer County Agricultural Fair Association Report –
No update

University of Wisconsin-Extension Department Report -
No update this month

Hayward Lakes Visitors & Convention Bureau -

A written report was provided and reviewed by Ms. Simons; general website traffic stats were included showing usage up from 2023. The webcam is the top performing page and they have 6,872 Facebook followers. The YouTube channel is getting many views; one video getting 19,825 views in 28 days. The lack of snow again this year has negatively affected some business traffic.

Northwest Regional Planning Commission Report -
No update

Economic Development Corporation Report -

Written reports were provided including a housing development opportunity/market study and two upcoming training flyers. Mr. Lamoreaux advised that four additional board members have been added to the EDC board. The business incubator has a remodel estimate in and some funding possibilities awaiting word from LCO for the plaza and Hwy K/B. He is now awaiting word on a small business development grant that would help fund the incubator for another year. New grant opportunities are also being worked on through the WEDC and Rural Business grant. Mr. Albarado advised that he has been talking to potential housing developers to help them understand what our County needs in the future. The EDC is trying to gather market study information to provide additional information on exactly what is needed.

Library Updates -

Written reports were provided and reviewed. Also included was a 2025-2030 County Library Plan. The Winter Library is being used by local area businesses as a meeting center and other community programs. Fundraising continues throughout the year. Ms. Larson advised that numbers and visitors increased this year. Community programs seem to remain popular. They are also collaborating with the Hayward School library on events. She reviewed a list of capital improvements on the building.

Ms. Knuckey and Ms. Larson presented a proposed County Library Plan that is renewed every five years which has been reviewed by Supervisor Buckholtz. This Plan allows local libraries to participate in the Northern Water Library Service. Text in this Plan has not changed other than updating the title of the LCO College facility.

Motorized Trail and Non-Motorized Trail Report -

Ms. LaReau provided a report to be read in. Snowmobile funding is experiencing frugal grant funding and the Legislature is looking at increasing trail pass fees. Rep. Chanz Green attended the Saturday night AWSC banquet fundraiser. They have been encouraging ATV/UTV riders to come to the County when weather cooperates, and some resorts are reporting success. Mr. Duffy reported that the Birkie is now full and the Korte and Prince Kaakon races are nearing capacity, as well. The Birkie is making snow and Nordic Kids meet every Sunday at OO with over 150 kids each week.

County Connectivity – Cell, Broadband, Public Safety Network -

Mr. Albarado advised that he met with GenComm and Bug Tussel and requested updated proposals.

Broadband Update -

Consider BEAD Endorsements – Norvado made a presentation (included in the agenda packet) requesting endorsement for a broadband project for three different projects in the towns of Hayward, Lenroot, Bass Lake, Hunter, Spider lake and Round Lake. Mr. Albarado presented a resolution granting a BEAD endorsement for Norvado. A motion was made by Mr. Righeimer to approve the Resolution approving the endorsement for Norvado; second by Mr. Kariainen. Motion carried without negative vote.

Historical Society -

No update

Board Appointed Committee Updates -

Future Agenda Items –

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

Meeting adjourned at 9:45 am
Minutes recorded by Lynn Fitch, County Clerk