



Visions Northwest Regional Economic Development Group
A Division of the Wisconsin Business Innovation Corporation

MEETING MINUTES
VISIONS NORTHWEST REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GROUP
WITC - Hayward, WI
November 11, 2015 – 10:00 AM

1. Meeting called to order at 10:05 AM by Chairman Kelly Klein.
2. **Roll Call:** Scottie Sandstrom – Representing Bayfield County, David Minor (ITV) – Representing Douglas County, Kelly Klein – Representing Iron County, Ken Maki – Representing Sawyer County, Geri Dresen – Representing Chambers of Commerce, Mike Bebeau – Representing Private Industry (Xcel Energy), Dale Heikkinen (ITV) – Representing Price County, Andy Albarado (phone) – Representing Rusk County, Renee Watcher – Representing Education (NorthWERD Group), Mari Kay-Nabozny – Representing NWWIB (phone)

Members Absent: Mike Spafford – Representing Washburn County, Brent McFarland – Tribal Representative, Dale Kupczyk – Representing Economic Development Organizations

Others: Tim Weber – WEDC, Bryan Antony – WHEDA, Sheldon Johnson - NWRPC Staff, Crystal Rohde – Visions Northwest Administrator

Vacant Seats: Ashland County, Burnett County, Taylor County

3. **Approval of September 9, 2015 Meeting Minutes**
A motion to approve the September 9, 2015 meeting minutes was made by Geri Dresen, a second was made by Mike Bebeau. Motion carried unanimously.
4. **Wisconsin Housing and Economic Development Authority (WHEDA) Presentation – Bryan Antony**
Bryan gave an overview of the programs that WHEDA offers and used the meeting as platform for introducing himself to members. His presentation will be distributed by email to members who participated via ITV or phone.
5. **Update on WEDC FY16 Base Funding Contract/1st Quarter Report**
Crystal explained to members that the base funding contract was approved at \$50,000 (\$12,500/Quarter) for base funding and operational costs. Crystal submitted the 1st quarter report on 10/29/2015 which included updates on group meetings, the CEDS, and goals for FY2016. The report was included in the packet for review by members. Also included in the packet were minutes from the Regional Leadership Council (RLC) and members were instructed to call or email Crystal with any questions regarding the RLC meetings/minutes.
6. **Visions Northwest Administrative Guidelines Update and Vacancy Recruitment**
Per the group's discussion at the 9/9/2015 meeting, the Visions Northwest Executive Committee met on 10/8/2015 regarding the administrative guideline amendments and recruitment. This allowed for recommendations to be made to the rest of the group at the 11/11/2015 meeting. The wording in the guidelines was changed to increase flexibility throughout the membership. 10 members will continue to be appointed by each of the county board chairs; however, if the chair is unresponsive to requests, Visions Northwest will recommend a member to the chair for approval. In July, members will discuss at the meeting whether or not they wish to continue participation in the group and term limits have been eliminated. If a members wishes to leave the group, they will work with the Visions Administrator to fill the vacancy within 60 days.

A motion to approve the changes to the Administrative Guidelines was made by Mike Bebeau, a second was made by Geri Dresen. Motion carried unanimously.

As for the current vacancies, Crystal will begin recruitment immediately.

7. Capacity Building Grant Application Update and Timeline

Crystal updated the group on the Infrastructure Analysis, Inventory and Map Server project that was submitted to WEDC for underwriting on 11/10/2015. The grant application seeks \$50,000 for the project with an additional \$10,000 match provided by NWRPC. The project proposes to: examine current and planned capacities for natural gas, broadband, and sewer/water; distinguish service areas and development patterns; identify planned growth and expansion from current land use plans; and examine projected costs and funding challenges. The goal is to examine how existing infrastructure and conditions could impact and potentially restrict future economic development in the region. The map server will allow stakeholders access to see current service areas and capacities through quick access to data and query functionality. Tim Weber with WEDC said the application should be reviewed soon and we should hear something back in December. The project timeline will occur between 1/4/16 and 10/31/16 if it is awarded.

8. Regional Summit for EDCs, Chambers, etc. – Potential Dates and Discussion

Crystal asked the group for input on this idea and explained that it was included in the base funding application to host a "Regional Summit" of some sort to promote/support economic development stakeholders in the region. Crystal asked for potential dates, partners, goals, locations and what would benefit the members and other local partners. Some of the main ideas that came up in preliminary discussion:

- Inviting economic development success stories either within the region, or outside of the region to speak – someone with good presentation/speaking skills.
- Involvement of the wood products industry which was one of the "high priority goals" set forth by the group.
- Allowing state agencies or organizations time to speak on different programs.
- Panel discussions.
- Meeting/networking of ED directors prior to summit.
- Golf outing to follow summit to attract more attendees.
- Having commercial business lenders to discuss financing for businesses.
- Potentially partner with the NWWIB to put on summit.
- Involve the Small Business Development Center (SBDC) – UW Superior.
- Looking at Spring dates April/May.

The Executive Committee will coordinate a meeting with Mari Kay-Nabozny (NWWIB potential summit partner) for the first week of January (prior to the 1/13/2016 meeting) to discuss the summit in more detail.

9. Review 2016 Tentative Meeting Dates and Confirm Next Meeting Date

The group reviewed the potential meeting dates for 2016. The only issue pointed out was a clerical error on Crystal's behalf for the month of July – moving the meeting from the 6th to the 13th.

Next meeting is set for Wednesday, January 13th, 2016 at 10AM at WITC Hayward. An Outlook meeting reminder/notice will be sent out for all future meetings.

10. Adjourn

A motion was made to adjourn the meeting at 11:33 AM by Ken Maki, second by Mike Bebeau.