

**Grow North
Regional Economic Development Corporation
Board Meeting
September 10, 2008
Co-Vantage Credit Union, Antigo, WI**

Attendees:

Jim Brown, Nicolet College
Mel Davidson, OCEDC/DRI
Jodi Hanson, Ministry Health Care
Jim Kumbera, OCEDC
Rob Krieghoff, Retired
Dan Kuzlik, UWEX
Pete Otis, Retired Partner/ Wipfli
Jack Sroka, Lincoln County
Cheri Wilson, CoVantage Credit Union
Karen Graff, US Senator Feingold Office
Sandy Kinney, Nicolet College
Rita Fritz, Eagle River Revitalization Program
Dick Hartmann, Langlade Co. EDC
Bob Egan, Vilas County Board of Supervisors
Sandy Bishop, Nicolet College
Aaron Kapellusch
Bob Weight, Wisconsin Public Service
Jerilyn Fritz, Three Lakes Chamber
James Crawford, Potawatomi
Dennis Bahlmann, North Central WI workforce Development Board
Dick Goldsmith, WHEDA

Minutes:

- I. Call to order: 7:30 a.m., Rob Krieghoff

- II. Welcome and Introductions: Rob Krieghoff thanked Co-Vantage Credit Union and the City of Antigo for hosting the meeting.

- III. Approval of Minutes: Motion to approve the July 9, 2008 meeting minutes by Bob Egan, second by Sandy Kinney. Motion carried.

- IV. Treasurer's report: Pete Otis
Ending balance 9/10/2008 = \$7,494.09
Pete Otis informed the board that the organization has applied for tax exempt status.

- V. Membership: Jim Brown reported that there are 39 paid memberships in the Grow North organization as of September 10, 2008.

VI. Business Development:

- a. Research Facilities Cluster: Dan Kuzlik reported that the second annual Research Cluster meeting is being planned and may be held in conjunction with an existing function, such as the Manufacturers Network Dinner series, to increase the networking opportunities.
- b. Inventors and Entrepreneurs Club: Dan Kuzlik reported that the next I&E club meeting is scheduled for September 24th in the UW Extension Office at the Oneida County Airport, at 6:30 p.m. Jim Kumbera will be speaking on the topic of “Start-Up funding.” Dan also reported that the group is investigating the formation of a retail incubator in downtown Rhineland.

The I&E club has scheduled the second annual Business Expo for February 11, 2009 at the Quality Inn in Rhineland.

- c. Rita Fritz announced an entrepreneurs event sponsored by the Eagle River Revitalization Program. The event is the “Northwoods Entrepreneurial Boot Camp,” November 6, 7, 8 and 10, 2008 in Eagle River. To register contact the Eagle River Revitalization Program at 715-477-0645 or on the web at: www.eaglerivermainstreet.org
- d. Resource Sharing: Sandy Bishop shared an initiative being conducted by the Regional Manufacturers Network to recruit technical and professional employees to area manufacturing companies. The challenge is that not all of the need is for fulltime employees. A survey has been developed and is being distributed to manufacturers to assess their need for employees and the interest in some kind of shared employment. The results of the survey will be presented at the next Regional Manufacturers Network dinner meeting on October 28, 2008 in Mercer. This meeting will include a tour of Action Flooring Company, and a presentation of their “lean Manufacturing” efforts.

Rob Krieghoff asked for a motion to approve sponsorship of the manufacturing survey by Grow North. Motion by Dan Kuzlik, second by Pete Otis. Motion carried.

- e. Sally Cutler mentioned a website designed for professional people to move to the NORTHWOODS, to decrease brain drain, and for recruiting. The Web site is: www.WorkWhereUPlay.com It was also designed as a recruitment tool for “trailing spouses”. NCWWDB doesn’t have resources to market this new site at this time, so Sally urges individuals to send the link to businesses, relatives, and friends. The process right now is...If someone submits their resume it goes to the NCWWDB office. It is then distributed back out to local chambers and businesses that may match, and from now on ...to GROW NORTH if individuals indicate they want to move to the Grow North area.

VII. Infrastructure:

- a. Broadband Committee Report: Jack Sroka reported on a planning grant for a feasibility study of broadband in the northwoods. This is a community block grant from the Department of Commerce. The grant is for \$70,000 and requires a 50/50 match (\$35,000) which can be 25% in-kind match.
- b. Transportation: Dan Kuzlik provided an update of the project to provide six transit routes from outlying communities to Rhinelander. The routes would connect to a hub in Rhinelander which would provide transportation to sites in the city such as Nicolet College, the airport, shopping and medical facilities.
- f. Park N Ride: Jim Kumbera reported the progress made on the Park N Ride program. Carpooling sites are being identified and Jim is working with employers to fund an emergency ride home program for those who are called away from work by emergencies. Approximately \$2,000 is needed to fund the emergency ride program. The geo-coding software that schedules the ride share program is being purchased.

VIII. Old Business: Jodi Hanson reported that the Grow North website is operational and is being facilitated by Jack Sroka. Please visit the site at:
www.grownorth.org

IX. New Business:

- a. The I&E club has requested funding for two \$500 prizes to be awarded at the February 2009 business expo. The prizes will be for *best of show* and *best new invention*. Motion to approve by Cheri Wilson, second by Jack Sroka. Motion carried.
- b. Rob Krieghoff announced that Grow North has contact information for companies interested in doing business with the state of Wisconsin. This information was presented by state officials at the Claridge in Rhinelander during the Governor's northern tour in August.
- c. Dick Goldsmith announced that the Governor has made \$15 million available for a new revolving loan fund. These funds are for projects of less than \$3 million. For more information contact Dick Goldsmith at www.wheda.com

X. Guest Speaker: Rob Krieghoff asked Dick Hartmann to introduce the guest presentation by Dale Soumis, Director of Administration Services and Jim Pike, Director of Communications & Technology for the City of Antigo. The presentation was on the city of Antigo's efforts to bring high speed broadband internet service to the Antigo area. The system uses a variety of technologies including fiber, WI-FI and WI-MAX.

Meeting was adjourned at 9:10 a.m.

Next Meeting: Wednesday, November 12, at 7:30 a.m.

Location: Minocqua (to be determined).

Topic: Tourism – Economic Impact in Northern Wisconsin