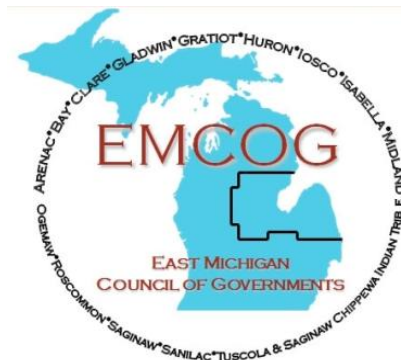


EAST MICHIGAN COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

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MINUTES OF THE EMCOG REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT TEAM Approved May 5, 2017

Meeting Date: Friday, March 3, 2017

Meeting Time: **11:45 A.M.**

Location: Ogemaw County EDC | Michigan Works

Address: 2389 South M-76, West Branch, MI 48661

Attendees:

RED Team Bob Balzer, Lisa Barna, Tracy Byard, Mandi Chasey, Zygy Dworzecki, Steve Erickson, Christine Greve, Gary Kellan, Pat Killingbeck, Robert Moffit, Bill Mrdeza, Rosalie Myers, Bob Redmond, Kacey Zehner

EMCOG: Dave Engelhardt, Jane Fitzpatrick

Guests: Nicole Alexander, MI Veterans Affairs Agency; David Rowley, MSU Extension; Troy Shank, USDA-Rural

1. Call to order, welcome and introductions

The RED Team meeting was called to order at 11:50 a.m. by Acting Chair Bill Mrdeza. Attendees introduced themselves.

2. Review and Approval of Agenda

Moved by Zygy Dworzecki to approve the agenda; supported by Rosalie Myers; motion carried.

3. Review and Approval of January 27, 2017 RED Team Minutes

A motion to approve the minutes as proposed was made by Zygy Dworzecki and supported by Tracy Byard. Motion carried.

4. Chairperson Updates: Bill Mrdeza (filling in for Kathy Methner)

There were no chair updates other than to note that Kathy Methner was on vacation.

5. Saginaw Basin Land Conservancy: Zachary Branigan, Executive Director, (www.sblc-mi.org)

Zachary (Zak) gave a brief introduction of the SBLC and then showed a video which was first shown at the recent 20th Anniversary celebration of the SBLC at the annual Osprey Awards. A link to the video will be sent to the RED Team. Following the viewing of the video Zak discussed some of the urban oriented projects that the SBLC has been doing such as a

pollinator project in Saginaw and the SBLC work with the Saginaw County Land Bank to turn empty city lots into beneficial sites which require very little maintenance (1 mow per 3 years), look nice and look deliberate. The SBLC cleans up the junk and engages the neighborhoods within Saginaw. They are expanding this pilot project to hundreds of lots this year, and hundreds more the next year with the intent of keeping this initiative going to cover as many of the 3,000 empty residential lots in the city as possible. This is part of the “Taking Root in Saginaw” initiative which started out by spending a year of outreach in the city to come up with a series of projects. The SBLC has received funding through WIN to expand this program to other areas in the region in a program called “Taking Root in Small Towns”. The SBLC will be working with small towns in the watershed to carry out these programs there. The SBLC also provides a “Fee for Service” program to help manage vacant lands such as vacant school and park lands, etc.

6. Greening MI Institute, MSU Extension: David Rowley, Government and Public Policy Educator

Dave introduced himself. This is a new position for Prosperity Regions 5 and 6. He is working on bringing some citizen planner courses into the region. Tax policy is his area of expertise and he is also bringing educational opportunities regarding this focus and local government finance into the region.

7. Updates from EMCOG:

7.a. EDA Review of CEDS: Jane Fitzpatrick

Jane sent the annual CEDS Performance Report that was submitted to EDA at the end of January out to the RED Team on Thursday, March 2nd along with the updated Appendix B Implementation Matrix. Handouts were also distributed at today’s meeting. Jane briefly went through the report with the RED Team and encouraged them to review the document along with the revised Appendix B which is now available on the EMCOG website.

7.b. Regional Water Strategy: Jane Fitzpatrick

A Water Strategy steering committee meeting was held on March 2nd to begin the process of setting up a mechanism to develop a regional water strategy to support the State Water Strategy. At this point the committee consists of Charlie Bauer (MDEQ), Brad Jenson (Huron Pines), Jane Fitzpatrick, Kip Cronk (MI SEA Grant). Bill Wright requested that the Partnership for the Saginaw Bay Watershed be included in discussions regarding a regional water strategy.

7.c. Regional Transit Mobility: Dave Engelhardt

Dave reported on the January 27th Transportation Summit that EMCOG partnered with The New Ezekiel Project, GLBRA, SVSU and others on. He has the preliminary notes from Jamie Forbes (The New Ezekiel Project). He also is seeing a lot of change and momentum from STARS to come back but they need to focus on existing service issues before movement to a countywide system. Bill Wright provided some context to the STARS plans, both immediate and future.

7.d. Hazardous Mitigation Plans: Bill Ernat

Bill was unable to attend the meeting due to another meeting regarding the Iron Belle Trail project. Jane referred to the March 2, 2017 memo from Bill Ernat to the EMCOG Council for the update. Bill Mrdeza reminded those present that their cities and townships must pass their resolution of support for their hazardous mitigation plan updates in order to demonstrate participation. Jane noted that EMCOG is including the mention of/coordination of master plans with hazardous mitigation plans as part of the comments provided per master plan reviews.

7.e. Saginaw Bay Watershed Coastal Storms Project (MI Sea Grant): Jane Fitzpatrick

Kip Cronk has set up a meeting set up for March 16th with BaySail for possible programs/initiatives through this project. Jane will be participating in this meeting. The full project steering committee will reconvene for the first time since Katy Hintzens departure. This meeting is scheduled for March 27th.

7.f. Iron-Belle Trail Facilitation: Dave Engelhardt for Bill Ernat

Bill was unable to attend this meeting due to a scheduling conflict with a meeting regarding this initiative. Dave reported that Bill has met with all stakeholders at this point. He submitted 5 mini-grants relating to portions of the trail system. Three of the five have been approved for funding. It is anticipated that EMCOG will be involved with this project through the remainder of our Governor's term in office.

7.g. Non-Motorized Plan and Maps: Dave Engelhardt

The Bay Region has been expanded to include fifteen counties (Prosperity Region 5 and 6). MDOT has requested that EMCOG facilitate this update with completion done by the 2018 bicycling season. EMCOG is working on cost estimates at this point. It is thought that due to the size of the region there will be two sets of maps; one for each of the two prosperity regions.

7.h. PR-5 Update: Jane Fitzpatrick

EMCOG received notice that it was funded at \$180,897 out of a maximum possible of \$250,000 which is what EMCOG applied for as a Tier 1 Prosperity Region. All of the Tier 1 regions received the same amount of funding for 2017. There is one Tier 2 (CUPPAD) that received \$271,000; and one Tier 3 (NWMCOG) that received \$400,000. EMCOG submitted a revised budget consistent with the level of funding. The major changes were in the amount of funds for participation in other regional initiatives and a reduction in the amount of the mini-grant program from the \$160,000 applied for to a lesser amount of \$100,000. A sub-committee has been formed and will be meeting over the next month or so to establish the grant program focus and criteria and application.

8. Other: Parking Lot Items

(Discussion items requested by RED Team members and/or guests during the meeting)

No additional items were added for group discussion.

9. Updates from RED Team Members and Guests

Christine Greve, SBDC at Delta College

Christine encourages everyone to look at their website (www.sbdcmichigan.org). They have moved into web based training with one hour segments. There are a lot more resources on the website and most of the training is free.

Troy Shank, USDA Rural

USDA is operating under a continuing resolution and most of the programs are funded.

Bob Balzer, Gladwin County EDC | Michigan Works

There is more going on now in Gladwin County than he is aware of from his past years. Since 2008-09 they have not lost a significant employer in the county. He has been doing a lot of work on retention. There is a large expansion happening in Beaverton where Saint-Gobain is going to add 66 jobs. A flooring covering manufacturer is moving into the building that was vacated when Lyle Industries merged with Brown Machine two years ago. Also sawmills are coming back into operation.

Gary Kellan, Oscoda Wurtsmith Airport

They are trying to grow maintenance and repair operations. They asked their occupants what to bring in which compliments the existing business operations. The thinking is that an aircraft painting company would be helpful so they are looking for this.

David Rowley, MSU Extension

He extended an invitation to ask questions and communicate needs to him. (Jane will distribute his contact information).

Rosalie Myers, Roscommon County EDC

Being that they are in PR-3 they applied for a \$30,000 grant for an Iron Belle Trail feasibility study and they recently found out they are getting this. A fifth manufacturing company exists in the County. It is a small woman owned operation that is moving out of a garage because he business needs more room for expansion. It has 5 employees. The County's first distillery is opening in May and will be producing rum.

Tracy Byard, Clare County

They are gearing up for their Easter Egg Hunt. Also they are collaborating with MSU Extension for county budget strategic planning.

Nicole Alexander, MI Veterans Affairs Agency

Nicole talked about county incentive grants; Gladwin was approved for a \$5,000 grant; Bay County has applied for a \$150,000 grant which is still under review. The grants can be used for transportation; assistance in the office, training, reimbursement for action meetings, etc. There are eight types of grants.

Bob Redmond, Bay County Financial Analyst

Through an EMCOG connection, Dan Manning from Connect Michigan is going to meet with Bay County regarding a broadband initiative. Also Bob is happy to be back with EMCOG.

Mandi Chasey, Ogemaw County EDC & MichiganWorks

There are two new restaurants, a veterinarian clinic, a yarn shop and a pharmacy opening in the area.

Lisa Barna, Arenac County EDC Liaison

They received notice of approval of their Iron Bell Trail grant. The City of Standish hosted a place making meeting with MEDC and the Chamber of Commerce.

Steve Erickson, Tuscola County EDC

A new company that builds experimental airplanes has opened up at the airport. The EDC revolving loan fund and equipment lease program keeps growing. A large agricultural processing plant will be doing a \$200 million expansion in the future.

Zygy Dworkzecki, Tuscola County (At Large)

Work is progressing on the incubator kitchen in Cass City.

Kasey Zehner, Greater Gratiot Development Corporation

Three manufacturers in Gratiot County are currently expanding. GGDC is working with the SBDC regarding new entrepreneurs.

Pat Killingbeck, Arenac County EDC and Carrollton Township

The grocery store in the City of Au Gres is reopening. Pat is also working on the Carrollton Township piece of the Iron Belle Trail project.

Bill Wright, STARS and Partnership for the Saginaw Bay Watershed

STARS (Saginaw Transit Authority & Regional Services): Bill is working in the planning department for STARS. His current work includes restructuring the route system from a 40 minute cycle to a one hour cycle to match the Bay Metro routes so that both will be on the Delta and SVSU campuses at the same time. This will also allow for a connection to Midland through Bay Metro. There is a need for more reliable STARS vehicles in order for this to work. STARS is in the process of working on the purchase of 20 refurbished vehicles this year which will make for a more uniform bus fleet. A side note: STARS is also working with The New Ezekiel Project in Saginaw and SVSU on the creation of an entertainment line back and forth from SVSU and the Old Town area in Saginaw. This route will run hourly from 9 pm to 3 am Thursdays through Saturdays for approximately six weeks.

Partnership for the Saginaw Bay Watershed: the big focus area this past year has been trying to work on the beneficial use impairment for beach closings. We seem to be more plagued than other areas around the Great Lakes for bacterial issues resulting in beach closures. The Bay City State Park had to be closed over six times last year. The Partnership would like to set up a study of why this is happening. A task force has been working on this over the past year but has not yet been able to figure it out in the timeframe given for the GLBRI grant project they received to study this.

Bob Moffit, City of Gladwin

Revenue share cuts and local government vacancies are very high. We need to speak to our legislators about this. A good note is that the Rural Council conference (Small Town and Rural

Development) is coming up on April 10th through the 12th. Also the MEDA Spring Economic Development Toolbox is coming up. Lee Shirey from EDA may be at our May 5th meeting. Regarding the City of Gladwin EDA grant application, the city received a letter from EDA indicating that the application has been selected for further consideration. Also the land transfer for the Gladwin – Beaverton bike path will be completed with zero dollars required.

Bill Mrdeza, City of Mount Pleasant

May 16th is the date for the MEDA Economic Development Tool Box. The city is continuing to work through its zoning ordinance code and anticipates a draft document this spring. The owner of Max and Emilys, Tim Brockman passed away suddenly this week. He was a huge community supporter.

Patty O'Donnell, MDOT North Region Planner

Patty could not attend the meeting but provided the following update which Jane Fitzpatrick shared with the RED Team and guests:

MDOT Update for Iosco, Ogemaw, and Roscommon Counties:

1. *MDOT Annual Public/non-governmental organizations Input Session: Wednesday, March 29th at 5:30 pm at the East Tawas Council Chambers at 760 Newman Street.*

*Presentations will include information on the 21st Century Infrastructure Commission Report - Transportation Section; MDOT 2017 Road Projects; MDOT Five Year Road and Bridge Program; and public input for projects on the State highway system (I, US and M roads) in the following counties: **Oscoda, Alcona, Ogemaw, and Iosco.***

*For **Roscommon** County: Wednesday, April 12th at 5:30 pm at the MDOT Gaylord Transportation Service Center, 1088 M-32 East, east of Gaylord.*

2. *Community Main Streets that are State Highways/Trunklines: any interested communities can contact me with any ideas or plans you may be working on for the state highways in your communities to include MDOT early in the process. Also, if you are updating your master plans, please send me a notice to review them regarding the transportation infrastructure planning section.*

3. *For up to date construction projects, please visit MDOT's MIDrive website. One big project is I-75 in the West Branch area.*

10. Adjourn

There being no other business to come before the RED Team the meeting was adjourned by the acting chair, Bill Mrdeza at 1:35 pm.

NEXT MEETING: May 5, 2017 at the Riverwalk Place in Gladwin

2017 RED TEAM MEETING SCHEDULE

MONTH	TIME	LOCATION
January 27, 2017	11:45 am	Andersen Enrichment Center Saginaw, MI
March 3, 2017	11:45 am	Michigan Works West Branch, MI
May 5, 2017	11:45 am	Riverwalk Place Gladwin, MI
July 14, 2017	11:45 am	City Hall Council Room East Tawas, MI
September 8, 2017	11:45 am	Tuscola County EDC Caro, MI
November 3, 2017	11:45 am	Roscommon Area District Library Roscommon, MI

RED Team meetings begin at 11:45 a.m. following 10:00 a.m. Full Council meetings. Lunch will be available at the meeting site upon adjournment of the Council meeting at approximately 11:30 a.m. for those who wish to participate prior to the start of the RED Team meeting. The lunch cost is \$10.00 per person unless otherwise specified for a particular meeting.

NOTE: Members of the public are always welcome at any EMCOG RED Team meeting.

Meeting Guidelines

- * Participate in good faith, and in an effort to promote collective learning and good communication
- * Be honest, open-minded, and respectful when offering and listening to differing points of view. Disagree judiciously and respectfully.
- * Respect time commitments in the agenda, maintain focus on the issues and objectives at hand.
- * Be mindful of comment length and the importance of encouraging participation from everyone in the group. Agree briefly.
- * Be respectful regarding use of smart phones and other technologies.