

Keweenaw County Economic Development Committee

Keweenaw County Courthouse

Eagle River, MI, USA

Wednesday, October 3, 2018 Meeting Minutes

(Approved November 7, 2018)

1. Welcome and Introductions

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 pm by Chair Peg Kauppi, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

- Members present: Peg Kauppi, Tess Ahlborn, Harvey Desnick, Todd Holmstrom, Matt Kero, Joe Miller, Sam Raymond
- Members excused: Ned Huwatschek, Kass Simila
- BOC Representative: Don Piche
- Contributing Members: Tom Bryant, John Sturos, Rob Tarvis
- Guests: Charlie Hopper (Pasty.net), Jeff Radcliffe (KEDA), Luke Theisen (Horizon School), Jim Vivian (KCBOC)

2. Approval of Agenda

Motion to approve the agenda by Todd Holmstrom, second by Joe Miller. All in favor, *motion carried*.

3. Approval of Minutes

Corrections: Change priority 3 in item 6 to priority 5, add priority 3 – 100 good paying jobs.

Motion to approve the Sept. 5, 2018 meeting minutes with corrections by Joe Miller, second by Todd Holmstrom. All in favor, *motion carried*.

4. Membership

Open EDC Chair position: Todd Holmstrom had previously expressed interest. As a fifth generation Keweenaw County resident with a successful career in global economic development, Todd brings a wealth of knowledge and experience to the EDC.

Motion to support Todd Holmstrom as the EDC Chair by Tess Ahlborn, second by John Sturos. All in favor, *motion carried*.

Chair Todd Holmstrom graciously thanked Peg Kauppi for her years of service and past leadership. Peg will remain a voting member.

5. Unfinished Business

Continued discussion of priorities (ASSETS/GAPS/LOW-HANGING FRUIT):

1. broadband development and communications
2. establish a small business revolving loan fund
3. 100 good paying jobs
4. land use issues including zoning and permanent easements
5. workforce development

1. *Broadband development and communications (see Sept 5, 2018 minutes)*

Priority champion: Tess Ahlborn

2. *Establish a small business revolving loan fund*

Priority champion: Harvey Desnick

- ASSETS: KEDA, Smartzone
- GAPS: awareness
- LOW-HANGING FRUIT: webpage update, announcements and publication
- Additional discussion: KEDA maintains two revolving loan funds (RLF). Keweenaw County businesses have access to these funds. KEDA has supported numerous businesses throughout the county. More RLF info can be found at [http://kedabiz.com/resources/ - business-financing](http://kedabiz.com/resources/-business-financing)

3. *100 good paying jobs*

Priority champion: Todd Holmstrom

- ASSETS: people interested in returning to the area, four seasons, manufacture/industrial zones, wood, land, Mt. Horace Greeley, world class university and schools nearby, KEDA, WUPPDR, Smartzone
- GAPS: missing industries and companies, retirement population exceeds employment population
- LOW-HANGING FRUIT: web page, awareness, review of zoning
- Additional discussion: we often mix the means with the ends, this is an end goal; definition to be determined, could be to raise a family, have retirement and expendable income; people currently here are first priority, how do we keep Tech students here; Horizon school is helping us through their industrial arts and trades focus, creating jobs for area craftsmen, trades and artists, and working with local companies to employ students; bringing businesses for trades, service centers, telecommunication centers, medical and educational services, and others; develop relationships with other influential people with connections to the Keweenaw (e.g. Mary Barra, General Motors Chairman/CEO).

4. *Land use issues including zoning and permanent easements*

Priority champions: Sam Raymond, Joe Miller

- ASSETS: Land, new business developers (e.g. John Mueller, Keweenaw Resort LLC), KewCo Blueprint for Tomorrow document, willingness of Planning Commission to work with EDC
- GAPS: updated and accessible zoning maps and easements, inventory of available buildings and lots, fractured data to support efforts
- LOW-HANGING FRUIT: Work with Planning Commission, promoting resources and land swaps, leveraging existing attractive resources
- Additional discussion: need zoning information for multi-family housing and seasonal housing, condos and other housing; need to hook into infrastructure or develop it; pull together businesses that benefit, consider a consortium to identify developers and potential owners; stay with a focus on recreation to build on our strengths

5. *Workforce development*

Priority champions: Matt Kero, Kass Simila

- ASSETS: successful local businesses; Horizon School Alt. Education program, ISD, state programs
- GAPS: Business centers, transportation (shuttles)
- LOW-HANGING FRUIT: influence youth for current positions, identify transportation options, work with MTU programs, connect with ISD

- Additional discussion: influence education and skills to bring to the Keweenaw, this is a philanthropic effort; seek info on state programs that are available; canvas local business to determine needed workforce skills; this priority has a strong connection to education, consider leveraging schools as entrepreneur centers

6. New business

- a. Welcoming new businesses: The EDC welcomes new business owner John Mueller, Keweenaw Resort LLC, to Keweenaw County and wish him success with the Keweenaw Mountain Lodge.

The EDC agreed that we should formally welcome all new businesses to the county. Tom Bryant and Todd Holmstrom will draft a letter to send on behalf of the EDC. The letter should include our mission and priorities, as well as contact information for key individuals. We should obtain information on all new businesses so we can highlight them on our webpage.

- b. Nature Conservancy concerns: Several EDC members expressed concern over the destruction of roads on nature conservancy land throughout the Keweenaw and specifically in the Lac La Belle area. The Conservancies own about ~20,000 acres in the county. Some feel the Conservancies are being preservationists, not conservationists, and are not providing a welcoming environment for all to enjoy nature. Destroying access to remote areas using berms, toppled trees and debris placed across woodland roads and trails has tremendous damage beyond economic impacts through our reduced recreational opportunities. In addition to blocking access to motorized vehicles, the damage blocks access for hikers, runners, the disabled, and emergency services. Who should be held accountable for destruction of access, cutting the local community and visitors off from the beauty of the Keweenaw? Should the EDC talk with Conservancy representatives (Gina N) or KLT (Evan McDonald) to discuss concerns? Todd Holmstrom will communicate with Elizabeth in the county office to discuss land use concerns.
- c. Other: Canoecopia – Sam Raymond described the world’s largest paddling expo, a 3-day event held in March. In addition to educational seminars and clinics, vendor and product displays and sales are an integral part of the event. Sam’s presence at the event will afford participants an opportunity to learn more about the Keweenaw and the adventures we have to offer.

Motion by Tom Bryant, second by Peg Kauppi:

The EDC supports Sam Raymond’s request for county funding to attend Canoecopia in March 2019 in Madison, WI.

All in favor, *motion carried*.

- d. Other: 1 Million Cups - Copper Country, a crowdsourcing opportunity for entrepreneurs in the Copper Country, hosts meetings on the second Wednesday of the month. The next meeting will be held at the Keweenaw Mountain Lodge on October 10, 2018 at 9am.

7. Public Comment

None

8. Adjourn

Motion to adjourn at 7:58 pm by Tess Ahlborn, second by Matt Kero. All in favor, *motion carried*.

Next meeting Wednesday, November 7, 2018 – 6:00 pm, Eagle River, MI