

Keweenaw County Economic Development Committee

Keweenaw County Courthouse

Eagle River, MI, USA

Wednesday, December 5, 2018 Meeting Minutes

(approved February 6, 2019)

1. Welcome and Introductions

The meeting was called to order at 6:02 pm by Chair Todd Holmstrom, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

- Members present: Tess Ahlborn, Harvey Desnick, Todd Holmstrom, Ned Huwatschek, Matt Kero, Joe Miller
- Contributing Members: John Sturos, Rob Tarvis
- Members excused: Tom Bryant, Peg Kauppi, Sam Raymond, Kass Simila
- BOC Representative: Don Piche
- Guests: none

2. Approval of Agenda

Motion to approve the agenda by John Sturos, second by Ned Huwatschek. All in favor, *motion carried*.

3. Approval of Minutes

Motion to approve the November 7, 2018 meeting minutes with editorial corrections as noted; by Joe Miller, second by Rob Tarvis. All in favor, *motion carried*.

4. Unfinished Business

4a. Priority check-in:

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

Tess Ahlborn will follow up with PFN regarding progress toward a fiber network in the county and invite PFN to attend the March 6, 2019 EDC meeting. Todd Holmstrom will continue to coordinate with NMU's EAN contact Eric Smith to discuss Keweenaw County's role in the network being implemented throughout the UP.

2. Establish a small business revolving loan fund

Upcoming statewide *Opportunity Zones* will play an important role in economic development. Keweenaw County is the largest area identified. Connecting the county with a fiber network will be a huge boost to the infrastructure needed to attract businesses and investment opportunities. The EDC will continue to monitor this topic as it becomes better defined.

3. 100 good paying jobs

Again, *Opportunity Zones* can play a big role in achieving this goal. Subsequent discussions will develop the prospectus, defining how we differentiate ourselves from other counties or zones. Todd Holmstrom will continue to attend related Opportunity Zone events and update the EDC at future meetings.

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

Joe Miller reported the group is reviewing the zoning map for industrial and multi-family developments. Please contact Joe if you are interested in helping with this topic.

5. *Workforce development*

Discussion regarding a needs assessment/report for workforce development through CCSID. Matt Kero will follow up and forward the report to the committee.

4b. Welcoming new businesses:

Thank you to all who helped with the welcome letter. Todd will use the letter as a template and follow-up with Ann and Elizabeth for monthly updates regarding new businesses.

4c. County website update:

Rob Tarvis followed up with Ann in the county office regarding the county website improvement initiative. He will be included in the future meetings and will coordinate input from the EDC as the county moves forward.

4d. Keweenaw County Pleasure Maps:

It was questioned whether the Chamber of Commerce or the Visitors Bureau and Convention Center offers a similar map, although it was decided by consensus that a map is needed to be more specific to Keweenaw County. Sam Raymond will draft a plan for future discussion.

5. New business

- a. DNR Land Swap: Todd Holmstrom reported on a potential land swap between the DNR and TRG that would extend into the peninsula making a network of trails possible. Don Kauppi has extensive knowledge in this topic and will be invited to meet with the EDC in February 2019. The EDC recognizes the value in working with the DNR to obtain land so that it remains for public access.
- b. EAN Coordination Meeting: Several members of the EDC met with Eric Smith and Don Salo from NMU's EAN. Harvey Desnick will forward the slides to the EDC, which includes coverage maps and access limitations. As expected, the EAN is faced with logistical issues and needs access to communication towers. The EAN will operate in a dedicated licensed spectrum and will provide the front end up to 5G service, but not the back haul will have to be either microwave line of sight or through a fiber network. The upgraded sheriff's tower will be a good county asset to assist in the development of the EAN throughout the county.
- c. Budget – the EDC currently has no budget. The county operates on a Jan-Dec fiscal year with budget meetings held annually in October. The EDC needs to consider their needs and have budget requests in by September.
- d. Membership – Matt Kero, Joe Miller, and Kass Simila have been put forward for reappointed to the EDC at the next county BOC meeting.

6. Public Comment

None.

7. Adjourn

Motion to adjourn at 7:02 pm by Harvey Desnick, second by John Sturos. All in favor, *motion carried*.

Next meeting Wednesday, February 6, 2019 – 6:00 pm, Eagle River, MI