

Richland Economic Development Board

Meeting Minutes

for

Monday December 13th, 2021

The Richland Economic Development Board met on **Monday, December 13th, 2021 at 9:00am at the Council Chambers of the Richland Center Municipal Building, 450 S Main Street, Richland Center, Wisconsin** to discuss and/or take action on following agenda items:

Board Members in attendance: Mike Breininger, Marty Brewer, Todd Coppernoll

Advisory Members in attendance: Eric Klang, Bruce Roesler, Kari Honer, Clint Langreck,

Director in attendance: Jasen Glasbrenner

Absent: Aaron Joyce

Minutes for Agenda

1. Call to order, establish that a quorum is present and that the meeting has been properly noticed. Jasen Glasbrenner established a quorum is present and properly noticed. Mike Breininger called meeting to order.
2. Approval of Agenda
Motion by: M. Brewer
Second by: T. Coppernoll
Discussion: Agenda was read out loud by J. Glasbrenner
Vote: Passed Unanimously
3. Approve previous meeting minutes from November 3rd, 2021
Motion by: T. Coppernoll
Second by: M. Brewer
Discussion: NA
Vote: Passed Unanimously
4. Selection of a person for Richland Economic Development Board - Advisory Member (Seat #3) representing the Retail Sector (Mike B.)
Chairman M. Breininger opened the floor for Nomination
Discussion: Position to replace B. Kaasa. Don Fieldhouse and Craig Woodhouse were nominated.
Motion to close Nominations: M. Brewer
Second by: T. Coppernoll
Vote: Passed Unanimously

Interviewing of Candidates:

Mr. Fieldhouse is Manager of Walmart and Mr. Woodhouse is Director of Chamber of Commerce, is the manager of the local branch of the Southwest Technical College in Richland Center and has just recently opened a record store on Orange St.

Mr. Fieldhouse believes that housing is the biggest priority in RC and is needed for current RC residents and to bring in new employees to the area. He and his wife currently live in Panorama Estates and have been looking to buy or build a home for the past two years. Mr. Fieldhouse said, “we need neighborhoods,” and to make RC more family friendly. Mr. Fieldhouse also commented that there needs to be more things for kids to do in the area. T. Coppernoll confirmed that housing is the biggest challenge in the City and County.

Mr. Woodhouse believes that RC is affordable and has a good quality of life. He believes we should increase our focus on tourism, especially silent sports activities, and celebrate the great things that we have. He stated that housing and workforce development are critical to the future of the area and we need to focus on them.

Both candidates were thanked by all members of the RED board for their interest in being a board member and both were deemed to be high quality candidates.

Motion to select candidate: T. Coppernoll

Second by: M. Brewer

Discussion: see above notes

Vote: M. Breininger, chairperson states “Mr. Fieldhouse has been chosen to replace Mr. Bruce Kaasa on the Economic Development Board” by 3 to 0 vote.

5. Nomination and Election of the Chairman for Richland Economic Development

Open nominations: M. Brewer

Discussion: E. Klang nominates M. Breininger to be chairperson. No further nominations

Motion to close nominations by: T. Coppernoll

Vote to Close nominations: Passed Unanimously

Motion to Elect M. Breininger as Chairman by: E. Klang

Second by: B. Roessler

Vote: Passed Unanimously

6. Discussion and possible action on the complete review of the RED Board founding documents and rules.

- a. Possible motion to Rescind the resolution passed at the last meeting (Agenda Item #7)
“A resolution by the Richland Economic Development Board to amend the guiding documents of Richland Economic Development especially as it pertains to voting rights of members.” Items addressed were Defining a quorum, which members can vote, expansion of the Board from 9 to 11 members.
- b. Possible motion to resolve to review the founding documents and rules in their entirety to identify all critically needed amendments and additions and to bring one change resolution forward.

Motion: To rescind/repeal the former resolution and to create a subcommittee to review and revise the founding structural documents and to increase the number of voting members.

Motion by: M. Brewer

Second by: T Coppernoll

Discussion: Current board members Honer, Klang, and Roessler concur that advisory members on the board should have voting rights on the RED board. M. Brewer is open to increasing the number of the board members from 9 to 11. B. Roessler states this is the correct “direction to go.” Subcommittee volunteers are: Honer, Langreck, Brewer, Breininger, Coppernoll, and Fieldhouse (new member).

Vote: Passed Unanimously

7. Discussion on refugee resettlement programs and their potential economic impacts on the workforce and communities (Mike B)

Motion by: N/A

Second by: N/A

Discussion: M. Breininger discussed recent visit to Ft. McCoy, largest group of Afghan refugees. There are 3 groups of individuals being housed at Ft. McCoy-Traditional families, Single parent families, and Single Men. M. Breininger and other board members discussed the possibility and viability of having refugees (visitors) move to Richland Center and be gainfully employed in our area and to put down roots. Lack of English skills and lack of housing are huge hurdles to overcome. Both SWTC (Woodhouse) and UWPR (Compton) said they will talk it over with their staff and see if they are able to help with the English speaking/ skills teaching should refugees relocate to Richland Center, WI. M. Brewer stated, “if we can find them housing, bring them here.” E. Klang said there are 500 job openings in the county but for his business (Rockwell) he needs them to understand English for safety reasons. D. Fieldhouse agreed with the comment. M. Breininger also stated there several other organizations like SW CAP and WEDC that are working on hiring a Director to work through education and housing programs for refugees. The refugees will have work permits/visas. Director Glasbrenner indicated that there is definitely a need for workers but that working with refugees was a very complex process and that he was concerned that his office does not have the time necessary to advance this initiative. Chairman Breininger stated that he was going to continue to work on the initiative and that anyone else that was interested could connect with him to learn more.

8. Update on Resolution by Economic Development Board – Recommendation to City Council to hire a professional negotiator to acquire land.

Director Glasbrenner reported that there had been discussions at the City around the topic and that there was a closed session of the Planning Commission to discuss land development possibilities and this recommendation would be discussed. T. Coppernoll recommended that the City Council is ready for a presentation from Troy M of the SW Planning Commission.

9. Adjourn to Monday January 10th, 2022 at 9am

Motion by: T. Coppernoll

Second by: M. Brewer

Vote: Passed Unanimously

Minutes recorded by Rosanne Knower and Director Jasen Glasbrenner