

WOODBURY COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS AGENDA ITEM(S) RE

#9c

Date: October 22, 2015

Weekly Agenda Date: October 27, 2015

ELECTED OFFICIAL / DEPARTMENT HEAD / CITIZEN: Jeremy Taylor

SUBJECT: Information from Committee Meeting Discussing Rural Economic Development

ACTION REQUIRED:

Approve Ordinance

Approve Resolution

Approve Motion

Give Direction

Other: Informational

Attachments

WORDING FOR AGENDA ITEM: Committee Meeting Discussing Rural Economic Development

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

BACKGROUND:

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

RECOMMENDATION:

ACTION REQUIRED / PROPOSED MOTION:

October 20, 2015

Sergeant Bluff City Hall

"Rural Woodbury County Development Committee"

Attendees:

Chairman Mark Monson, Board of Supervisors
Jeremy Taylor, Board of Supervisors
David Gleiser, Economic Development Director Woodbury County
Jon Winkel, Sergeant Bluff Mayor
Jim Fisher, Merville Mayor
Kent Baker, Record Editor
Wayne Dominowski, Sergeant Bluff Advocate Editor
Taylor Goodvin, Taxpayers' Research Conference

Committee Introduction

Mark Monson, Chairman of the Board of Supervisors, called the meeting to order. He set forth the purpose of the meeting, namely to discuss the future of funding for Local Option Sales Tax. Because of Iowa Code and a voter referendum, these monies are allocated 80% to secondary roads and 20% to economic development.

Supervisor Jeremy Taylor volunteered to keep minutes of the meeting, and a name for the group was to be determined at a future date. (Toward the end of the meeting, it was agreed upon to be named the Rural Woodbury County Development Committee.)

Discussion of County Funds:

Chairman Monson described the creation of an RFP resolution for long-term planning crafted by Economic Development Director David Gleiser.

Supervisor Jeremy Taylor discussed great versus realistic expectations in understanding that the Board takes in about \$500,000 in Local Option Sales Tax and if the Board adopted a resolution prioritizing property tax relief, that not until 2019 does CF Industries revenue even reach \$49,000. One request recently before the Board was for \$8.2 million so that if apportioned among 14 communities, something in the \$30-35,000 range annually from LOST funds would be more realistic and it must be understood that the County's \$56 million from CF Industries gradually stair-steps in over 20 years so that the one \$8.2 million request would have taken all TIF revenue until 2025 for one community.

Comprehensive Plans

Chairman Mark Monson discussed the fact that 10 towns had comprehensive plans paid for by the county in 1970 but few have current ones. Economic Development Director David Gleiser spoke about options ranging from main street revitalization to the RFP for long-term planning. Any metric in his estimation should be measured by a three-fold goal: growth to the tax-base, future job growth and retention, and the ability to expand utilities and infrastructure.

Moville Mayor Jim Fisher and Sergeant Bluff Mayor Jon Winkel discussed the differences between a comprehensive plan required by Code and a true, functional plan having both recently developed one in each mayor's respective community. Mayor Fisher discussed private business needs ranging from various businesses within his community.

Supervisor Jeremy Taylor discussed the importance of making sure that a long-term plan preceded requests from the county to ensure that the project truly represented a consensus of the community. Because a long-term plan involves stakeholder meetings, this would keep the county from the untenable position of contributing to a project that only benefitted one or a few against the objections of a majority of the community (especially critical in discussions of water/sewer infrastructure).

Increased Dialogue from Mayors Representing All Parts of County

Sergeant Bluff Mayor Jon Winkel discussed the synergistic effect of having a "once in a lifetime opportunity" with AGP, CF, Seaboard and Triumph foods along with the added valuation in his community. In his opinion, it was critical to talk to each rural mayor (perhaps the mayors collectively). This could dovetail with increased discussion of E911 and emergency services, which is a topic that has brought rural mayors together in the past. This has happened in Climbing Hill, but they need to have real input.

Moville Mayor Jim Fisher discussed wanting to feel that they are an integral part of this and that the communication from the County Board of Supervisors needs to not only increase but be felt out in those areas. Whether it is meeting minutes or notes of discussions, there is a various spectrum of feeling somewhat involved to feeling left out. Perhaps a meeting that was more centralized than driving from Smithland to Sioux City would be meritorious of further discussion.

The group had consensus that every town and community is different and that the committee needs to listen as much if not more instead of planning to far out without garnering as much input as possible.

Record Editor Kent Baker likewise echoed what seemed widespread sentiment—that mayors are key to being listened to as representatives of their community. He also made the point how vital and integral clerks are to their communities. Perhaps they could be brought in on the discussion at some point, and Economic Development Director David Gleiser mentioned that he has a quarterly lunch with all clerks.

The Establishment of CDCs

Mayor Jon Winkel and Economic Development Director David Gleiser spoke about the power of establishing community development corporations. These exist in Correctionville, Cushing, Oto, Moville, and Sergeant Bluff. Both concurred that the groups are really only as good as those who are sitting at the table but have been instrumental in the Correctionville grocery store and the Cushing library.

Professional Services: Grant-Writing and Clerical Assistance

Chairman Mark Monson spoke of discussions with Western Iowa Tech's Steve Warnstadt regarding training for clerks and assistance in further education related to local government functions.

Sergeant Bluff Mayor Jon Winkel and Economic Development Director David Gleiser discussed several groups who could assist not only in planning but also in leveraging other dollars, e.g. "Advance Iowa," "The Institute of Decision-Making," and the "Strategic Marketing Initiative," some of which come from the University of Iowa and the University of Northern Iowa.

Possibilities of Local Option Sales Tax Uses

Discussed in the meeting were the potential of paying membership dues to SIMPCO for counties, \$100-120,000 for comprehensive plans paid for by the county, the development or startup of CDCs, grant-writing assistance to leverage more funds, an on-line marketing presence for communities, job recruitment of "cottage industry," training for clerks and staff, main street revitalization and nuisance abatement, and access to private capital through non-tax means (navigating SCDC loans and USDA grants through the RECs).

Future Meetings

Supervisor Jeremy Taylor and Economic Development Director David Gleiser will develop a survey to help poll the rural mayors at a gathering of the rural mayors with the Board of Supervisors. The goal would be to have the Board meet at that same time with the rural mayors and have a 30% presentation but 70% listening session. Perhaps the discussion of comprehensive plans, minutes of our meetings and initial discussions can take place; however, it seemed a key consensus was that the listening outweigh any presentation. This could include hearing "Needs" and "Wants" and listening to such wide-ranging topics as housing, family, and business needs.

November 15, a Sunday night, was suggested at a central location, e.g. The Fireside in Anthon. Having a meal and a discussion was thought to be a good idea, and we can explore if this is something that the county could fund in order to generate this important discussion.

The Taxpayers' Research Conference will have both Jim Johnson and Taylor Goodvin in future meetings, and Taylor Goodvin thought that this approach of garnering broad-based input seemed worthy of support.

The next meeting will be Tuesday, November 3, at 2:00 p.m. in Merville.