

**MERAMEC REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION
COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY
ADVISORY COMMITTEE/DEVELOPER'S LUNCHEON
Tuesday, April 28, 2015
MEETING MINUTES**

Members Present: James Morgan, Lowell Tonding, Ray Walden, Butch Tucker, Wayne Morgan

Members Absent: Dennis Wilson, Cheri Tune, Tony Floyd, Cyndra Lorey, Candace Connell, Krista Snyder, Donald Claycomb, David Dudenhoeffer, John Petersen, T.R. Dudley, Bruce Sassmann, Rosiland Pride, Bob Baldwin, John Butz, Kathy Byrd, Byron Craig, Carl Stephens, James Wright, Jim Barnett, John Casey, Luge Hardman, Mark Boyer, Mike Distler, Randy Verkamp, Robert Vineyard, Robin Huskey, Shannon Grus, Thomas Leasor, Byron Baker, Jeff Davis, Terry Palmer, Christopher Dickeneite, Ken Bassett, Russell Scheulen, Jan Haviland, Janet Walker, Marla Stevenson, Carol Carson, Jeff Clark, Robert Schaffer, Keith Strassner, Ted Day, Nancy Montgomery, Richard Huse, and John Greenlee.

Welcome and Introductions: In the absence of the chairman, James Morgan opened the meeting at 12:15 p.m.

Approval of Jan. 27, 2015 Minutes: Walden made a motion, seconded by Morgan, that the minutes be approved as presented. Motion passed.

Pulaski County Growth Alliance (PCGA): Wayne Morgan, Executive Director of PCGA, presented information about PCGA. The organization began in 2007, with a group of interested citizens assisted by MRPC. Through funding from the Department of Defense Office of Economic Adjustment, the group was able to complete a Diversification Study. One of the needs identified in the study was an organization responsible for the county's economic development activities. The county, cities in the county and local businesses committed to assist with financing. Additional financing was needed, so the PCGA successfully bid to operate the Department of Motor Vehicles license office in 2009. This provides about 50 percent of the budget for PCGA.

Current projects include:

- Work on the 80-acre industrial park, including a possible Community Development Block Grant for a spec building.
- Work Ready Community Designation. Twenty-five of 43 employers are currently willing to participate. Process is moving forward.
- Fiduciary Agent for the Neon Park in Waynesville
- Fiscal Agent for the Ozark Quilt Trails

Some issues facing the county include the downsizing of Fort Leonard Wood resulting in a loss of available workforce, sales tax, school enrollments, etc.

Economic Development Activities Across the Region: Participants were asked to answer the following questions for their local jurisdictions/organizations:

In what ways does your jurisdiction/organization promote available economic opportunities for young people in order to retain their talents within the region and encourage young people to return talents to the region?

Participants agreed that it is difficult to retain young people, but that this is directly related to the strength of the family unit. Quality of life also helps. Since younger people are more involved with technology, it is important to provide adequate broadband.

Next Meeting:

Tuesday, July 28, 2015 at 12:00 noon.

Adjournment