

**MERAMEC REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION  
COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY  
ADVISORY COMMITTEE MINUTES - Tuesday, July 29, 2014**

**Members Present:** David Dudenhoeffer, John Petersen, T.R. Dudley, Lowell Tonding, Cheri Tune, Bruce Sassmann, Rosiland Pride, Cyndra Lorey, Candance Connell and Butch Tucker.

**Members Absent:** Bob Baldwin, John Butz, Kathy Byrd, Bryon Craig, Carl Stephens, Dennis Wilson, Donald Claycomb, James Morgan, James Wright, Jim Barnett, John Casey, Luge Hardman, Mark Boyer, Mike Distler, Randy Verkamp, Robert Vineyard, Robin Huskey, Shannon Grus, Thomas Leasor, Travis Schwartz, Byron Baker, John Tracy, Jeff Davis, Terry Palmer, Christopher Dickeneite, Ken Bassett, Russell Scheulen, Jan Haviland, Janet Walker, Ray Walden, Marla Stevenson, Wayne Morgan, Carol Carson, Jeff Clark, Robert Schaffer, Tony Floyd, Keith Strassner, Ted Day, Nancy Montgomery, Richard Huse and John Geenlee.

**Staff Present:** Maria Bancroft, Connie Willman and Bonnie Prigge.

**Welcome and Introductions:** Chairman John Petersen called the meeting to order at 11:45 a.m.

**Approval of Mar 25, 2014 Minutes:** The committee members present reviewed the minutes from the meeting on March 25, 2014. Sassmann made a motion to approve the minutes as presented, seconded by Dudley. Motion passed.

**Meeting Frequency:** Willman provided the committee members with background information on previous committee discussions to change the frequency of the committee meetings. After discussion, Sassmann made a motion to change the current meetings from bi-monthly to quarterly on the fourth Tuesday of month at 12:00 noon and invite the economic developers and IDA representatives in the region, seconded by Dudenhoeffer. Motion passed.

**Economic Development Action Plan Development:** Willman recapped where the committee finished off at the last meeting and asked the committee members to discuss and share ideas on the following action plan items. The committee members provided input on the objectives and action plan as follows:

1. International competition and how the region may compete in today's environment
  1. Need to address jobs leaving the area
  2. Address the issue that local businesses are missing out on global opportunities

(Global markets could create more jobs for the area)

1. Need input from DED on resources available
2. Address cost of labor challenges
3. Create database of regional companies
4. Hold workshop on exporting (with DED, SBA and small businesses)
5. Visit international trade shows (partner with other organizations, if necessary)

1. Lack of some critical infrastructure (especially roads-no north/south corridor)
  1. Work on current funding issues
  2. Address impact of EPA regulations
  3. Work on addressing broadband infrastructure
  4. Work to address water and sewer improvements, balancing cost with local capacity

1. High poverty levels. (Committee decided this is a result of the economy and should not be listed as an action item.)

1. Lack of sufficient state, federal and local funding.
  1. Set priorities from most important to least important

2. Seek out alternative funding sources.

**Next Meeting:** Thursday, October 28, 2014 at 12:00 noon.

**Adjournment:** Being no further discussion for the committee, Sassmann made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Dudenhoeffer. Motion passed and meeting was adjourned at 1:08 p.m.

**Approved by the board \_\_\_\_\_, 2014**

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**John Petersen, Chairman**