

Sawyer County Clerk
10610 Main Street, Suite 10
Hayward, Wisconsin 54843
cwilliamson@sawyercountygov.org
telephone 715.634.4866 
toll free 877.699.4110 



Agenda

Economic Development and UW-Extension Committee meeting
March 5, 2018; 8:30 a.m.
Assembly Room, Sawyer County Courthouse

01. Call to order
02. Certification of compliance with the open meetings law
03. Meeting agenda
04. [Minutes of February 5, 2018 meeting](#)
05. Audience recognition
06. Hayward Lakes Visitors & Convention Bureau
07. Sawyer County Agricultural Fair Association report
08. Broadband update
09. [University of Wisconsin-Extension Department report](#)
10. Bike/Ped Citizens Advisory Committee report
11. [Economic Development Corporation report](#)
12. Future Agenda Items
13. Other matters for discussion only

Carol Williamson
Sawyer County Clerk

Emailed to: Sawyer County Record, Sawyer County Gazette, WRLS, WHSM, AND WOJB, Hayward Library, and Village of Winter for posting on Tuesday, February 27, 2018, 11:30 a.m. by Carol Williamson

A majority of the members of the County Board of Supervisors or of any of its committees may be present at this meeting to listen, observe and participate. If a majority of any such body is present, their presence constitutes a "meeting" under the Open Meeting Law as interpreted in State ex rel. Badke v. Greendale Village Board, 173 Wis. 2d 553 (1993), even though the visiting body will take no action at this meeting.

Draft

Minutes of the meeting of the Economic Development and UW-Extension Committee
Sawyer County Board of Supervisors
February 5, 2018; 8:30 a.m.; Assembly Room; Sawyer County Courthouse

Members present: Brian Bisonette, Marc Helwig, Bruce Paulsen

Others present: Lori Baltrusis, Don Semler, Don Mrotek, Tom Hoff, John Saunders, Sherry Beckman, Frank Zufall, Linda Zilmer, Don Mrotek, Rose Lillyroot.

Brian Bisonette called the meeting to order at 8:33 noting that there was a quorum.

Motion by Paulsen, 2nd by Helwig to approve the agenda. Motion carried.

Motion by Paulsen, 2nd by Helwig, to approve the minutes of the December 11, 2017 Committee meeting. Motion carried.

James Schlender arrived and began chairing the meeting.

Cheri Morgan recapped statistics on tourism from 2017 that the Chamber can track via their website. Discussion of the Birkie Bridge being in Minneapolis for the Super Bowl.

Sheldon Johnson discussed recruiting and retaining employees in Northwest Wisconsin, Rise Sessions that looked at millennials and what attracts them. Discussion about affordable housing, new funding allocations that were requested and that are available, and that there will be two upcoming household hazardous waste collections.

Don Semler updated the Committee on broadband progress. Reports he has spoken to both Charter and Norvado and neither company has any opportunities being developed in Sawyer County. CenturyTel did submit a grant for further development. Some people are trying Satellite broadband and it is working well, but there is concern that once the busy tourist season arrives it will not be adequate.

UW Extension Director Lori Baltrusis distributed a monthly report to the committee, reported that recruitment is beginning for the new position in Sawyer County and she is hoping to schedule meetings with other partners to discuss possibly sharing educators in the future.

John Saunders introduced reported that the Town of Hayward application went in on time, that bike path maps are now on the website. There was discussion of a master plan.

Don Semler updated the Committee on the Economic Development Corporation and noted that there was a report in the committee's packet. The Workforce Development Committee has had two meetings, good discussion so far with the focus on what to do to attract and retain people.

WITC is hosting strategic planning listening sessions.

Meeting adjourned at 9:03 a.m.

Minutes prepared by Rose Lillyroot

Sawyer County March Report

*The Sawyer County UWExtension staff identified and shared the following goals for 2018: 1) Support community organizations, 2) Provide education and technical support to local businesses, entrepreneurs and agriculture producers and 3) Provide life skill development for youth and families. Discussions among the staff have also suggested an important theme: **Creating Resiliency in organizations, local economy and families in Sawyer County.***

4-H Youth and Families Educator – Vacant

- The **Positive Youth Development Extension Educator** position was posted on 2/19/18. The following are the plans for filling the position: Post until 3/19, First review by UW-Extension on 3/20, Phone Interviews with selected candidate 3/27, Face to Face Interviews 4/9, Offer Position 4/12, Tentative Start Date 5/1/18.

FoodWise - Lisa Wydra / Kim Clark

- Second graders at Siren, Webster, Hayward, Winter, LCO and St. Francis schools are having fun during FoodWise nutrition lessons. We help youth build a lifetime of healthy habits: choosing healthy food, moving more and washing hands to help prevent illness.
- At each in-school nutrition lesson, FoodWise educators encourage children to talk with their parents about the day's nutrition lesson. Parents receive nutrition information about healthy family routines, saving money on food and being active as a family.
- The FoodWise program is introducing updated display materials for use at food pantries, where clients talk with educators about ways to act on their nutrition and budgeting goals. Display topics include planning to shop and making meals at home.

Community Development and Resource Educator - Ariga Grigoryan

- Ariga will be reporting in person this month

Agriculture Development Educator - Kevin Schoessow

- UW-Extension is co-sponsoring the annual spring Grazing Conference with Northwest Graziers Network on March 3 near Luck, Wisconsin. This conference addresses issues important to new, part-time, full-time, and low-income startups livestock producers. Over 75 farmers are expected to attend including many from Sawyer Co.
- Pesticide Applicator Training (PAT) will be held on March 14 at the Spooner Ag Station. This training is for farmers or farm employees who will be purchasing, handling or applying restricted use pesticides. Attendees include crop farmers, cranberry growers, and greenhouse & nursery owners from Sawyer and surrounding counties.
- The Master Gardener Volunteer Training is tentatively scheduled for Tuesday evenings from 6-9 pm at the Spooner Ag Station April 3-Jun 19. We are currently taking applications.
- Meeting with Lisa Wydra and LCO tribal partners to organize gardening and nutrition education lessons at the Reserve Community Center during the growing season. _____

Sawyer County/Lac Courte Oreilles Economic Development Corporation
6134N Morningside Lane, Stone Lake WI 54876
(715) 865-4606 – (612) 309-0221 cell

Executive Director's Report for February, 2018

Workforce Development: Lynn Fitch, Chair of our Workforce Development Committee, wrote the following press release. "For the past several months, members of the Sawyer County/LCO Economic Development Corporation have been gathering ideas to help resolve some of the employment gap issues in our community. The first organizational meeting held on January 15 in which local community school superintendents, representatives of area businesses large and small, representatives of WITC and LCO Community College, and key workforce related community agencies were present. Critical topics were identified and additional meetings were scheduled to begin working on key areas; filling job vacancies and training our local workforce are foremost on the agenda.

Multiple meetings have been held since the January 15 kickoff date of this group and projects are being identified and developed. One endeavor is a community-wide brochure that will bring together contact information for employers and job seekers in all areas relating to successful job placement. This pamphlet should be available for the public soon.

As employers enter the busy summer season in the greater Hayward area, it is important to note that the Winter High School and Hayward Community Schools are ready to help place high school students in jobs, whether it be a summer placement, an internship or job shadowing experience. If you are an employer seeking to fill a position with a potential student match, please contact the Hayward Community Schools at 715.634.2619, extension 9501 or Winter School at 715.266.3301. If you have not already made arrangements to join the 2nd Annual Job and Career Fair at the Hayward High School Commons on March 21, 2018, please do so. The Job Fair is scheduled for 1:30-3:30pm so make arrangements to showcase your business or organization and meet potential job applicants in person."

I recently learned that there are funds available to employers that will cover 50% of the cost of training a new employee for up to 16 weeks as long as the job involves over 32 hours per week and pays a minimum of \$10 per hour. This could mean a major cost reduction for businesses that are hiring new employees or training existing employees for a promotion to a new position.

Housing: I attended a Housing Forum in New Richmond on February 16. There were a wide variety of speakers, including realtors, bankers, developers, economic development directors, and state officials. In addition to much valuable information presented that can potentially be utilized in Sawyer County, I had the opportunity to discuss issues facing business owners in Hayward with Bruce King, Government Affairs Director for the Association of Northwestern Wisconsin Realtor Association. We discussed the businesses that were leaving Main Street in Hayward and potential actions that could be taken to replace them. Bruce said he thought he could arrange a \$5,000 grant to study what could be done to make downtown Hayward a more attractive destination for tourists. We're also currently pursuing options with UWEX and Northwest Regional Planning for such a study.

Broadband: In last month's report I stated that we would work with CenturyLink if we could work directly with their grant-writing personnel. I was informed by their Regional Operations Manager that

the person that writes grants is retiring in March, and that a replacement currently hasn't been named. He assured me that when the new grant-writer is in place he would put me in contact with him or her.

The state has a program entitled Broadband Forward which encourages participation by counties to facilitate broadband expansion. The program involved a county passing a resolution to expedite the permitting process and at a reasonable price to the broadband provider. We have begun steps, including discussions with the state's Broadband Director, to certify Sawyer County in the Broadband Forward program. Additional information will be presented to the Sawyer County Economic Development Committee in April.

Business Opportunities: In conjunction with the SBDC (Small Business Development Center) in Superior we're continuing to work with a number of businesses in the greater Hayward area. Our primary emphasis is on business planning which will provide a plan that can be followed or changed as conditions warrant. With one client we've analyzed product line profitability and have moved on to suggestions in marketing and sales. We're helping another business analyze alternatives for expanding his business.

We've also met with board members of Harvest Market who are planning to open and operate a coop grocery store that would cater heavily to organic products and fresh locally grown produce. We're in the process of analyzing their financial projections, helping to determine the best form of corporate registration, discussing funding sources, and starting to look for potential property locations. They hope to open their new store in 2019 or early 2020.

We've had our second meeting with a young couple interested in purchasing a sizable business in Hayward. We've analyzed their initial financial projections and are helping them develop a fair offer for the business, as well as discussing the various forms of legal structure.

We're continuing to work with the U.S. Forest Service in consolidating their existing five district offices into a single office. They would prefer to stay in the greater Hayward area, preferably in a location out of town on Highway 77, which would be convenient when dispatching their fire truck and other vehicles. We've considered two different locations, but neither turned out to be suitable. We've presented another option which would entail finding a suitable location, building to suit their needs, leasing the property to them, and providing an option to purchase when they've sold their other locations. If we can keep the Forest Service in the county it would save 60 jobs.

Business Intelligence: The Business Intelligence Project Team with UW Madison is continuing to work with a business in our area. The team consists of university and business professionals with outstanding credentials. The business owner is satisfied with the progress they're making and expects good results from the project. We'd like to involve additional businesses in our area to take advantage of this resource.

Main Street Support: We're continuing to work with the downtown merchants, and have suggested forming a downtown council to address issues on a consolidated basis, and to have a common voice in City Council meetings. One of the business owners has suggested we visit successful retail stores in other northwest Wisconsin communities, and invite them to open a branch in Hayward. He said he's been approached numerous times with a similar offer. We plan to pursue his suggestion.

Heart of the North Legislative Day at the Capital: Representatives from Sawyer, Barron, Rusk, and Washburn counties visited the Capital on February 8 to meet with department heads and legislators. We had a series of planning meetings prior to the trip to document and refine the issues we wanted to pursue. Upon arrival we split into groups depending on the particular departments we wanted to interact with to discuss the issues we had prepared. Each department head explained his/her department's function and responsibilities, and then entertained questions and discussions relative to the issues we'd prepared. We also met with some of our legislative representatives. I think the department heads, legislators and our participants all benefited from the interactions. I took many pages of notes on housing, economic development, workforce development, and others that I'm following up on. I learned that there are some excellent resources that are willing to support our efforts, and bills going through the legislature that could potentially provide sizable grants for our efforts.

Funding: We're continuing our fund raising efforts, but still have a long way to go to meet the \$25,000 in matching funds authorized by the Sawyer County Board. Funding typically goes hand in hand with benefits for those that are contributing. For the county, benefits would relate to a stable and/or growing economic environment that produces tax revenue. For businesses it would relate to improved profitability through additional revenue, improved efficiency and/or cost control, both which could result through improved business planning provided by the economic development corporation.

We have had a number of accomplishments for the relatively short time we've been in operation including:

- 1) Expansion of the trail system in the county to attract more visitors and the resulting revenue increase for businesses that are now on the trail system. Trails Committee representatives met with the Hayward Public Works Committee and the City Council on February 8 to request approval of expanding trails in downtown Hayward. The plan was supported by a large majority of Hayward businesses, and approved by the Public Works Committee and City Council.
- 2) The transfer of housing management from Impact 7 to the Sawyer County Housing Authority which will reduce the time for those needing affordable housing from months to weeks.
- 3) Building a good working relationship with the three major broadband providers in the county.
- 4) The establishment of a Workforce/Job Summit Committee to address the problem of lack of available employees.
- 5) Support for new business startups.
- 6) Support for existing businesses in the area.
- 7) Developing new relationships with various departments in state government that should benefit Sawyer County in the short and long term.

As our reputation spreads and the support we can provide continues to grow, we'll increase the number of businesses that we'll be supporting.

Thanks for your continued support.

