

**Minutes of the October 9, 2023 meeting of the Sawyer County
Economic Development and UW-Extension Committee
Of the Sawyer County Board of Supervisors
Board Room; Sawyer County**



Voting Committee Members Present:

- Chair: Tom Duffy
- VC -- John Righeimer
- Stacey Hessel
- Brian Bisonette
- Chris Rusk

Others Present:

Andy Albarado
Lynn Fitch
Donna Knuckey
Molly Lank-Jones
Ann Korn

Sherry Beckman
Sheila Young
Monica Johnson - Virtual
Sheldon Johnson - Virtual
Jim Ferguson

Call to Order – Chair Duffy called the meeting to order at 8:30 am.

Certification of Compliance with the open meeting law was met. Roll Call was taken. Quorum was met.

Meeting Agenda --

Public Comments –

Minutes from previous meeting – A motion was made by Ms. Hessel to approve the minutes of the September 11, 2023, meeting; second by Mr. Righeimer. Motion carried without negative vote.

Sawyer County Housing Update -

Sheila Young of the Sawyer County Housing Authority provided an update. Rental units will be available at \$900/month. The units are complete and full. Almost all applicants were elderly which was unexpected. They are still seeing out of town landlords purchasing homes and converting to tourist rooming houses. This means we are still using our rental housing units via this means which causes problems with finding workforce housing units. Meth cleanups after renters vacate continue to be a costly problem in turning over units. Only 26% of the agency's voucher holders are able to find an affordable rental unit at this time. HUD increased the reimbursement rate to cap at \$796/month. Ms. Young provided a review of their total rental unit capacity; units in the southern area of the county are difficult to fill due to transportation problems.

Sawyer County Agricultural Fair Association Report -

University of Wisconsin-Extension Department Report -

Ms. Knuckey provided a review of the 4-H programs and classes being undertaken in the County. Positive youth development is also a part of her role in the department serving 74 4-H youth this past year. Community health programming and Heart of the North legislative days are two additional duties within this position.

Hayward Lakes Visitors & Convention Bureau -

A written report was provided identifying various fulfillment pieces paid by or in partnership with HLVCB, the local publications sponsored by HLVCB and local events sponsored. Ms. Beckman reviewed her report with the Committee.

Northwest Regional Planning Commission Report -

Mr. Johnson provided a verbal update. On November 14th NWRPC is assisting all counties with the regional planning updates, coordinating with Namekagon Transit. The semi-annual commissioner's meeting will be held at Flat Creek Lodge in December. The revolving loan program had two payoffs this year for the 0% loans provided for owner-occupied home rehab projects.

Economic Development Corporation Report -

Ms. Johnson provided a verbal update. The SC/LCO EDC have hired an executive assistant for day-to-day operations. The draft for the updated housing study is expected in November. A potential for a housing project on some hospital land is under discussion. Monica Isham is interested in becoming a board member. Board members will be taking part of the Legislative Days in February.

Library Updates -

A written report was provided for the Hayward Weiss offering a list of activities through October. Ms. Korn reviewed the highlights. Ms. Knuckey provided a verbal update for the Winter Library. The community garden was harvested.

Motorized Trail and Non-Motorized Trail Report -

Mr. Albarado read aloud an email report provided by Ms. LaReau for motorized sports and Mr. Duffy provided an emailed report from Mr. Popp. Last week there was a group of 64 ATV/UTV machines that came here from the Webb Lake area. Clubs are organizing trail work days now - redoing signs, brushing, and removing leaning trees in preparation for snowmobile season. The full Birkie is now filled and we are anticipating over 12,000 skiers in 2024, and they also continue to work on trail maintenance projects.

Broadband Update -

No update

LCO Update -

No Update

Historical Society -

A verbal update was provided by Mr. Ferguson identifying the winter hours. He shared the programs that have recently been undertaken; the quarterly meeting will be held at the Vet's Center with speaker Dave Anderson.

Meeting Date/Time – The next meeting of the Economic Development and UW-Extension Committee will be Monday, November 6th, at 8:30 am in the Board Room.

Meeting adjourned at 9:43 am

Minutes recorded by Lynn Fitch, County Clerk