

PRAIRIE DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

COLORADO'S CENTRAL PLAINS



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PRAIRIE DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION BOARD MEETING MINUTES March 19, 2014

Call to Order

Chairman Siekman called to order the March 19, 2014, meeting of the Prairie Development Corporation at 7:00 PM held in Hugo at Turkey Crossing Cafe. Members attending were: Jerry Allen, Robert Rowland, Robert Safranek, Dana Siekman, and Marilyn Ward. Candace Payne, Special Projects Director, also attended. Steve Burgess, Rol Hudler, Ed Rarick and Dorothy Stone were unable to attend. Maryjo Downey, PDC Administrator was also absent due to schedule conflicts.

Minutes

Minutes of the January 22, 2014 meeting were presented. Robert Safranek made a motion to approve the Minutes as presented. Robert Rowland seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Financial Reports

The Board reviewed a list of bills for January totaling \$6,787.97 and for February totaling \$18,126.00. Jerry Allen made a motion to ratify the bills paid and accept the financial reports for filing. Marilyn Ward seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

Business Loan Recommendations

There were no loans presented at this time.

Housing Recommendations

There were no housing loan requests above \$25,000 to approve above. Loans below that amount are reviewed and approved or disapproved by staff and do not need Board approval.

Ag Business Entrepreneur Loan Program

Candace has visited with many bankers on this program recently however, no applications have been submitted.

CDBG Revolving Admin Funds/EDA Match

Due to her absence, Jo Downey presented a request via board memo to contribute \$25,500 from PDC Business Revolved Funds to the ECCOG matching funds requirement for its EDA grant. PDC does not have its own staff. It has a Professional Services agreement with ECCOG and reimburses COG for the staff time of Candi, Jo, and support staff that is spent on economic development related business. In 2013, the PDC staff time cost was artificially low because much of Candi's and Jo's salaries are paid from the EDA grant to COG. That \$51,000 grant is matched 50-50 and covered a period beginning July 1, 2013 and ending June 30, 2104. Marilyn Ward made a motion to contribute \$25,500 to the EDA match. Robert Safranek seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

CDBG 2014 Application

Candace provided a brief update on the statues of the application in Jo Downey's absence. The funds not used for loans as of January 31, 2014, have been de-obligated with OEDIT (Office of Economic Development and International Trade). A new application has been prepared and awaits a signature from Elbert County Commissioners, which is expected next week. The request will be made for \$300,000 for lending and \$55,000 (16% of the entire \$355,000) for administrative costs when a loan is made. Though Lincoln County is the only actual applicant and sub-contracts the grant to PDC and ECCOG to administer, all four counties must sign the application and enter into an intergovernmental agreement if loans are to be available in their county(s). The changes of receiving additional funds will not only be dependent on their availability but the ability to demonstrate need for loan activity for the first few months of any new grant period. At this time, PDC does have a potential project on the

horizon that could possibly borrow the entire contract amount. Should that come to be, OEDIT has indicated that Lincoln County could immediately request an amendment to increase the funds in the contract.

SBDC Counseling Update

Candace Payne reported our area of the Small Business Development Center (SBDC) has a new logo and name: East Colorado SBDC. Lincoln County Economic Development Corp. has hired a new Executive Director who will start the position April 1st. This person will represent SBDC also in Lincoln County replacing Craig Curl. Craig continues his service in Elbert County and the I-70 corridor west from Deer Trail. SBDC continues to offer webinars within our area and Candace and Craig plan to use the offerings for their clients. Candace reported 2 new businesses have opened recently in her area.

Drought Impacted Business Loans Update

Candace visited many area bankers and businesses in March to promote the drought loan program as well as the other PDC loan programs. Candace reported twenty-three mini-drought loans throughout the service area have been funded. The loans total \$284,590 for various purposes including feed, seed, inventory, equipment, and working capital. The loan base is spread fairly even across all four counties. Three loans have been paid in full to date. All DIB loans are current at this time.

Dana explained more about the program for the benefit of the newest members with these details. Loans may be up to \$15,000 and up to five years at 5% fixed interest. Credit score must be above 650 and only existing businesses qualify. These loans are not collateralized.

Potential Loan Activity

Candace shared preliminary information on a possible loan application that could use the CDBG funds when the new contract is awarded. The business is working on loan application but it has not been completed yet. It may be necessary to call for a teleconference if the application needs presented before the next scheduled meeting.

Enterprise Zone Boundary Process Status

Using information provided by Jo Downey, Candace reported that the time frame for the state re-examining the existing Enterprise Zone Boundaries has been moved back and the new effective date for implementing boundary changes will be January 1 of 2016 rather than January 1 of 2015. The State felt it most important to have the most current population and economic distress data available, rather than be tied to the 2010 census. Department of Local Affairs will be finalizing 2013 estimates within a few months. Therefore, 2014 will be a data collection year to determine possible boundary changes by county or within a county by census tract. 2015 will be the year to finalize the boundaries with the new Enterprise Zone boundaries being effective January 1, 2016.

Summer Tourism Marketing/Events Guide

Candace distributed the Events Guide blank request forms and asked for submissions prior to March 31, 2014, to be included on the brochure. She also discussed the board to encourage any new businesses in their communities to contact us if they qualify to be listed on the Bed N Breakfast, Antiques/Thrift Stores brochure. The Our Journey summer marketing theme of "Trails" is being promoted by the PR firm headed by Danielle Dascalos. Her previous efforts have produced great results through her obtaining TV, radio and other Front Range media coverage. This year the Elbert County Museum will open a special exhibit entitled "On the Smoky." As all of Colorado's Central Plains was impacted by the Smoky Hill Trail, it is anticipated that the new exhibit will contribute to increased media coverage and tourism traffic for the entire region. PDC Board Members were encouraged to check out this new exhibit when it opens.

Next Meeting Date/Location

Robert Rowland offered to host the next meeting in Elbert County. The next meeting date was set for June 25, 2014 in Kiowa. Dinner may be held at Patty Ann's Café beginning at 5 PM.

Other

Robert Rowland shared that Elbert County is receiving a new trail monument to be constructed as part of an Eagle Scout project. The structure will be erected at the court house in Kiowa.

Candace mentioned the Jon Schallert webinars were scheduled for April 10, May 1, and June 5 starting at 10 -11:30 AM. The webinars will be archived for viewing until July 2. The price of \$6,900 includes up to 1,500 participants in each webinar. Candace shared advertising will start this month and asked the board to share the opportunity when possible.

Adjournment

There being no other business to come before the Board, Chairman Siekman adjourned the meeting at 7:15 PM.