Upper Explorerland Regional Planning Commission Board Meeting
September 6, 2012
MINUTES

Board Members Present: Larry Schellhammer, Kay Zimmerman, Leigh Rekow, Bob Beach, Larry Gibbs, Ron McCartney, Kay Vorwald, Darla Kelchen, Leon Griebenow, Paul Ryan, Larry Murphy, Bill Ziegler, Vicki Rowland, Warren Steffen, Mark Bohle, Janet McGovern, Lonnie Pierce, Gerald Freund, Les Askelson, Randy Uhl, Charles Frana, Nina Taylor. **Board Members Absent:** Roger Thomas, Andrew Wenthe,
Others Present: Rachelle Howe, Lisa Lensing, Fern Rissman, Lori Brockway, Bev Krambeer, Sue Severson, Karla Organist, Ashley Christensen, Ardie Kuhse

Upper Explorerland Regional Planning Commission (UERPC) held its regular board meeting on Thursday, September 6, 2012 in the Conference Room of UERPC, Postville, IA. Chairman, Randy Uhl, called the meeting to order at 6:05 p.m. A quorum was present. Motion by Frana/Murphy to accept the agenda. Motion carried.

Ashley Christensen, UERPC Liaison for our Safe Routes to School Program gave a presentation on this program. The Safe Routes to School program in Northeast Iowa works with communities and schools in conjunction with the Northeast Iowa Food and Fitness Initiative which aims to promote healthy eating and active living and play in the region.

There was a motion by Gibbs/Rowland to approve the UERPC Board Minutes of June 14, 2012. Bob Beach indicated that the discussion under the heading of *Disbursements/Treasurer's Report* was inaccurate and he suggested the following change to the minutes: *Mr. Beach asked if a listing was available that included a short description of the purpose of each disbursement. Staff responded that the listing provided to board members is the same as the listing published. Mr. Beach stated that he believes a description of the claims is required for legal publications.* After brief discussion, the current motion on the table by Gibbs/Rowland was rescinded. A motion by Beach/Griebenow to approve the June 14, 2012 minutes as amended herein. Motion carried.

Lisa presented the list of disbursements for approval. The listing is for June 1st through August 31st. There was a motion by Bohle/Murphy to approve the list of disbursements as presented. Motion carried. Any board member can request a more detailed list of the disbursements if needed. Next she presented the Treasurer's report for July 1st through August 31st. With being approximately 16% spent to date, Lisa feels we are on target. Sue Severson gave the Treasurer's Report for the Region I Employment & Training Programs. This report also covered only July 1st through August 31st. They are at 11% spent on their expenditures. A motion by Beach/Askelson to accept both reports as presented. Motion carried.

Lisa reported that she needed new signature resolutions signed for all of the signatories recently approved for the UERPC and WIA Bank Accounts. These accounts are being updated. At this time, it was recommended to add Rachelle Howe as a signatory for the CSP Fiscal Agent account, two Region I Employment & Training accounts, HAWC RLF account and the Jumpstart Assistance Program account. A motion by Ziegler/Bohle to approve the new resolutions to be signed by the current authorized signatories. Motion carried.

Board member, Leigh Rekow, addressed a proposed By-Law change that he was endorsing. Proper notification had been given to place the item on the agenda. Leigh stated that he is concerned that for several consecutive years there has been two representatives from Winneshiek and Howard counties on the Executive Board while only one representative from Allamakee, Clayton and Fayette. He would like to change the by-laws to read: *A five (5) member Executive Committee of the Commission shall consist of one (1) member from each county appointed by the Board of Supervisors of each member county. The same counties shall also name an alternate to serve in the absence of their appointed executive committee member. Each member of the Executive Committee shall have one vote. The Chairman and Vice-Chairman shall be chosen from the five (5) member Executive Committee and be subject to approval by the entire Commission.* He feels that this proposal would make each county equal on this board. He feels that the Executive Committee has all of the power in making major decisions and the full board merely rubber stamps those decisions usually without question. It was asked if the By-laws are reviewed periodically and if not, perhaps a better solution would be to have them reviewed periodically by a committee or the board and then have all proposed requests for changes made/reviewed at that review time. It was noted that the five counties are represented and the Chair and Vice-Chair positions change from year to year as persons are elected from the full board so different counties could have 2 representatives on any given year. It was also noted that the Chair does not vote so perhaps it could be stipulated that both the Chair and Vice-Chair do not vote. As for the naming of an alternate (another supervisor) - this would not be feasible as they would not be familiar with UERPC policy

not being a member of the full board. After discussion, there was a motion by Murphy/Ryan to table this by-law change proposal and to charge the Director with the task of checking into the process for evaluating and/or changing our by-laws and devising a plan to make all changes at that time. At this time a roll call vote was taken on this motion: AYE: Schellhammer, Zimmerman, Gibbs, McCartney, Vorwald, Kelchen, Griebenow, Ryan, Murphy, Ziegler, Rowland, Steffen, Bohle, McGovern, Pierce, Freund, Askelson, Frana, Taylor; NAY: Rekow, Beach. Motion carried.

Executive Board Report:

- Leon spoke on behalf of the Executive Board stating that they had met on June 28th to interview candidates for the position of Executive Director of UERPC. They offered the position to Rachelle Howe with the following salary package offering: $72,500 with four weeks vacation, no changes to current health care benefits and a performance review after 6 months with a possible $1,000 increase. The position and salary would be retroactive back to August 1, 2012. It was noted that her previous position will not be filled at this time as Rachelle is assuming some of those same duties as she intends to be a working Director. A motion by Ziegler/Steffen to accept the recommendation of the Executive Board to hire Rachelle Howe as the Director with the offered salary package as stated herein. Motion carried unanimously.
- Rachelle stated that we had a minimal statement in our personnel policy regarding our Smoke-Free Environment. The policy being proposed by a partner agency, Helping Services, is much more specific in detail. In reviewing the plan as submitted to the Board, there was some concern about the verbiage on tobacco or tobacco-like products in any vehicle of employees, customers or visitors as a vehicle is considered personal property and our enforcement of this policy would not be lawful. A motion by Murphy/Ziegler to approve the personnel policy change on Smoke Free Environment as presented except for striking the words: client, customer or visitor in the last sentence of paragraph two and subject to the approval of Helping Services to our change. Motion carried.
- Rachelle indicated that there will be nine board positions up for re-appointment at the end of December 31, 2012. The Supervisors will be notified about these expirations/renewals as it is their job to reappoint or appoint new directors. Rachelle will do the initial contact with board member to view their choice of being reappointed. One issue that we will work on is fulfilling a better ratio of men and women as board members retire from the board.
- Rachelle stated that the budget as approved allowed for a $15,000 line item to be used for merit increases. She has asked the Executive Board to give her permission to put these merits on hold until such time as she has an opportunity to review and understand the budgets as they stand.
- Randy proposed to the Executive Board that a Board Training session be held for all board members. The training will be done by Jeff Schott of the University of Iowa at a very minimal cost to the Commission. Rachelle strongly encourages ALL board members to take this training.
- As requested, the Board agendas and packets were e-mailed to board members this time. We hope to continue this process, however, if board members wish to receive the info differently, they should let Ardie know and other arrangements will be made.

Lori stated that at the last meeting the board approved several policies for the First Time Homebuyer Program for Clayton County (Strawberry Point, Garnavillo, McGregor) and also for the City of Oelwein. A resolution for the Affirmative Fair Housing Policy was omitted but does need to be approved and included. A motion by Frana/Gibbs to approve both Resolutions as presented. Roll Call vote: AYE: Schellhammer, Zimmerman, Rekow, Beach, Gibbs, McCartney, Vorwald, Kelchen, Griebenow, Ryan, Murphy, Ziegler, Rowland, Steffen, Bohle, McGovern, Pierce, Freund, Askelson, Frana, Taylor; NAY: None. Motion carried.

Lori stated also that at the last meeting the board approved the HOME Administrative Plan pending Iowa Finance Authority (IFA) approval. IFA did make some suggested changes. After discussion, a motion by Beach/Griebenow to approve the suggested changes to the HOME Admin Plan. Motion carried.

Fern updated the Board on the status of the Promise Jobs Program which contract was not renewed with Region I Employment 1Training as the service provider. It has meant the lay-off of three staff members at UERPC. There is currently one IWD staff person in Decorah who is handling the program and the possibility of an overwhelming caseload is probable. Howard and Chickasaw counties will now get service from the Mason City Region (North Iowa Area Community College). The next closest region will be out of Waterloo (Hawkeye Community College) who will serve Allamakee, Clayton, Fayette, Winneshiek, Delaware and Dubuque. There is good news in that Colleen Finger was hired by Hawkeye Community College to continue her work with the Promise jobs Program in our Region. Being able to provide any of the WIA services in the outlying offices (counties) continues to be an issue Fern is dealing with.

Randy informed the board that he had contacted Attorney Wolle to check the current status of our lawsuit. All 51 counts had been appealed to the Supreme Court and Attorney Wolle stated that the plaintiffs had yet another week to submit their briefs and then we will have thirty days to submit ours. It looks like four to eight months before any action would be taken. Les Askelson reported that he did follow through on his visit to the Postville City Council and addressed the cost of this litigation to taxpayers, etc. asking for them to reconsider their intentions. There was and has been no response from them since that time.

Director's Report:

- Rachelle referred to her packet enclosure on the list of UERPC acronyms hoping this will help in reviewing the Friday reports that are sent to the board. Friday reports will continue to be sent.
- A lease has been extended for another year with Goodwill.
- She has made contact with four out of the five county Boards of Supervisors and will be meeting with Fayette County next week.
- She will begin City Council visits shortly and will ask the assistance of staff to help out with these visits as well.
- She has met with Department Heads and is meeting individually with staff.
- She gave a brief update on projects: improved job access for our region through Job Access Mobility Institute; more city codes and ordinance updates for our cities; working with Luther and Upper Iowa for EDA funding working with communities on downtown planning processes; working on 2013 CDBG grants for our communities.
- Reminder for the Brain Gain Seminar on September 20th at NICC. All are encouraged to attend. Can contact Ardie to R.S.V.P. This is sponsored by Northeast Iowa Business Network and is being promoted by UERPC.

Floor Items:

- Board members were in agreement that they like the program presentations given at each meeting. It provides an excellent opportunity to learn more details about our programs.
- Randy was thanked by board members for his excellent guidance, leadership and work during the time of the hiring process for a new Director. Department Heads were thanked as well for their leadership during that process.
- Board members were thanked for the excellent turnout for this meeting – hoping that it will continue as we move forward in our mission
- A question was asked regarding Board of Director's Insurance and Lisa informed the board that we went ahead with the insurance quote with the company that offered us a quote. Larry Schellhammer indicated that he had checked with his county and it may be that the board members would be covered by the county as long as they have been appointed to serve by the Supervisors, but it possibly wouldn't cover other Boards that are a part of UERPC, so the insurance is pertinent at this time. .
- Vicki commented on an editorial out of the Postville Paper that she felt was very negative. The Fayette County Supervisors were criticized for a Fayette County road project. She clarified that they had approved the project, but had no knowledge as to when that project would take place. The paper went on to imply that Supervisors do not make good decisions especially in the matter of moving UERPC's main offices out of Postville. Vicki wants it noted that there were no Fayette County Supervisors on the board who made such a vote and that the facts should be reported correctly. It was also noted that UERPC did not move out of Postville, but rather has had the opportunity to expand their business and services to the public it serves.

The next regularly scheduled meeting will be on October 18, 2012.

There being no further business actions to come before this board, there was a motion by Gibbs/Kelchen to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 7:25 p.m.

For more information regarding this board meeting, please contact Ardie Kuhse at Upper Explorerland, 563-864-7551 or at akuhse@uerpc.org.

The above constitutes my interpretation of the matters discussed and the decisions reached. Please contact the undersigned for any corrections or omissions.

Ardie Kuhse, Board Secretary