

Keweenaw County Economic Development Committee

Keweenaw County Courthouse

Eagle River, MI, USA

Wednesday, December 4, 2019 Meeting Minutes

(approved February 5, 2020)

1. Welcome and Introductions

The meeting was called to order at 6:04 pm by Chair Todd Holmstrom, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

- Members present: Tess Ahlborn, Harvey Desnick, Todd Holmstrom, Ned Huwatschek, Joe Miller
- Contributing Members: Tom Bryant, John Sturos
- Members excused: Peg Kauppi, Matt Kero, Sam Raymond, Kass Simila
- BOC Representative: Don Piche, Jim Vivian
- Guests: Jeff Ratcliffe (KEDA)

2. Approval of Agenda

Motion to approve the agenda; by John Sturos, second by Harvey Desnick. All in favor, *motion carried*.

3. Approval of Minutes

Motion to approve the November 6, 2019 meeting minutes; by Ned Huwatschek, second by Harvey Desnick. All in favor, *motion carried*.

4. Unfinished Business

4a. Priority check-in:

1. *Broadband Development and Communications*
2. *Website Communications*
3. *100 Good Paying Jobs*
4. *Land Use Issues including Zoning and Permanent Easements*
5. *Workforce Development*

1. *Broadband Development and Communications*

Tess Ahlborn – no update on the grant application status.

Todd Holmstrom had sent a New Yorker article link to the EDC members. A county in Kentucky increased remote worker jobs by providing fiber door-to-door. All agreed that a fiber network in the Keweenaw County could change our economic outlook. Tess forwarded the article link to county commissioners and staff.

2. *Website Communications*

Harvey Desnick reported that he has not had any further communication with county staff regarding the county website development. The deadline was questioned. Because it is a living website, changes should be able to be made when needed. Don Piche will provide an update on the county agreement to update and maintain the website.

3. *100 Good Paying Jobs*

Harvey reported that Keith Meyers provided him with a link to Michigan Works jobs. Harvey reviewed the website and noted census type jobs are available, but was disappointed to see the hourly rates for these positions in Keweenaw County was lower than Houghton or Baraga Counties. Harvey will check into this.

Harvey has not heard back from his Tech contact regarding Pinterest. He will provide an update at a future meeting re: Keweenaw County Pinterest Page.

4. *Land Use Issues including Zoning and Permanent Easements*

Joe reported that the GIS data availability initiative continues to move forward. Some GIS data will be publicly available with the unveiling of the new county website. Coleman Engineering is working with county staff. Open access that has been agreed upon is:

- a. zoning,
- b. commissioner districts,
- c. parcel shape file and
- d. parcel ID number.

Keweenaw County will not have ownership information available through the website. The County will provide options for accessing “secure” public information through an account link with BSA. The individual can then order and pay for record cards on line.

EDC members agreed this is a great start. As the information becomes available, we may request additional information, including locating county parks, township parks, and other.

5. *Workforce Development*

No update.

4b. EDC Survey - preliminary results

Todd Holmstrom reported the EDC Priority Survey is still live on the county website. Some tax bills may not include the survey, although we are hopeful for a large response.

Todd contacted Horizons School (Luke) to get some youth input; students will have these topics included in their coursework. Todd will follow-up with other places to publish the survey, i.e. Keweenaw Report.

4c. Mt. Horace Greeley – BOC update

Don Piche has been working with individuals who worked on a Mt. Horace Greeley clean-up initiative eleven years ago. An appraisal will be done by the end of February, followed by a 60-day period to formalize the results. The county is also working on resolving the title issue for some of the properties.

The county will start to work with Eagle Harbor township, because some of the area was put into a conservancy zone. BOC members will meet with EH officials to work on changing the zoning to encourage site development.

Brad Barnett has had contact with a TV crew to consider using the site as a filming location. It may lead to big opportunities. Brad said the producer wants to pursue this, and wants us to designate a point of contact. Jeff Radcliffe will follow-up with Brad. Jim Vivian mentioned “ghosts of our lighthouses” as a topic to propose to the crew.

4d. New Businesses – Welcome Letter

Todd Holmstrom received a new-business list of four in the county (Galicia, Slim’s, Bird’sEye, two in CH). The updated letter welcomed businesses and mentions our survey. Please let Todd know if you hear of other new businesses in the county.

4e. other None.

5. New business

5a. Membership terms expiring Dec. 31, 2019 (Holmstrom, Desnick, Raymond)

The county clerk has requested the EDC approve new members so names can be forwarded to the BOC for approval at their mid-December meeting. Tess Ahlborn will report back to Julie Carlson that all are willing to serve again.

5b. other

A special BOC meeting was recently held for Mt. Bohemia to have a primitive campground. Zoning is not an issue. They will need to complete further applications. Concerns included a sanitary system for the campground. DEQ will have regulations. This is just a start of the process. We look forward to Black Bear Enterprise expanding in Keweenaw County.

Alleouz Township will hold a public hearing on 1/23/20 regarding marijuana business. All townships in Keweenaw County originally opted out, although some are now revisiting this decision.

MI Land Bank representatives will be in UP in Iron Co during the week of 2/10-14, and would like to visit Keweenaw County. Don Piche recommended that Jeff Radcliffe connect the land bank people with Eric Hermonson, Keweenaw County Treasurer.

6. Public Comment

None.

7. Adjourn

Motion to adjourn at 6:56 pm by Harvey Desnick, second by Joe Miller. All in favor, *motion carried*.

Next meeting Wednesday, February 5, 2020 – 6:00 pm, Eagle River, MI