

Economic Development Corporation of Arenac County

Meeting Minutes



Location: Arenac County Building,
Room 201

Date: September 12, 2024

- I. Call to Order: 8:35 am
- II. Roll call:
 - a. President: Robert Balzer, Jennifer Pierson, Dennis Stawowy, Curt Hillman, Brad Mason, Kimberly Nelson, Harold Wollhiser, Heather Bauman, Leona Daniels, Pat Killingbeck, and Mike Stodolak (entered at 9:04 am)
 - b. Absent: Amanda Lauzon, Deb Morgan, Dale Wiltse
- III. Pledge
- IV. Minutes/Secretary's Report **Motion to approve:** Hillman support Mason to approve July 11, 2024 and August 8, 2024 minutes as presented. Approved
- V. Treasurer's Report (EDC and Brownfield) by Dennis Stawowy; **Motion to approve:** Hillman, support: Daniels. Approved
- VI. Guests Introduced: Julie Hazeltine newly elected Arenac County Treasurer, Dennis Whitney, Standish Chamber of Commerce, Tim Dempsey, Saginaw Future, Sr. Vice President, Austin Hazeltine, Arenac County Board Secretary/County Coordinator.
 - a. Ms. Hazeltine informed the board that she appreciates the opportunity to serve as Arenac County Treasurer and looks forward to working with EDC members. Board members welcomed and thanked Austin for attending EDC meeting.
 - b. **Strategic Site Readiness Program (SSRP):** Mr. Dempsey reviewed MEDC's Strategic Site Readiness Program (attached summary); Arenac County (Region 5) has been allocated \$36,425 to prioritize a site in Arenac for potential industrial development. Also a proposal from Quest (attached) in amount of \$31,500 to assist Arenac County and EDC in marketing the site selection. Mr. Dempsey confirmed that Saginaw Future would be the Fiduciary for Program. **Motion:** Bauman, support Daniels to approve Quest proposal in amount of \$31,500. Approved
- VII. Directors Report (attached) included in report: **Intro Brownfields Finance Webcourse**, fee \$500 per person; Ms. Pierson expressed a desire to participate in educational training, as Arenac has Brownfield Authority. Mr. Stodolak offered a \$1,000 contribution from Independent Bank in support of training of two key individuals (Director, Jennifer Pierson), and also Arenac County Treasurer. **Motion:** Stodolak, support, Daniels to send two people for Brownfield training. Approved. Board members expressed gratitude to Mr. Stodolak for generous offer to sponsor this training.
- VIII. Old Business:
 - a. **Golden Shovel:** Final adjustments were approved; and Director authorized to download on Arenac County EDC website, noting that future revisions are possible by staff if needed. Thanks to Heather, Jennifer and others who worked diligently to make this an

important document to advertise what Arenac County has to offer. Suggestion was made to distribute document in other areas as possible, using QR code ect.

- b. **Strategic Plan:** Director Jennifer will continue to work with group to finalize a document for EDC review.
 - c. **MSU Extension Position:** County Chairman Harold Wollhiser shared that Arenac County will continue to provide support staffing for MSUE and EDC; position is being posted today (9/12); it is a 21 hour weekly position.
 - d. **Arenac County/USDA Revolving Loan Program: \$95,000** Per Director, a few details needing board approval PRIOR TO SUBMITTING TO USDA. Discussion: **Motion:** Killingbeck, support Stawowy: **Offer the following recommendations to Arenac County Board of Commissioners.**
 - i. Loan Application fee: \$150 per loan
 - ii. Cap on loan request: \$20,000 with discretion by loan committee;
 - iii. Loan Committee Members: Chairman Bob Balzer, EDC Director Jennifer Pierson; Arenac County Staff Austin Hazeltine, EDC Board members Mike Stodolak and Brad Mason. Approved
- IX. New business: Around the Table
- a. Kim Nelson, hospital transition to MY Michigan has been finalized and is going well.
 - b. Curt Hillman: Depot has a busy schedule coming up: Farm Markey through September; Depot Days October 5-6, Celebrating 135th Anniversary of Depot; Christmas Lighting November 29th; and Santa Train in December.
 - c. Leona Daniles shared that many crop prices are lower, cattle prices very high, and as of last year United States was a net importer of food, labor causing much higher cost to farmers. Farm Bill will not be finished prior to retirement of Congresswoman Stabenow.
 - d. Heather Bauman shared non-profits are in crisis mode with child care, housing shortages in the county/state. Distributed flyers for Multipurpose Collaborative Body of Arenac County, "Project Connect" meeting September 26th, 2024, 10-2:00. Resurrection of Lord Catholic Church in Standish; Expanding Childcare Capacity Grants (\$6,000 available for Arenac County); MI Roadmap to Healthy Communities; Annual Christmas for Kids, sponsored by the WELL Outreach, Dec. 10th 10-6pm. Also Health Department may relocate its office to the Community Center.
 - e. Bob Balzer reported Consumers Energy is making good headway with Riverbend and Au Gres expansion projects; these projects will provide much needed additional power availability to NE Arenac County. Bob noted that videos were attached to materials sent out with September meeting materials. He also requested that if special service was needed by a community or board member. To please contact Consumers Customer Service phone number, rather than requesting that he research the information, suggesting they would get faster response.
 - f. Dennis Stawowy noted that next month would be his last meeting on EDC board, as he would be retiring as Arenac County Treasurer; he reviewed process for EDC bill payments.
 - g. Paty Killingbeck commended Dale Wiltse/City of Au Gres for investigating a new housing project under "My Neighborhood Program."

- h. Harold Woolhiser commented that County OC will take action to approve USDA Revolving Loan program.
- i. Brad mason reported that SPARK GRANT is proceeding; Spartan Tire is schedule for demo on September 23rd; Granton Inn has been purchased by Kevin King; will be called King's Dish, and Jay's Market has new owners.
- j. Mike Stodolak informed member that interest rate are declining slightly; also cautioned member to be aware of new Fraud issues "fake funeral planning" which has been circulating online, contacting residents with fraudulent funeral proposals.
- X. Public Comment: Dennis Whitney Standish Chamber presented Proclamation to Standish Free Methodist Church for celebration of 100 years in the city.
- XI. Next Meeting October 10th at 8:30am
- XII. Meeting adjourned at 10:37am

Recorded by:

Pat Killingbeck,

EDC Board Member