

DRAFT MEETING MINUTES  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ALLIANCE OF LINCOLN COUNTY  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING  
Thursday, March 5, 2020, 3:30 pm

Members Present: Bailey, Kemp, Ogden, Abbott, Cowen, Cuellar, Holbrook, Lewis and Roy  
Staff: Brewer

1. **Agenda Review:** Bailey called the meeting to order at 3:34pm. Normal business was set aside. Instead, the board worked on a proposal to commissioners on how EDA could assist the County with moving forward with economic development. Abbott distributed a draft proposal.
2. **Discussion:** Bailey and Abbott met with Wayne Belmont. He asked for a proposal from EDA to present to the County. The prior week Belmont met with city managers for a visionary session on economic development.

Ogden entered the proposal on a laptop while board members collaborated. She commented that commissioners know what they don't want. What they do want is deliverables. EDA is saying the board is dynamic and very capable of ramping it up. It has the know how to bring on an executive director who is capable of accomplishing what the County wants. There was discussion about the time wasted by the County, and how the volunteer board didn't understand that the County wanted more communication. EDA had been a hybrid organization, a grantee, helping to further County goals. In the past the County had been laissez-faire. Now they're feeling internal pressure to justify money spent.

Discussion ensued about how Caroline Bauman's departure prompted changes, that the board was made up of the movers and shakers in the county who could be a force to be reckoned with, that the board had already been in a re-evaluation process and how it would be good to go forward with a strong vision. Abbott added that the County was looking at bringing in a housing person and others. He thought EDA had some positive traction in the last meeting.

Deliverables were discussed. Bailey listed off the following: annual goal setting with updates, grants evaluations, grants prep and classes, engaging stakeholders - city managers, etc., Trails project, doing quarterly presentations, and April mid-year assessment on how things are going. Ogden is in conversation with national childcare firms who have land they're willing to make available. They're geared to high-end learning for infants and up - could do some deals. Transportation: students put together a list of all available transportation with Cynda Bruce. The goal is to expand more and different types of transportation. It could be a deliverable document.

There's data on lower income workers. What is affordable workforce housing? Below 70K workers would have a hard time finding housing and maintaining, using the 30% rule for rent to target. EDA shouldn't engage anyone who wouldn't use those guidelines. If EDA compiled that data from members, it could be actionable and deliverable. Discussion ensued re: housing, childcare, industry, rebranding, transportation, newsletters, meeting quarterly with the County. EDA could show it is working on all these issues. EDA is trying to solve workforce housing, but can't solve every housing problem with one solution from an economic development perspective. EDA could bring definition and data to workforce housing. More housing, childcare, and transportation would be a big accomplishment. A new executive director with expertise could help pull this together.

Expanding economic development to the north county was suggested by Roy. Look at what's not being provided in the county that people have to go 200 miles RT to get. Holbrook recommended a book by Michael Schuman that addresses those issues. Was EDA a business-friendly organization that people can come to? Roy added that Prescott, Arizona has a tremendous amount of business and is also two and a half hours from an airport. The ocean and college are big assets, how to attract businesses to that? How to get the word out they have the opportunity to get property for a business?

Cowen talked about skill sets: update website, identify services EDA could provide and list them out. Find out what the County wants and partner with them. Look also at other areas of growth. It could be laid out in an exciting way. EDA does have real goals but from the outside it looks like there's not much going on. Discussion ensued about the board stepping it up and working with the County, asking who would carry it forward and whether the board was active vs passive. The board agreed it was a working board and that message should be in the proposal. Other questions: Is there a marketing tool to focus on core industries? How to get more people engaged? Develop a strategic plan? How can strength be brought to EDA to bear on these issues?

Abbott will give the proposal to Wayne Belmont on Monday. Ogden will distribute her typed revision over the weekend so people can make changes or adjustments before Monday. Belmont will use it as a communication document. Ogden thought the County would love the proposal because they will have to come up with economic development for the county. Bailey said one of the biggest things they heard from the County is "communication". The board came up with the phrase "We are encouraged by the County's enthusiasm and economic development vision." Roy suggested utilizing true partnerships so all are working toward the same thing; talking face to face through greater communication and engagement with stakeholders. Brewer reminded the board of the database records of almost 300 stakeholders, city and other governments, anyone who ever attended an event, etc.

Bailey thanked everyone for all their efforts.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:00 pm.