

**MINUTES
PROSPERITY EASTERN IOWA (PEI) STEERING COMMITTEE**

DATE: Monday, November 23, 2009

TIME: 10:00 a.m.

PLACE: ECIA
7600 Commerce Park
Dubuque, Iowa

MEMBERS PRESENT: Stacy Driscoll, Tami Petsche, George Lake, Jacque Rahe, Colleen Myers, Cindy Lenz, Donna Boss, Dave Heiar, Patty Manuel, Greg Willging, Rick Dickinson, Marty Kelzer

OTHERS PRESENT: None

STAFF PRESENT: Candace Eudaley, Jerry Schroeder, Larry Nagle, Sharon Nesteby

Call to Order

Chairperson Driscoll called the meeting to order at 10:07 a.m.

Introductions

Introductions followed by committee members and staff.

Approval of Minutes

a. August 24, 2009

Motion by Boss, second by Rahe to approve the August 24, 2009 PEI minutes. The motion passed unanimously.

Initiatives updates

a. New Business Recruitment

i. Rebranding

Eudaley said the Iowa Department of Economic Development has awarded a Regions Initiative grant for \$50,000 to Prosperity Eastern Iowa (PEI). These funds must be used as follows: \$5,000 to enhance the website for visitors; \$15,000 to conduct site visits promoting the ECO-EI Petal Project program; \$15,000 to expand the advertising

campaign to include the Petal Project and Accessmyfuture; and \$15,000 for direct marketing and mail campaign. Eudaley will send a copy of the letter to the members for their information.

A booklet was distributed to the members by Eudaley which highlighted some suggested changes to the PEI website, including signature, color, font, and graphics. Heiar said that branding takes time to establish and rebranding can lose some of what an established website already has gained in recognition. Discussion followed by members concerning how well known PEI is outside of the State of Iowa. Eudaley said the first logo represented six counties outlined with a partial map of Iowa. The new logo would highlight the word Prosperity and utilize a video map or tour of the region. Eudaley asked for feedback from the members by the beginning of December. The actual changes to the website will be made by Mission Creative; their quote has not yet been received, but was expected to be approximately \$3,000.

ii. Mailing sample

Eudaley said the Regions Initiatives grant awarded \$15,000 for direct marketing and mail campaign. Eudaley showed the members a journal-type notebook sent FedEx that was received by several staff from Dell—a thank you for your business gift. This type of sample is meant to catch site selectors’ attention; PEI will need to send something that will catch site selectors’ attention also. Eudaley will have the interns research to see who the most influential people are on the list who should get the sample mailing.

iii. Site videos

Eudaley said PEI members will have the opportunity to take a video camera to their area to record available sites to post on the web site. Visitors to the web site will have the ability to tour members’ sites. Eudaley said a template will be developed for the members to determine what should be recorded for consistency and professionalism. A link on LOIS will enable visitors to view the video tour.

iv. Other ideas?

Petsche suggested that each county could set up a webinar lunch with site selectors to showcase areas of possible interest. Dickinson proposed instead that at one of the conferences, such as IEDC, a luncheon with a big giveaway item such as a television, be set up to draw the site selectors in to showcase the region. He suggested working with Blouin to set up a future luncheon.

b. Buyer Supplier Connection

i. Registered companies update

ii. Partnership

Eudaley said 110 companies are now registered in the Buyer Supplier program. Discussion followed by members concerning Cedar Rapids and Waterloo companies wanting to sign up for the program. Eudaley said that Northeast Iowa Business Network is now joining the Buyer Supplier program. Members noted that charging a fee to join the program could create a revenue stream. Eudaley said the currently enrolled companies are asking for a newsletter and an annual networking event.

Motion by Kelzer, second by Dickinson to expand the Buyer Supplier program by allowing companies outside the region to join according to a fee schedule researched by staff; with those companies already part of the program to be grandfathered in. The motion was not put to a vote.

Discussion followed by members concerning that anyone can look at the Buyer Supplier program to find information they need; they do not need to actually be enrolled in the program to access the information.

Motion by Dickinson, second by Heiar to request that staff pursue research on a fee schedule for companies outside of the PEI region that are interested in joining the Buyer Supplier program. The motion passed unanimously.

c. Workforce Development

i. Website traffic analysis

Eudaley noted there have been 125 hits on the Accessmyfuture web site in the last month and actual time spent on the web site at approximately five minutes per visit. The career resources and find a job are the two places that get the most attention.

ii. Mousepads, Coasters, Giveaways

Eudaley said there are mouse pads, coasters, CDs and other giveaways promoting the Accessmyfuture web site for members to take with them to place in coffee shops and other places where students may gather. Other marketing materials that recently arrived for giveaways are headbands and wristbands.

iii. Video Visits

Eudaley said she had a young person tour Dubuque recently with a video camera visiting the popular spots where young people gather. This tour will be placed on Accessmyfuture for visitors to view; to see what Dubuque has for young people. She asked members to find a young person to video their area for the web site. As an incentive, the young person may keep the video camera.

d. Petal Project

i. Status update

Eudaley said she has been working with Dubuque Bank & Trust and the Petal Project as a pilot program. To date, the bank is half way through the program; they have spent no money so far. Loras College is now interested in working with the Petal Project, along with a couple of manufacturers and a retail store. There are five steps to complete the sustainability and green business standards. ECIA will be hiring interns to work with these businesses to complete the Petal Project.

Discuss December meeting

Member consensus that there would not be a PEI meeting in December. Eudaley will send out an email confirming that a meeting will not be held on the fourth Monday in December. Driscoll said the next PEI meeting will be held at 10:00 a.m. on Monday, January 25, 2010, at ECIA.

Other Business

Dickinson commended Eudaley on her focus, direction and creativity regarding PEI. He asked about business retention and expansion in relation to PEI. He said this can be the most challenging part of economic development in a region. Discussion followed by members that business retention and expansion discussions are part of economic development staff' jobs, that PEI helps members with their companies' relationships, and that IDEED just provided funding for PEI staff to accompany members on visits to their companies.

Adjourn

Motion by Boss, second by Rahe to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 11:45 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kelley H. Deutmeyer
Executive Director