

## **SUMMARY OF I-69 THUMB REGION - REGIONAL PROSPERITY STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING**

The I-69 Thumb Region Regional Prosperity Steering Committee met at 10:30 a.m. on Wednesday, February 14, 2018 at the Lapeer County Health Department.

**Present:** Anna Pinter, Bonnie DiNardo, Carl Osentoski, Dan Casey, Dan Manning, Derek Bradshaw, Eric Andreychuk, Gene Pierce, John Horvath, Justin Sprague, Kimberly Prusak, Linda Burchell, Mary Ann Ketels, Patricia Lucas, Rachel Verschaeve, and Tom Young.

**Others Present:** Tamar Lewis, Lottie Ferguson, and Debby Compton.

Chairperson Lucas called the meeting to order at 10:34 a.m.

**I. Introductions**

Everyone introduced themselves.

**II. Dan Manning, Connect Michigan**

**a. Update on Rural Broadband Initiative**

Mr. Manning presented a PowerPoint to the group. Connect Michigan is a Non-profit and they are helping to expand broadband across the state. About a year ago after President Trump came into office the Agriculture and Rural Prosperity task force was put together to get to the heart of what we can do to make broadband better. Connect America has funds that are being used to encourage providers to go out and build up these rural areas. Currently there are three (3) major providers; AT & T, Century Link, and Frontier that have accepted money from the government on an annual basis to build out their areas. They are required to report to FCC on their progress annually, but they are not required to report to the public. There will also be a bid process for other providers to build out the areas that are not covered by the three major providers. Mr. Manning stated that we should see some results from all of this in the next couple of years. Discussion ensued.

**III. CIB Planning**

**a. Update on DMAP Housing Development and Implementation Report**

Derek Bradshaw reminded the group that we received a \$50,000 grant from the Defense Manufacturing Adjustment Program. We went through a process with them and came up with a project that we were interested in looking at. The project selected was to complete a housing report and implementation plan.

Justin Sprague stated that right now we are still in the discovery process. This project has a very aggressive timeline with the project completed by the end of May. CIB Planning is looking at all seven counties in the region. The focus is to look at where the current housing market is at, what is the demand, and why that demand is not being met. The data being pulled together is going

to be higher level since it is all seven counties. Mr. Sprague discussed the timing on the project. The project is currently in the discovery phase, pulling data together that will culminate with some focus groups, speaking with builders, mortgage lenders, appraisers, home builders and developers. The discussion will focus on what the market place is for housing, what mortgage lenders are seeing on the inside and what builders are doing on the supply side. If gaps exist why do those gaps exist? This process should be done by the 2<sup>nd</sup> week of March. Next is strategy development, looking at what the data was and put together a first draft strategy and then we will work with Derek and Anna to generate a targeted opportunities list that will be distributed to the group. This will be done by the middle to end of April and at the beginning of May the project will be finalized. Discussion ensued.

**IV. Janice Karcher, Flint & Genesee Chamber of Commerce**

**a. Update on Talent Forum and RFP**

Janice Karcher reviewed with the group a slide presentation regarding what was learned from the Talent Forum. The MEDC regularly funds projects that the Economic Development Partners identify as priorities. This year there are funds for increasing attraction activities and to zero in on talent. As of 2014 many counties had more people leaving for work then staying in the county for work. There are 154,000 underemployed people region-wide and there are 11,100 people working in the region that are over 65 and could retire any day. Based on this information the breakout groups at the Talent Forum felt they would like to focus on projects for the underemployment and retirement sectors. The Retirement forecast is something that employers need to understand and prepare for. We want to carry this work over into the Talent Forum the Governor is hosting on March 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup>. Ms. Karcher encouraged everyone to attend and help represent the region. Let staff know if you would like to attend and we will organize the group. Discussion ensued.

**V. Patricia Lucas, Lapeer Development Corporation**

**a. Update on Loan Program**

Patricia Lucas stated that in the summer the USDA awarded a revolving loan fund. There is a pool of about \$75,000 to make loans. The USDA invited the Region to submit a second application for additional funding. With the help of the economic development partners the application will be submitted by the end of April. Ms. Lucas asked that if you know of any businesses that need funding, please let her know. Along with the Community Development Block Grant Revolving Fund there are now two funding sources. Discussion ensued.

**RPI Funding 2018**

**b. Update**

Derek Bradshaw announced that we received notice that our grant award for 2018 will be \$180,897. Anna is in the process of looking through the budget to see where we can cut back. Staff hopes to have something to propose to the committee in the next couple of days. We will get the information out to

the group and then have a meeting where people can call in as well as come in to discuss the proposed budget.

Derek Bradshaw announced that there are some water bottles available here for anyone that wants one. They show off 200 miles of great lakes shores, 7000 acres of parks and major rivers are displayed on the back as well.

#### Next Meeting

Wednesday, April 11, 2018 at the Ferris Wheel in Flint

Derek Bradshaw advised that the next meeting will be held at the Ferris Wheel in Flint on Wednesday, April 11<sup>th</sup>. U of M-Flint will be unveiling the new MI Smart Start.

There was a question about doing more First Impressions assessment.

Anna Pinter advised that the budget is in the process of being reviewed and it will be looked at to see if there will be funding available to do more FIT projects.

Chairperson Lucas adjourned the meeting at 11:33 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Debby Compton, Secretary  
GLS Region V