

Natural Resources Economic Development Board Meeting
Monday, May 22, 2023 5:30 PM
Carbondale Main Street, 121 S. Illinois Ave. Carbondale, IL 62901

Call to Order

(5:30pm)

Present: Legan, Carrier, Layne, Maxwell, McMorrow-Hunter, Mulholland

Also Present: Anthony Henson

Approval of Minutes

1. 2023- Approval of February 2, 2023 Minutes
139

A motion was made by Carrier, seconded by Mulholland, to approve the February 2, 2023 minutes as presented. The motion carried by unanimous vote.

Communication

Reports

1. 2023- GIS
140

NRED directed Henson to engage with the County IT staff and provide a project update at the next meeting.

2. 2023- NRED By-Laws
141

No update was given.

3. 2023- Jackson County/University of Illinois Outdoor Recreation Survey General
142 Update

Legan commented that he had attended a zoom meeting which had 4 student groups giving presentations on what the survey would say. He noted that the recreation survey was not as far along as he had hoped and that the board should soon have a draft version of the survey available for review and suggested changes. The board briefly discussed the next phase of the project and the need for budgeting. Henson commented that the County would soon begin budgeting for 2024 and that the NRED board should present a work product from Phase I before requesting a funding proposal for the next phase of their project.

Old Business

1. 2023- Proposed Jackson County Vendor List
143

Mulholland questioned if there were additional vendors that could be added to the list for interviewing, noting that other counties should be added to the list. Henson commented that Perry and Franklin counties have the capability to print off a list of vendors and agreed that other counties should be added to the Jackson County list. Legan commented that a vendor list tied into phase II of NRED's plan and noted that NRED could take its current list and add any additional vendors they wanted. Henson commented that if the board wanted to make a motion, he could begin working on creating the vendor list. Carrier questioned the purpose of the list, where it would live, and who would have access to it. Legan commented that the motion would just be for Henson to begin creating the list, not yet publishing it. A motion was made by Mulholland for Henson to begin creating a vendor list. The discussion continued and carried over to the next agenda item.

New Business

1. 2023- NRED Phase II
144

Legan began discussion on the form the next phase of NRED would take. He noted that he felt the board should go in the direction of some type of intergovernmental agreement which would help with financial support. Carrier agreed, commenting that it would make grant funding requests stronger. Legan commented that he felt the rest of the board wanted to move in that direction, but asked what the other members thought. The discussion circled back around to creating a vendor list and where it would live. Legan commented that in the short term, it would most likely live with the NRED board. Henson commented that it might be a good idea to reach out to the Southern Illinois Tourism Bureau and ask if they would post it on their website. Maxwell led a brief discussion about Carbondale tourism being disbanded and the city using the Southern Illinois Tourism Bureau. She suggested it would be a great idea for NRED to work with the tourism entities to help get the word out about the vendor list. Legan commented that there was a motion on the floor and asked if there was more discussion. Carrier questioned whether the board should define what the list is in the motion. The discussion continued. The consensus of the board was to amend the motion to read "begin creating a list of vendors that includes any who offer services related to the outdoors or serve users of the outdoors". Legan seconded the motion and asked Henson to read back the motion. A motion was made by Mulholland, seconded by Legan, to have Henson begin creating a County vendor list which will include any vendors who offer services related to the outdoors or serve users of the outdoors. The motion carried by unanimous vote.

Legan redirected the discussion to the NRED phase II agenda item. He commented on New River Gorge in West Virginia, where he had previously visited, noting that the tourism bureau information was detailed and helpful. Legan also suggested that the NRED board look into doing something similar and asked the board to review the link he had sent from the tourism bureau. Henson mentioned that he felt there were 2 prongs to a possible NRED phase II: a multi-jurisdictional cooperative agreement for deferment of maintenance projects, and strengthening the relationship with local tourism entities (Southern Most Tourism) and producing a user guide. Layne questioned what Southernmost was and the board had a brief discussion about it. McMorro-Hunter commented about using social media and the internet to promote tourism. The board was in agreement and continued the discussion.

Good and Welfare

1. 2023- Grand Tower
145

Henson commented that the issue of deciding how much the power plant owes in property taxes has been sent to the Illinois Supreme Court. There was a brief discussion of the issue before moving on to the next agenda topic.

2. 2023- Anti-National Park Campaign
146

Legan asked if the topic was brought up to prepare NRED for when/if the County Board directed the issue to them. Carrier and McMorrow-Hunter began a discussion of whether the Shawnee forest should become a national park. Carrier disagreed, stating that it was unrealistic and that the issue was a symptom, not a solution. McMorrow-Hunter stated she was in favor of park management. Legan commented that there was no upside to getting involved in the issue. The discussion continued. Carrier commented that he does not think the County Board should take a position on the issue and that if they do, they need to recognize that doing so would detrimentally affect the ability of us as a county to work with whatever management agency the forest ends up being.

Officer Elections

Legan commented that the board needed to discuss among themselves who would need to be chair of NRED since his one-year voluntary term was ending. It was decided to put the topic on next month's meeting agenda.

Climate Planning

McMorrow-Hunter mentioned a strategic plan for climate resilient development she was working on through her non-profit agency. She commented that it was a holistic plan that would include jobs, training, and economic development. Carrier asked her to describe the plan in more detail. Henson questioned if the Port district would be involved. McMorrow-Hunter commented that she would keep the board up-to-date on the progress.

Executive Session

Adjourn

(6:40pm)

A motion was made by Mulholland, seconded by McMorrow-Hunter, to adjourn the meeting. The motion carried by unanimous vote.