

## **EDC/BRA Meeting**

**January 24, 2019**

**Present:** Ed Kowalski, Courtney Gillison Mary Carroll, Ken Holmes, Roger Griner, Art Jeannot

**Absent:** Robert Russell and Blake Brooks

**Also Present:** Gary Sauer, Lisa Leedy, Betsy Evans, Chris Vander

**Approval of Agenda:** C Gillison, second by E. Kowalski. Motion approved

**Approval of December 14, 2018 minutes:** motion by M. Carroll, second by C. Gillison. Motion approved.

**Public Input:** No public input

**Establishment of meeting dates 2019:** Keep meetings on the third Friday of the month at 11:00, motion by K. Holmes, second by M. Carroll. Motion approved.

**Natural Gas Discussion-** R. Griner discussed bringing up natural gas up through Kaleva / Mesick area, which would be close to Crystal Mountain. Asked for there to be follow through. L. Leedy, talked to some owners of natural gas lines near Buckley, looking for other routes to get natural gas to Benzie County. Discussed cost of building out infrastructure. Several options that need additional exploration.

**AES Update on current projects and billings:** Went over document that was produced for today's meeting. Has linked the Benzie County website with AES website. Need to get monthly minutes updated on the website. Stakeholders /Partners were incorporated. Deputy County Administrator will also have access to the website. Numerous questions were asked to L. Leedy regarding the website. Discussed how to contact the Benzie County EDC, originally sent to the County Administrator. EDC member C. Gillison is assisting Website.

Waiting on MDARD grant for Benzie County infrastructure assessment. Federal Government shutdown has shut down conversation regarding broadband discuss.

Following up on previous retention visits and scheduling future retention visits. A. Jeannot, believes that a retention visits must have a EDC/BRA need to be involved with all retention visits. Board agrees.

AES Invoice dated 1/20/19 invoice number #WP2018-2 for \$5,067.00. County Administrator and L. Leedy will work together over the next 30 days to update and revise the invoice process that includes more details of work completed. Motion to postpone the AES invoice until the future.

L. Leedy will inform Benzie County of the AES meetings. S. Taylor

**Seasonal Worker Housing Update:** Ad Hoc Committee with A. Jeannot, M. Carroll and B. Brooks. Future meetings will be scheduled.

**New Businesses / Old Businesses:** Broad Band Update. E. Kowalski discussed the RFP. Chris V. Eclipse would offer to make a presentation to the EDC Board to help update the board knowledge. County Administrator indicated that the EDC Board needs to receive more information to fully understand the Broadband issue. Chris V. Eclipse wants to work with Benzie County. Benzie County needs a

professional partner to assist in moving broadband throughout the County. A. Jeannot asked several questions regarding broadband. Chris V. from Eclipse answered questions. A. Jeannot recommended a subcommittee be established to address this issue. Most likely will be a public/private venture, ultimately being privately owned. Need to set sub-Committee.

**Public Input:** Betsy Evans, the MI Connect report and the raw data is important information for the sub-committee. What are the businesses plan for accomplishing this? Need to be conscious about costs.

Roger Griner – Brought up cruise ships and west Michigan Tourist industry. Also involved with the rail road/container being loaded closer to Benzie County. Businesses from Benzie County would benefit from this container loading location adjacent to rail roads.

L. Leedy provided an update on transloader project.

Financial updates were requested by M. Carroll.

**Adjournment:** Meeting adjourned at 12:40 pm.

Next meeting is scheduled for Friday February 15, 2019 at 11:00 am.

Respectfully Submitted,

Mitchell D. Deisch, Administrator  
Benzie County