

TUESDAY, AUGUST 10, 2010

**APPROVED MINUTES OF THE
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING HELD**

**STATE OF MINNESOTA)
DODGE COUNTY)**

**COUNTY ADMINISTRATION OFFICE
MANTORVILLE, MN**

2010-15 C.O.W.

The Dodge County Commissioners met in Committee of the Whole August 10, 2010, in the Commissioner's Room at the Dodge County Courthouse Annex, Mantorville, MN, at 9:00 a.m. CDT. Lyle Tjosaas opened the meeting at 9:02 a.m. CDT.

Meeting Convened

The Chair acknowledged those present:

Those Present

Members present:	Klaus Alberts	District #1
	Lyle Tjosaas	District #2
	David Erickson	District #3
	Don Gray	District #4
	David Hanson	District #5

Members absent: None

Also present:	Jim Elmquist	County Administrator
	Becky Lubahn	Deputy County Clerk

Southern Minnesota Initiative Foundation (SMIF) Chief Operating Officer Carol Cerney discussed with the Board SMIF's history, the amount of money that has been spent over the last year, where money has been spent and SMIF's desire to invest in youth programs.

SMIF Financial
Report

Since 1986, SMIF has been a catalyst for economic growth in 20 Minnesota counties. Their work focuses on building a prosperous region with vibrant communities, innovative businesses and a skilled and valued workforce.

Under the leadership of CEO/President Tim Penny, SMIF is providing resources in emerging workforce and business opportunities that have the largest growth potential and impact on the future economy in southern Minnesota.

Over the past 24 years, SMIF, together with hundreds of partners, has supported nearly 500 businesses with loans and technical assistance, totaling more than \$22 million and securing more than 6,500 jobs. It has benefited hundreds of communities and organizations through grants, training, and asset-based community development initiatives totaling more than \$21 million.

SMIF remains committed to making investments that break new ground to create economic prosperity in southern Minnesota.

Ms. Cerney provided the following year in review information:

Business

- 21 businesses received almost \$1 million in loans
- 76 jobs were created or maintained
- Over 472 entrepreneurs helped through technical assistance/training
- 9 entrepreneurs supported through CEO Peer Council
- Trained & engaged 9 Owatonna SCORE volunteers

SMIF Financial Report - Continued

Workforce

- 3 new community partners selected for Community Growth Initiative – 'Immigrants in the Workforce' (Albert Lea, Austin, Owatonna)
- Created Engaged Elder & Career Exploration Learning Networks
- 33 Americorps LEAP service members supported early childhood efforts at 23 community partner sites

Collaboration

- Supported Minnesota Angel Network
- Supported Southern Minnesota Regional Competitiveness efforts

Results

- \$127,577 in grants awarded to organizations/collaborations
- 5 Home Visitation grants totaling \$70,000 awarded
- 5,000 books granted to 28 organizations through Bookstore
- 19 Young Explorer computers granted to 15 organizations

The following year ahead information was provided for the Board's review:

Business

- Invest \$1.2 million to new or expanding businesses
- Provide at least 2,000 hours of technical assistance/training to entrepreneurs
- Train/engage at least 6 new SCORE volunteers
- Support entrepreneurs through CEO Peer Council groups
- Host Business Succession Planning Event
- Implement 2 Community Growth Initiatives focused on biobusiness

Workforce

- 20 Americorps LEAP service members supporting early childhood efforts at community partner sites
- Convene Learning Networks on Engaged Elders, Youth Career Exploration & New Immigrants

Collaboration

- Award \$300,000 or more in grants
- Award Picture It Painted grants, Home Visiting grants, Bookstore grants, and Young Explorer grants
- Implement Mini Micro Loan Program - WINGS, Northfield
- Support YES program (Youth Energy Summit)
- Support Minnesota Angel Network
- Support Southern Minnesota Regional Competitiveness efforts

The following Dodge County investment information was shared:

SMIF Financial
Report - Continued

Investment amount - \$1,443,365
28 loans - \$1,307,709
22 grants - \$125,656

It was reported that over a dozen children are using the new Young Explorer computer system each week at the West Concord Public Library. They've combined the weekly story time with helping the children learn a new program on the computer system. The Young Explorer is an attraction therefore the library is seeing many new children and their parents.

Since there is no preschool in West Concord, the local public library plays an important role for young children and their families. Once parents become familiar with the Young Explorer, it becomes a regular part of their library visit because it's fun and easy to use.

The advent of the Young Explorer has also substantially increased parental involvement in their children's learning. The children have demonstrated a 75% increase in hand/eye coordination and motor skills.

The partnership grant award from IBM and SMIF also signifies that by promoting technology and science to young children we are helping build a capable future workforce.

Ms. Cerney informed the Board that since 1986 SMIF has provided financial support and technical assistance to more than 500 businesses, impacting more than 6,500 jobs. Their foundation has long supported southern Minnesota businesses that innovate, particularly those which use this region's resources to develop high-tech products.

Here in Dodge County, SMIF supports business growth by providing a variety of financial and management tools, including the following highlights:

- High Country Energy, LLC, Kasson - 2010
- Clean Plus, Inc., West Concord - 1994, 1997, 2002, 2004, 2007, 2008
- Kasson-Mantorville Nursery Group - 2006
- Prairie Stone Coffee & Juice LLC, Kasson - 2006
- Craftsman Cabinetry, Kasson - 2006
- Foam Pro Insulation, Hayfield - 2004
- Woods Metal Works, Inc., Kasson - 1993, 1994
- Tri-Star Manufacturing, Inc., Kasson - 1992
- Hiawathaland Tool, Inc., Kasson - 1992
- RDM of MN, Dodge Center - 1989

Since 1986 SMIF has provided more than 1,700 grants to better our communities and our workforce. Key areas include early childhood development, engaging elders, new immigrants, and experiential learners.

The following is a sampling of the organizations and programs supported in Dodge County by the Foundation:

- Claremont EDA, Industrial Development Initiative
- Dodge Center EDA, Child Care Needs Assessment
- Dodge County, Regional Economic Development Planning
- ISD #2125 - Triton, Dodge Center
- RDM of MN, Dodge Center, "20 in 20" Recipient

BookStart Recipients:

- Kasson-Mantorville ECFE
- SEMCAC Head Start of Dodge County
- Triton ECFE/School Readiness, Dodge Center

Picture-It-Painted Recipients:

- Big Brothers Big Sisters of Dodge County
- Dodge County Historical Society/Wasioja School
- City of Kasson Historical Water Tower
- City of West Concord
- West Concord Historical Society Building

Young Explorer Learning Center Recipients:

- Kasson-Mantorville Community Education
- Kasson-Mantorville ECSE
- Kasson-Mantorville Nursery Group
- Triton ECFE, Dodge Center
- West Concord Public Library

Emerging business resources were discussed. SMIF supports southern Minnesota businesses that innovate, particularly ventures that develop high-tech products and services.

Focus Areas:

- **Biobusiness:** The Foundation has made biobusiness its highest business priority. They are investing resources to commercialize bioscience applications within the bio-medical, bio-agriculture and renewable energy arenas.
- **Entrepreneurs:** Small businesses are the anchor of our economy. SMIF supports innovative business owners with finance and management tools to increase profitability and employment opportunities.
- **Minority:** To achieve an entrepreneurial culture, SMIF needs the assets and involvement of every person within our region. To achieve parity of opportunities for minority populations, they offer specialized assistance and some priority funding.

Resources:

- **Bio Seed Fund:** Funding is available to support seed and start-up biobusinesses that need capital, business expertise, and networking opportunities. Amounts vary.
- **Revolving Loan Fund:** Up to \$200,000 is available to 'fill the gap' between available and necessary financing in partnership with local lenders, economic development organizations and government agencies. Priority will be given to biobusinesses and minority entrepreneurs.

- **Small Enterprise Loan Fund:** Up to \$35,000 is available to support small business owners or start-up entrepreneurs, including minority-owned businesses.
- **Technical Assistance:** SMIF provides assessment, planning and implementation support, trainings, and specialized consulting that result in increased business success.
- **Incentive Grants:** SMIF provides up to \$20,000 to support asset based collaborative projects or programs within their five key emerging business and emerging workforce areas.
- **Community Growth Initiative:** SMIF's Community Growth Initiative process brings community members together to evaluate the assets of the community, set goals, and accomplish a project of choice. SMIF provides facilitation, technical assistance, and up to \$20,000 to initiate/create asset based community development efforts (ABCD).
- **Convenings:** SMIF collaborates with regional partners to create small and large convenings that enhance awareness, increase knowledge, and produce results within their focus areas.

Ms. Cerney informed the Board that she is looking to the County Board to help SMIF locate opportunities to assist businesses within Dodge County.

The Board thanked Ms. Cerney for the report.

Dodge County Historical Society (DCHS) President Tom Gall and Historical Society Director Cheryl Finnegan provided the Board with a Historical Society report.

Mr. Gall discussed some of the work that the Historical Society has done recently.

The Historical Society President noted that the most pressing need is the church roof. The Historical Society plans on applying for a grant next spring for repair of the roof. Matching funds will be needed to make the grant competitive. Mr. Gall noted that the cost of replacing the roof is more than what they have in the yearly budget, however, the Historical Society will be seeking out additional grants and funding sources to fix the church roof.

Mr. Gall reported that the roof on the red house also needs to be replaced. DCHS manages seven historic buildings: three in Mantorville, three in Wasioja, and the log cabin on the Dodge County Fairgrounds.

The DCHS President informed the Board that the Historical Society would like to have a parking lot because the yard gets so muddy it is easy to get stuck. It was reported that County Engineer Guy Kohlnhofer formulated a plan for five spaces of a gravel parking lot with an asphalt apron to keep the gravel from washing away. Mr. Kohlnhofer estimated the cost of the parking lot at \$2,500. It was noted that the City of Mantorville has been approached regarding the proposed parking lot and will allow the Historical Society to install a gravel parking lot.

Ms. Finnegan reported that DCHS recently received a grant from the Minnesota State Historical Society to repair and restore the front steps and install a handicap accessible ramp. It is undermined yet where the ramp will be place on the property.

Mr. Gall informed the Board that in a number of counties the Historical Society is responsible for retaining old historical records for the counties and that the Dodge County Historical Society was willing to do this for the county.

Director Cheryl Finnegan shared the following information about her background:

Ms. Finnegan was hired in March 2010. She has ten years experience as Educator, Program Development Manager, and Volunteer Coordinator with the Goodhue and Olmsted County Historical Societies. She has a Master's in Education from Hamline University and is currently studying Web Design and Development at RCTC.

The Board thanked Mr. Gall and Ms. Finnegan for the report.

The Chair adjourned the meeting at 9:34 a.m. CDT.

Meeting Adjourned

ATTEST:

LYLE TJOSAAS
CHAIR, COUNTY BOARD

BECKY LUBAHN
DEPUTY CLERK

DATED: