

**MINUTES  
METRO PEORIA AD-HOC COMMITTEE  
March 11, 2015  
2:30 PM**

<b>MEMBERS PRESENT</b>	Michael Phelan Mary Ardapple	Ryan Spain W. Eric Turner
<b>MEMBERS ABSENT</b>	Andrew Rand	Timothy Riggerbach
<b>OTHERS PRESENT</b>	Carol Trumpe, County Board Member Chris Setti, Assistant City Manager Don Shafer, Chamber of Commerce Jennifer Daly, Greater Peoria Economic Development Council Karen Raithe, Sustainability & Resource Conservation	Leslie McKnight City Senior Development Specialist Lori Curtis Luther, County Administrator Mark Rothert, Assistant County Administrator Mark Little, Peoria County CIO Pat Lewis, Citizen Scott Sorrel, Assistant County Administrator

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Phelan at 2:35 PM.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

A motion to approve the minutes of the February 11, 2015, meeting was made by Ms. Ardapple; seconded by Mr. Turner. The motion was approved unanimously.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Mr. Pat Lewis addressed the committee regarding Springdale Cemetery, particularly the Savannah and its potential role in stormwater abatement. He explained that the land encompassing Springdale Cemetery is prairie savannah, which naturally soaks up the run-off that is currently an EPA issue. He commented that the areas around Springdale Creek could be returned to natural prairie, so that water would absorb instead of running off; a concept that could be expanded into the County and the City. He noted past discussion of the possible reduced involvement of Peoria County in Springdale Cemetery, and expressed some concern that the Savannah is not appropriately appreciated by the City of Peoria. He urged Committee members to consider the importance of the Savannah when discussing Springdale.

**PRESENTATION - GREATER PEORIA ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL**

Ms. Daly advised that the Greater Peoria Economic Development Council worked with both Focus Forward CI and the Economic Development Council for Central Illinois to create one entity for regional economic development efforts. A Regional Economic

Development Strategy has been created and they look forward to the implementation of the plan. She advised that the Board is working on expanding by-laws to include FFCI Board Members; the Board will meet quarterly with an Executive Committee meeting monthly.

Ms. Daly advised that Business Development and Workforce Development are areas in regional economic development that the EDC will be focusing on as an organization. She highlighted several key strategies for those areas of focus. Those include assisting existing employers, business attraction, aligning workforce with high school students with available critical careers in the region, talent attraction and workforce retention. She added that a campaign will be developed around the Greater Peoria area being the best destination for individuals and their families to live and work.

Ms. Ardapple noted that the City is working with minority workforce development and the County has invested in minority contract development. She stated that an issue that has been discussed at the Minority Business Enterprise (MBE) Committee is that our area is not well represented with successful, large companies that are minority owned. She asked if Ms. Daly could consider taking back to her Board the possibility of seeking out minority owned companies to relocate in Peoria. She also expressed interest in what the EDC regional effort will be in assisting local government build minority capacity.

#### **DISCUSSION ITEMS**

##### **MBE Committee presentation - County Funded Contractor Development Program and City Funded Employee Development Program**

Mr. Rothert stated that the need for minority contractor development is apparent after review of available data; minorities equal approximately 26% of the population in Peoria County, but only account for 10% of businesses. In the construction field alone, census data shows that of 1,700 construction firms, only 7% are minority owned. Additionally, an IDOT District #4 disparity study showed egregious discriminatory contracting practices in that district in providing minorities with contracts through IDOT for road construction projects. He outlined the three primary reasons for the focus on construction projects: **1)** construction is an industry that relies heavily on public funding through the federal, state and local governments; **2)** construction is a profitable industry and can support workers with good wages, even at basic levels of education, and **3)** a strong construction industry in place in Peoria that can serve as good mentors for those in the initiative.

Mr. Rothert advised that in early 2014, staff had identified funds that were to originally be allocated for a minority and women's business incubator. Upon further review, that project was deemed financially unfeasible, and the funds were reallocated, with a portion going towards a Minority Contractor Development Program. He commented that through an RFP process, the County hired the Illinois Black Chamber of Commerce, the Minority Business Development Institute and the Cayemitte Group, which

specializes in providing bonding capacity building. Many of the program elements relate to one-on-one training and educational classes held for minority contracting firms to help build their business, and with a specific focus on bonding. He noted that an additional portion of the program is working with community partners to determine opportunities for future projects. He stated there have been 20 MBE and WBE firms participate in the program, a majority of which are African-American firms. He stated that financial, management and/or bonding issues were identified, and several of the firms were successful in getting on the recent Bel-Wood demolition project as well as a mowing contract through the Greater Peoria Sanitary District. He stated that with current financial constraints, the policy issue before Peoria County is how to maintain the commitment to the program and continue to move forward.

Mr. Setti advised that although the City funded minority program somewhat mirrors the County program, it focuses on developing employees, specifically in the construction trades. He stated that the City Manager, the Executive Director of the NAACP and the West Central Building Trades began working on a plan to identify, prepare and funnel more minorities into the building trades. A "Peoria Area Diversity Employment Action Team" was formed several years ago, with the goal of developing a framework of a long term employment strategy for broader inclusion of minority populations in the building trades in Peoria and the surrounding areas.

Ms. McKnight spoke briefly on a joint government purchasing diversity event held this morning, with representation from the City, County, Peoria Park District, CityLink, PHA and Bradley University, discussing their procurement process and their minority participation goals and outreach efforts. In addition, the event provided the rural communities within the County an opportunity to market their economic development efforts. She commented that feedback received from the minority businesses indicate a need for help in capacity building, as well as some intimidation regarding the certification process.

### **Springdale Cemetery**

Ms. Curtis Luther advised that the County Board Chairman and the Mayor have met to discuss the issue, however, no direction on a solution has resulted from those meetings. She stated that from a staff perspective, there are three policy decisions to be considered: 1) maintain the status quo on the relationship between parties in the Intergovernmental Agreement; 2) the County could exercise its ability to exit the Intergovernmental Agreement and no longer be a part of the government structure, or 3) a compromise can be sought in the negotiations of the contents of the Intergovernmental Agreement. She commented that the City has noted that they have a greater financial responsibility to Springdale Cemetery than the other partners, yet the governance structure is equally split. She added that it is reasonable to question how governance should be managed moving forward, given that all parties initially anticipated a short term agreement that has become a long-term agreement. Mr. Spain

asked that further discussion be deferred for one month, so that absent committee members may take part.

**Distribution of Final Resource Management Plan**

Ms. Raithel advised that the Plan is going before the County Board for approval tomorrow evening. The Advisory Committee is scheduled to meet next week to begin discussion of the implementation process. Several of the implementation goals to be highlighted in the next 6 months to 5 years of the 20-year Plan include regional partnerships and development of a regional authority, creation of an Annual Report, and assistance in evaluating the development of a Large Event Ordinance.

**DEPARTMENT COORDINATION**

**Economic Development Coordination - Update**

Mr. Rothert advised that he continues to meet monthly with Mr. Setti and his team to discuss various economic development projects. He stated that recent discussions have centered on a joint incentive policy, which would enable project continuity between governments. Mr. Setti advised that City staff is working on determining a strategy for the City of Peoria, and activities utilized to support the strategy. He stated that often times the role of local government and economic development is to provide incentives, particularly in regard to business attraction and retention. He said that Mr. Rothert and Ms. McKnight have been investigating criteria that would aid in the creation of a policy that is flexible, but not so flexible that it could apply to anyone. He commented that a policy discussion on incentives will be held at the City Council level on March 31st.

Mr. Phelan noted the recent news from Caterpillar regarding their building their world headquarters in Peoria, and asked if the City/County are positioning themselves jointly for a strategy to market the community as an area to live and work. Mr. Setti stated that the City of Peoria is in the process of developing marketing tools, although no specific marketing plan or campaign has been explored. Mr. Rothert noted that from a County perspective, it is incumbent upon his office to perform outreach with communities within the County to determine how they wish to participate and market their own communities. Mr. Setti advised that providing a framework to promote individual communities while also promoting the overall community could be a potential collaborative effort.

**Joint Legislative Program - Update**

Mr. Sorrel noted distributed a hand-out listing legislative priorities included in the joint legislative proposal for direct sponsorship. The priorities include specific requests from the City and County, as well as joint requests. Mr. Sorrel and Mr. Setti summarized and provided a status for each of the legislative proposals.

**APPROVED 7/8/15**

Mr. Phelan asked if both the City and County are working together to monitor both the Governor's actions and actions by the Legislature that may negatively impact local government. Mr. Setti answered affirmatively, and noted that both City and County are also represented by lobbyists in Springfield.

A brief discussion ensued as to the impact of proposed, significant cuts in state aid for both the City and County within the Local Government Distributive Fund. Ms. Curtis Luther stated that although the lobbyists and state organizations will attempt to defend the positions of local government, major cuts are forthcoming. Ms. Ardapple suggested that City and County finance officers begin to draft budget documents based upon worst case scenarios. Ms. Ardapple suggested that the Committee Chairman work with the Mayor and County Board Chairman to ensure that the Governor is aware that there is a system in place for collaboration that is unique within the state.

Mr. Phelan requested that staff add a monthly update on budget related issues to the agenda.

**Work Plan Update**

Ms. Curtis Luther advised that subject to any input or requests for revision, the work plan will move forward as presented.

**ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned by Chairman Phelan at 3:38 PM.