

**Minutes of the
Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy
Committee Meeting
Treasure Coast Regional Planning Council
421 SW Camden Avenue, Stuart, Florida 34994**

Thursday, February 19, 2009

The meeting was called to order at 2:00 p.m.

The following members and staff were present:

Martin County	Tammy Simoneau Ron Bunch Kevin Powers John McAuliffe Judson Epperly
Palm Beach County	Paul Skyers
Staff	Greg Vaday Penny Myszkowski
Visitors	Monroe Harlow David Weller

Staff called the roll and announced that a quorum was not present.

The Minutes of the last meeting on December 18, 2008 will be approved at the next CEDS meeting.

Federal Economic Stimulus Package

Staff addressed economic trends in the region, saying the unemployment rate has risen, consumer confidence has declined, and credit is not readily available. Staff gave the unemployment rates for the counties in the region. An overview of the stimulus package- the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 HR-1, was given. This package provides supplemental appropriations for a number of Federal Agencies, including the Economic Development Agency (EDA), Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) which provides funds for Brownfields cleanup, Small Business Administration (SBA) for business and industry loans, and United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). Staff said that EDA is not the only source of funding and there are other opportunities for the CEDS Committee to consider.

Staff explained some other provisions of the stimulus plan: Regional projects should be submitted no later than late this year for consideration for funding. If the governor of a

state refuses federal dollars, the state legislature can override the governor and adopt a resolution to obtain the funds.

Priorities for 2009

Staff discussed regional priorities in terms of matching the federal priorities. Job creation, renewable and alternative energy projects, and infrastructure improvements will be prominent. The regional inland port is another project that is in the forefront. The inland port would relieve congested space in the Port of Miami and in Port Everglades. It would be a warehouse distribution center. Max Planck Florida Institute received county and state support to establish a location at the Jupiter campus of Florida Atlantic University (FAU). Staff said infrastructure projects to be considered include rail, an intermodal logistics center, the HD King Power Plant in Fort Pierce, regional aviation facilities, and regional water/sewer facilities. An infrastructure development bank is also an important possibility.

Staff encouraged members to talk to their Commissioners to remind them that these EDA and government funds are available for regional projects.

Ms. Munroe Harlow said that with international trade at a low, the country may have to learn to be more self sufficient. One idea is a Public Market making available foods grown locally.

Ms. Tammy Simoneau said that most of the regional projects fall under the Strategic Intermodal System and that State Road 710 is a large project with a regional impact. Staff said in the stimulus package there is \$1.5 billion for surface transportation systems which will be available under discretionary competitive grants.

Staff said the Indian River Bridge project has been submitted to the State for possible funding from the economic stimulus package.

There was discussion about the different counties' needs, including farming, high speed rail, fiber optics infrastructure for businesses, waterway access, and education of our children.

Staff met with Mr. Ron Bunch this week and he mentioned the Governor's Office has an Economic Gardening pilot program with funds available for loans. Staff said that kind of program would work well in this region if people would be willing to work together. Mr. Paul Skyers gave an example of how one consulting business in Palm Beach County was employing this method and becoming a model for this process. Ms. Tammy Simoneau said this creates an environment where there is unlimited lifetime learning, leadership, and available resources.

Mr. Judson Epperly said the airport in Port St. Lucie is watching the business development at the Martin County Airport. Ms. Tammy Simoneau said the Airport Master Plan will be coming before the County Commissioners soon and they just

published a business plan for the Martin County Airport. She will share the information with Mr. Epperly when it is available.

Public Comment

None.

CEDS Committee Comments

None.

The meeting adjourned at 4:20 p.m.