

Minutes

Brooke-Hancock Regional Planning and Development Council July 15, 2009

Persons Present:

John Brown, Brooke-Hancock Regional Planning and Development Council
Larry Dorsch, St. Paul's Parish/Weirton
Gary DuFour, City Manager/ City of Weirton
Doug Griffin, Citizen
J.J. Guida, Airport Realty
Mark Henne, City Manager/ City of Wellsburg
Patrick Kirby, Northern West Virginia Brownfield Assistance Center
Dave Lieving, West Virginia Development Office
Sue Simmonetti, Mayor/ City of Wellsburg
Marvin Six, Assistant Director/ Business Development Corporation of the
Northern Panhandle
Rick Trazama, Starvaggi Industries

On July 15th at 12:00 in the Weirton State Office Building, the above persons met to consider amendments and changes to the Brooke-Hancock Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy.

On behalf of the Business Development Corporation of the Northern Panhandle, Marvin Six introduced an Economic Adjustment Assistance Proposal to create and implement a detailed, step-by-step, project specific, and regionally consensus built action strategy for stabilization and diversification. The requested funding scenario is as follows.

Federal	\$200,000
BDC	\$30,000
State	\$10,000
Local	\$10,000

As noted on pages 19-21 of the application to the U.S. Economic Development Administration, the proposal satisfies EDA's investment policy guidelines in the following manner.

1. Be market-based and results driven. An EDA investment will capitalize on a region's site location strengths and will positively move a regional economic indicator measured on EDA's Balanced Scorecard, such as: an increased number of higher-skill, higher-wage jobs; increased tax revenue; or increased private sector investment resulting from the EDA investment.

The project utilizes market-based data and analysis to develop practical and workable strategies to strengthen the target areas' economies. This strategic approach builds upon existing asset and workforce strengths. It focuses on potential growth areas as a way to identify job training needs, launch programs, attract investments, retain and expand emerging industries, and increase employment opportunities for workers. Over a projected five-year period, the project will result in the creation and retention of over 500 jobs in the region.

2. Have strong organizational leadership. An EDA investment will have strong leadership, relevant project management experience, and a significant commitment of human resources talent to ensure a project's successful execution.

The Business Development Corporation of the Northern Panhandle (BDC), in cooperation with the Brooke-Hancock Regional Planning Council (BH) will manage this project.

Formed in 1993, the BDC is a consolidation of five existing economic development organizations in Brooke and Hancock County. The consolidation occurred to form a single organization dedicated to job creation and encourage investment. Formed in 1967, BH's mission is defined in its bylaws as follows.

The Council will serve as the focal point for district planning. It will formulate district economic and community development plans and programs. It will consider and when feasible incorporate development policies and priorities. The Council will serve as the primary designate for relating needs, objectives and priorities to the statewide development and program planning. The Brooke-Hancock Regional Planning and Development Council (BH) meet on a quarterly basis and prepare a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy to create jobs and advance the regional economy.

The BDC has a full-time Executive Director and part-time researcher. BH has a full-time Executive Director and Senior Community Development Specialist. The two agencies are joint participants in an existing planning assistance grant through US EDA. This work group has completed and received funding from federal, state and local resources. They have and continue to complete quarterly, mid-year and end of year reports in a timely and accurate fashion.

3. Advance productivity, innovation and entrepreneurship. An EDA investment will embrace the principles of entrepreneurship; enhance regional industry clusters, and leverage and link technology innovators and local universities to the private sector to create the conditions for greater productivity, innovation, and job creation.

Technical assistance offered through this investment will build capacity through the identification of current and emerging problems and the development of workable action solutions. The project will bring together organizations and communities facing a common challenge to develop innovative regional strategies for economic growth. The BDC will help community stakeholder groups promote innovation and build support networks for entrepreneurs as a vital component of job creation. Through this project, the applicant projects it will provide business and operational assistance to over 50 entrepreneurs and existing businesses located throughout the region.

4. Look beyond the immediate economic horizon, anticipate economic changes, and diversify the local and regional economy. An EDA investment will be part of an overarching, long-term comprehensive economic development strategy that enhances a region's success in achieving a rising standard of living by supporting existing industry clusters, developing emerging new clusters, or attracting new regional economic drivers.

Data analyses provided through this investment will help community advisory groups and economic development stakeholders focus on ways to support existing businesses as a means of promoting diversity and identify high-growth industries around which communities may develop longer-term economic development strategies. The BDC encourages community leaders to look past immediate concerns and identify long-term economic goals. Through this project, the BDC encourages priority setting and action plans while creating annual five-year benchmarks and indicators for success.

5. Demonstrate a high degree of local commitment by exhibiting.

- High levels of local government or non-profit matching share funds and private sector leverage.

Local advisory groups organized under this investment will include representatives from public agencies. The BDC in cooperation with BH will provide critical resources to support this effort. The BDC has committed \$30,000 in local match to this project. Additionally, the Brooke and Hancock County Commissions have jointly committed \$10,000. The West Virginia Development Office has committed \$10,000 to the project in match funding to support this effort.

- Clear and unified leadership and support by local elected officials

Historically, local elected officials have been enthusiastic participants in community and regional strategic projects. In the targeted BH region, public sector officials at all levels, including the West Virginia Development Office and members of Congress are working together to find ways to provide new jobs through economic diversification. Local elected officials, including county commissioners and other community leaders will play a key leadership role in supporting this project.

- Strong cooperation between the business sector, relevant regional partners and local, State and federal governments.

Joined by regional development offices and business interest, government units at all levels are working together to resolve current major job losses. These same entities will be actively involved in developing strategies and action plans for economic recovery and growth anticipated in this investment.

Upon the nomination of Gary DuFour and second by John DeStefano, the Council agreed to add the Business Development Corporation of the Northern Panhandle's Action Plan with a cost of \$250,000 the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS).

Upon the nomination of Gary DuFour and a second by John DeStefano, the Council meeting was adjourned.