



Economic Development and Planning Committee

Meeting Minutes – March 31, 2014, 4:00 pm

Members in attendance: Dan Wagner, Jerry Staczek, Robert Ruse

Members absent: none

Others attending: Edward Ciecka, City Administrator; Neil MacKinnon, Mayor; Kurt Miller, Miller Diversified

The meeting was called the meeting to order at 4:05 pm.

1. Kurt Miller of Miller Diversified was in to discuss development ideas for Crossroads. It was a healthy discussion of understanding the current economic challenges that developers face. The entertainment district has gained some traction. Some of the ideas involve mixed use, commercial/retail, and residential, along with a recreational component. Both parties agree that success of such large tracks of property will require thinking globally (outside the box) about ideas for private-public partnerships.
2. Discussed HB 289 (see attached) and how it might impact the City. The current Bill has passed the Ohio House and is onto the Senate. As the Bill currently exists, Joint Economic Development Districts (JEDZ) will not be allowed in their current capacity after December 31, 2015. How the Bill will ultimately impact the current Rossford Crossroads JEDZ remains to be determined. The Committee recommended that the Law Director monitor the Bill.
3. Mr. Ciecka discussed that OPWC grant program, State Issue 1, that is back on the ballot. Rossford has secured numerous Issue 1 grants through the years (when this first came out over 15 years ago, it was known as Issue 2). The Committee recommended that Council pass a resolution of support for its passage.
4. Continued discussion on the need to compare how Rossford's fees, assessments, and taxes compare to our neighbors. Ed Ciecka has been tasked with crafting a matrix of data. He will be reaching out to Kurt Miller for assistance.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:35 pm.



LEGISLATION MAKING SUBSTANTIAL CHANGES TO OHIO'S JEDZ LAW HEARD IN OHIO SEANTE

The Senate Finance Committee held a second hearing this week on sub.HB 289, legislation introduced by Rep. Kirk Schuring (R-Canton) that would modify Ohio's Joint Economic Development Zone law.

The bill, which passed the Ohio House February 26, with a vote of 83-7, went through several modifications in the Ohio House before reaching the substitute version now before the Ohio Senate. We have attached a Legislative Service Commission (LSC) comparative analysis [HERE](#) listing the changes that have taken place in the language proposals. Specifically, the latest version of the bill would make the following changes to Ohio's current JEDZ law:

*Prohibits the renewal of a JEDZ contract after December 31, 2014 and terminates, on January 1, 2015, the authority of municipal corporations, or of municipal corporations and townships, to create new or to substantially amend existing joint economic development zones (JEDZs).

*Requires subdivisions that enter into or substantially amend a JEDZ contract between the bill's effective date and December 31, 2014, to create and include an economic development plan for the zone and a schedule for implementation of new or expanded services, facilities, or improvements.

*Specifies that a least half of new revenue generated in the JEDZ be used only for new or expanded services, facilities or improvements until they've been completed under the economic development plan

*Establishes a joint economic development review council and requires the council to hold at least three public meetings each year, to prepare a report evaluating the JEDZ's effectiveness and to approve the plan. The bill further requires the council to submit the report to each subdivision participating in the JEDZ. Furthermore, sub. HB 289 requires that the council be composed of the county auditor, owners of the four businesses that employ the most persons within the JEDZ, a person affiliated with an economic development organization, and a member of the public.

*Authorizes two or more employers or employees in the JEDZ to bring civil action for termination or suspension of the income tax if the council rules the JEDZ is not in compliance with its plan or implementation schedule.

*Requires subdivisions participating in an alternative JEDZ to phase out the income tax as quickly as possible if the court determines that the tax is not in the best interests of the JEDZ and requires subdivisions participating in a municipal-only JEDZ to implement a plan to terminate the JEDZ contract as expediently as possible if the court determines that continuation of the contract is not in the best interests of the JEDZ.

Sub.HB 289 is not scheduled for a third hearing next week but we expect the Senate Finance Committee to take up the bill the week of April 7th, before the legislature adjourns for Spring Break.

If your municipality has concerns with the direction the legislation is going and the changes being considered that may affect current economic development contracts in your communities to please share those concerns with your state Senator as soon as possible so unintended consequences can be identified and addressed before the committee acts to advance the bill. The league would also very much appreciate receiving a copy of any correspondence that may be sent to legislators or the Governor on this or any other legislative matter.