

COMMITTEE REPORT

COMMITTEE: Development & Planning (D&P)

CHAIRPERSON: Diane Gallagher, Chairperson

DATE/TIME: September 24, 2024 at 5:30 p.m.

PRESENT:

☒ Diane Gallagher

☒ Lynn Gallagher

☐ LaDon Trost

☒ Steve Endress

☒ Bob Heuerman

☐ John Lang

☒ John Schultz

☒ Michael Dittmar

A quorum was established.

Other Board members: Dianne Allendorf

Others: Angela Kaiser and Melissa Soppe. David Schmit of NWILED appeared via Zoom. Citizen Shawn Saunders, local business owner.

1. Approval of Minutes –

- a) Review and approve minutes for the August 27, 2024 Development & Planning Committee meeting – **L. Gallagher made a motion to approve the minutes for the August 27, 2024 Development & Planning Committee meeting. Seconded by Schultz and motion passed following a voice vote resulting in all Ayes.**
- b) Review and approve minutes for the June 25, 2024 Development & Planning Committee meeting (*Incomplete minutes approved at the Development & Planning Committee, meeting of July 23, 2024*) – **Schultz made a motion to approve the completed minutes for the June 25, 2024 Development & Planning Committee. Seconded by L. Gallagher.** There was a correction that needed to be made in the minutes. On page 7 of 47, there needs to be a removal of the words ‘he had’ (an idea) under 4.b. Dittmar said that it wasn’t ‘his idea’. **Schultz made a motion to amend the previous motion by striking out ‘he had’. Seconded by Dittmar and the amendment carried. The committee then voted on the amended motion and motion passed following a voice vote resulting in all Ayes.**

2. **Citizens’ Comments** – Shawn Saunders, a business owner from Apple River, asked what the rule for signage was. He has received letters and pictures of his signs up around Jo Daviess County. He’s been getting ‘a lot of grief’ from the County and said he had signs in six other counties and there was only one county he had to get a permit in. Nobody else does or says anything. He’s trying to figure out what needs to be done and why this is. The past year, he’s tried to fix up a lot of businesses, but said he gets a lot of grief for the advertising. D. Gallagher directed Saunders to the County website and told him the Code of Ordinances is online. She asked him if he has contacted the Planning & Development office yet. He hadn’t. He said his lawyer may have a year or two ago but he hadn’t himself. Schultz told him we are in the preliminary process of relooking at our zoning ordinance and if he had any issues like this, to please present them to the Committee or the Zoning Administrator so things can get ironed out. Saunders doesn’t understand why he is getting a hard time for fixing signs up. He said some of them have a permit thing on them but that he thinks those are just for the state roads. When asked who he has been contacted by, Saunders said that someone from the Count sent a letter and then he was contacted by the building inspector and told that he had to take them down. Kaiser asked what he has done at the Hanover office to find his way to getting the signs approved. Saunders reiterated that he had not gone to that office. Schultz said the first step would be to go to Planning & Development in Hanover and start with them. Saunders mentioned he has received these letters for about 13 years. There was much discussion.

3. Unfinished Business

- a) FY2023/FY2024 Strategic Goals and Plans – The committee wanted to be cognizant of the meeting length, so the goals and plans were not discussed at length.
- b) Discussion and possible action on \$100,000 grant program to small businesses (Small Business Economic Development Grant Program) – Special Fund 018 Economic

Development Investment Fund line item 018-46177-908 Scheduled Loan Expense – Kaiser said she made a couple revisions to the document presented. She said that it put all of the decision making on this Committee, and she wasn't sure if the entire board would want that. She would suggest maybe revising. She said the applications would go to NWILED and from there, review and recommendations would be made to the Development & Planning Committee, the Committee would then review those recommendations, and the next step would be the Committee presenting that recommendation to the County Board for approval. Schultz said Kaiser's suggestions certainly clear up the chain of command in the process. Dittmar agreed with Kaiser's revisions. He said he would like to have the \$200,000 budgeted for loans and then \$100,000 for the grants. That would leave some for future years. Kaiser replied that she wasn't sure if they'd have all the paperwork they'll need for the 1st time homebuyer program – so the paperwork may not need to be done, but they'll need to recommend a change to the budget for FY2025. Dittmar said that we can complete the planning for this item before moving onto the first time homebuyer program. D. Gallagher said there is a lot of personal information in the applications and that it should not be the business of the County. The bankers would be the ones to look at the paperwork. She said that there isn't any revenue rolling into the Economic Development Investment Fund. The revenue is coming from interest. Once the money is used up, there isn't anything out there to replenish it. There was discussion on the expenditures in the fund. **Dittmar made a motion to recommend approval of a Resolution to establish the Jo Daviess County Small Business Economic Development Grant Program and to fund it as presented. Seconded by Schultz.** Endress asked if when this was all established, if we could publish a statement that the money wasn't from taxpayers and it was from the Riverboat. **The motion carried by a voice vote resulting in all Ayes.**

- c) Discussion and possible action on a Starter Home Down Payment Loan Program – Dittmar spoke about the revolving loan fund. Just because this is a different program, we are just adding this to the same pool of money. We won't need to budget anything additional because we already have the money in the fund. This loan could be funded to first-time homebuyers with a 2% interest rate. Schultz said there was no problem selling the idea of free money to improve businesses. But what kind of revenue stream do we have to get this money back from first-time homeowners? 2% won't cover the actual cost to provide these loans. Creighton said that we have to look at the demographics and that we are the second oldest county in the state. Everyone else is doing better. If we don't reverse some of the trends we have, and convince some of our youth to stay in the county and do business here, in 20 years, Jo Daviess County wouldn't exist like it does today. This is already the cheapest housing market in the State. The reason is because we have a large supply on the market and our kids are going somewhere else. The numbers he is continually told is that 70-80% of our youth are going to leave. The point of doing this program is to keep somebody here who is going to raise a family and be productive member of the community. He said a program like this could be monumental. There was no action on this item, and it will be brought back to the Committee with a Resolution in October. There was much discussion.
- d) Retrospective of Committee minutes – October – December 2023 review by Steve Endress – Steve Endress gave a retrospect of Committee minutes from October to December 2023.

4. New Business

- a) Discussion and possible action on a revised position description for the Planning & Development Administrative Assistant (Recommended by the Personnel Review Committee, meeting of September 12, 2024) – There was some discussion on this but everyone was in agreeance that it was something necessary for the Planning & Development office. **L. Gallagher made a motion to recommend the revised position description for the Planning & Development Administrative Assistant. Seconded by Schultz and the motion carried.**

LaDon Trost entered the meeting at this time.

- b) Interim Staffing Plan – The committee discussed the interim staffing plan for the Planning & Development office. Things are going well. There should be some additional updates for next month's meeting.

5. Reports

- a) Building & Zoning Monthly Reports – Melissa Soppe (Inc. permits, guest accommodations, public hearings, text amendments appeals) – Melissa Soppe, Interim Planning & Development Administrator, gave her monthly report. In August, thirty-two (32) building permits were issued with a total construction value of \$2,167,500, including 3 new homes, 8 accessory structures, 7 additions and/or decks and 5 renewable energy permits. The total estimated construction value since January 2024 is \$29,269,405, compared to \$21,131,670 by this time last year. Her report included information about the Illinois Association of County Zoning Officials (IACZO) fall 2024 meeting. IACZO is holding the meeting via Zoom on October 25th. Soppe presented the agenda for the meeting within her report. There will be a presentation by the Woodford County State's Attorney and another by the Kendall County Director of Planning, Building & Zoning. She also included contact information for anyone to RSVP for this meeting.
- b) Economic Development Monthly Report – NWILED – David Schmit – David Schmit, Northwest Illinois Economic Development Director, gave his monthly report that was included in the packet. He has been working with County Board member Dittmar on the second draft of the proposed JDC Small Business Development Fund. This past month, Schmit has also completed his annual member visits with multiple businesses and associations. There was a Carroll County update included in his report as well. In the near future, Schmit will be working giving a presentation at the JDC Mayors Association meeting. Manufacturing and Trades Day for this year is on October 3rd. There is also an Aged Worker/Veteran Hiring 'Lunch & Learn' scheduled for November 13th.

6. Citizens' Comments – None.

7. **Board Member Concerns** – D. Gallagher would like everyone to find model zoning ordinances to compare with Jo Daviess County's zoning ordinance. Dittmar thanked Schmit for helping with the grant program. In regards to signs, he also doesn't like things to look gaudy either and likes them to look nice. Schultz said that his concern was that there could be a Zoom mishap during the Finance meeting Thursday night and he told Lang he would try to do something about it. Kaiser said she confirmed that all of the links are the same wherever they're posted.

8. Adjourn

The next regular Development & Planning Committee meeting will be Tuesday, October 22, 2024 at 5:30 p.m.

The meeting adjourned at 7:42 p.m. following a motion made by Schultz and seconded by Heuerman. Motion passed following a voice vote resulting in all Ayes.