



**BOARD OF DIRECTORS QUARTERLY MEETING AGENDA**  
Wednesday, January 10<sup>th</sup>, 2024  
[View Zoom Recording](#)

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

*a division of the Wisconsin Business Innovation Corporation*

**1. Call to Order**

- Meeting called to order at 10:00 AM by Administrator Crystal Rohde
  - **Members Present:** Kelly Klein – Representing Iron County, Cole Rabska – Representing Bayfield County, Dale Heikkinen – Representing Price County, John Will – Representing Education (Northwood Technical College), Geri Dresen – Representing Chambers of Commerce, Dick Hartmann – Representing Burnett County, Jim Caesar – Representing Douglas County, Donna Walker – Representing Private Industry (Dairyland Power Cooperative), Michelle Johnson – Representing Private Industry (Enbridge), Ken Disher – Representing Private Industry (Xcel Energy)
  - **Others Present:** Kori Zenz – Iron River Area Chamber of Commerce, David Wierzba – Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation, Jim Miller – Congressman Tiffany’s Office, Joy Melton – NWRPC, Monica Johnson – Sawyer County/LCO EDC, Colleen Merrill – WI SBDC, Melissa Meschke – Institute for Business & Entrepreneurship, Andy Albarado – Sawyer County, Crystal Rohde – Visions Northwest
  - **Members Absent:** Carver Harries – Representing Economic Development Organizations, Mari Kay-Nabozny – Representing NWWIB, Philomena Kebec - Bad River Band of Lake Superior Chippewa, John Righeimer – Representing Sawyer County, Ilsa Hoeschen – Representing Education (UW-Superior/NorthWERD)

**2. Welcome and Introductions**

**3. [Agenda Addition] Requesting Support for Assembly Bill 470 (AB 470)|Senate Bill 481 (SB 481)**

*Legislation that retains Wisconsin’s control over the safety and reliability of our state’s power grid*

- Ken Disher, Xcel Energy + Donna Walker, Dairyland Power Cooperative

A motion was made by Jim C. to approve the letter of support on behalf of Visions Northwest, a second was made by Cole R. The motion carried unanimously.

**4. Approval of Draft October 11<sup>th</sup>, 2023 Meeting Minutes**

A motion was made by Cole R. to approve the October 11<sup>th</sup>, 2023 minutes, a second was made by Michelle J. The motion carried unanimously.

**5. Presentation: UW Institute for Business and Entrepreneurship + SBDC Programs**

- Colleen Merrill - Interim State Director, Wisconsin Small Business Development Center  
See slides/presentation attached. View on the meeting [recording](#) at 17:12.

## 6. Presentation: Entrepreneur Fund Wisconsin Expansion Update

- Mike Lattery, Director of Business Finance + Kara Gunderson, Business Developer  
See slides/presentation + materials attached. View on the meeting [recording](#) at 30:25.

## 7. Key Partner Update

- David Wierzba – Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation
  - Community development investment grant very successful – much interest – probably oversubscribed for current fiscal year – can always put projects into the pipeline for FY25. Earlier the better to get started if planning to access programs.
  - Thrive Rural program updates – through Office of Rural Prosperity – interest forms due January 16<sup>th</sup>. If interested and need a letter of support from the region, please reach out to Crystal ASAP.
  - Business development tax credit program – legislation looking at making changes to the program – initially built to attract new business and jobs – now looking at tweaks to the program to adjust to current climate (i.e. automation, etc.)
  - This Spring (possibly March) a colleague from Diverse Business division will be traveling to region and will be looking for potential connections.

## 8. Mission Wisconsin + WEDC Talent Attraction Community Partner Network ([RoleCall](#))

- See slides/presentation

## 9. Around the Table/Other Business

- Dale H. provided updates on Price County – [hear his update](#) at 1:08:00
- Group discussed housing barriers and any relevant legislative updates – short term rentals have become an increasing issue since they are taking away from housing stock – even in residential areas (not just lake properties).
- John W. provided updates from Northwood Technical College – [hear his update](#) at 1:19:13

## 10. ICYMI + Upcoming Events

- See slides/presentation

## 11. Confirm Next Meeting – April 10<sup>th</sup>, 2024 (virtual)

## 12. Adjourn

- Geri D. made a motion to adjourn the meeting 11:28AM, a second was made by Donna W. Motion carried unanimously.