

United Growth for Kent County, Inc.

Minutes of Coalition Meeting November 7, 2007

Present: Mike Williams, Cynthia Price, Bonnie Blackledge, Kendra Wills, Herb Ranta, Paul Haan, Kevin Wisselink.

MINUTES: Herb moved to approve the minutes with the change to “Comerica” before account. Bonnie seconded, and the motion carried. Bonnie mentioned, based on the minutes, that she did talk to someone at Rockford Construction about newsletter underwriting and he was going to send it to a different department. They regarded it as a charitable contribution; she had been thinking of it as marketing, with which most present agreed.

TREASURER’S REPORT: Herb reported that Tuscan Express was the biggest expense for the month, for the Land Use Networking Luncheon, but there was offsetting income. We broke just about even on the event. Cynthia moved to accept the treasurer’s report, Kevin seconded, and it passed.

SUSTAINABLE FUNDING: We discussed other potential opportunities for salary funding, based on projects: DTE, Consumers, energy grant to State of Michigan. Kendra reviewed that for the Land Preservation Committee work, we have received \$19,500 from Frey, \$19,500 from Lowell Community Fdt., and put in a request for \$19,500 from Grand Rapids Community Fdt. Kendra also said the Kellogg grant which had been going to end March 31 had been extended through May.

We discussed Merry Malfroid’s position and what could be done by volunteers or interns to take her place if we can’t find funding. She does the detail work on the newsletter, web updates, etc.

We then spent a lot of time discussing the fact that it is very difficult to wrap our arms around our financial situation because we do not control most of the funds. For example, Kendra is funded 60% by the County, but we don’t know what the dollar figures are for the remainder nor how much is covered by current grants. (A similar statement is true of Carol.) It is not therefore really appropriate that we try to determine how the money is spent. We need to have our own dollars for our own projects as determined by United Growth members and board.

We need to look at other possible sources of income and match it to projected needs, and to know what it is we are spending money on in a more specific way. We also need to clarify our relationship to MSU in terms of finances.

It was determined that Paul would meet with Kendra and Carol and others who could attend to develop a picture of our financial condition before the next board meeting.

We need to revisit the notes on the board that Kendra took a photo of about what UGKC value is after that process.

MEMBERSHIP CAMPAIGN: We did not have time to go into this in depth.

NOVEMBER COALITION MEETING: Because of Kendra’s seriously ill child, she had had to cancel the PDR presentation in October, so we decided to schedule it again for November. The rest of the agenda fell into place.

NEWSLETTER: Kendra had attached a draft. This issue is paid for by the WKK grant. We need to get back to Fulton St. Farmers’ Market and Heffron Farms, and Bonnie, as noted above, is working on Rockford Construction.

Kendra suggested doing an e-newsletter on local shopping for the holidays. There is a new Local First gift certificate. This met with approval.

The meeting adjourned at 11:35 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Cynthia Price