

**Southern Indiana Rural Development Project, Inc.**  
**Board and Advisory Board Meeting**

Indiana University Southeast – New Albany  
May 11, 2005

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Agenda

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- 10:00 Call to Order & Introductions**
- 10:10 Approval of Minutes**
- 10:15 Executive Committee Report**
- IRDC Grant
  - Fall Symposium
- 10:45 Treasurer's Report**
- 10:50 Task Force Reports**
- Housing
  - Technology
  - Entrepreneurship
- 11:10 Presentation:** Cris Fulford  
Director of High Speed Communications,  
Indiana Office of Rural Affairs
- 11:30 Lunch & Member Updates**
- 12:30 Adjourn**

**Southern Indiana Rural Development Project, Inc.**  
**Board and Advisory Board Meeting Minutes**  
**April 13, 2005**  
**Gasthof – Montgomery**

Mayor Dave Abel  
Ron Ackman  
Charley Dibble  
Bill Fattic  
Cris Fulford  
Judy Gray  
Fay Greckel  
Jess Helsel  
Ray Kassab

Vicki Kellerman  
Lisa Locke  
Darla Miles  
Robert Peacock  
Julie Pfitzer  
Jim Rice  
Mary Lou Schnell  
Charles Selby  
Gary Shelley

Brenda Swartz  
Kent Yeager  
  
*Staff*  
Thayr Richey  
Dave Cox  
Matt Kinghorn

Fay Greckel called the meeting to order at 10:10. Introductions followed.

### **Approval of Minutes**

November minutes were approved with one correction. Jess Helsel noted that a new medical plaza will be constructed adjacent to Washington County's new industrial park, not in the park as reported.

### **Executive Committee Report**

The group discussed the two possible fall symposium scenarios that were presented by staff. Thayr Richey commented that SIRDP has held a fall symposium for the last ten years with a variety of different formats and attendance peaked a few years back at around 110. Fay Greckel reported that scenario #1 would be to partner with the IRDC to convene all the IRDC grant recipients. Scenario #2 was to hold a conference featuring the new Indiana Economic Development Corporation, Office of Rural Affairs and Department of Agriculture.

Robert Peacock commented that scenario 1 would be best because the various grantees would be in the middle of their projects and participants could learn from each other and possibly find ways to collaborate. Scenario 2 may be better for next year because these agencies may not be settled by this fall.

Jim Rice stated that, as an IRDC board member, he prefers scenario 1 and that he would like to include the groups who didn't receive funding from the IRDC. Rice believed this would be helpful to SIRDP and promote a better turnout.

Charley Dibble noted that the two scenarios don't need to be exclusive. Dibble suggested combining the two so that we can demonstrate to these new state agencies what SIRDP does.

Greckel questioned whether people outside the grantees would be attracted to the conference described in scenario 1. Mayor Dave Abel commented that people can always learn a lot from being exposed to different programs and projects.

Greckel stated that it was nice to have a consensus from the board and that we would continue to be open to other ideas.

Vicki Kellerman noted that if we did go with scenario 1, that it would still be beneficial to include the new Office of Rural Affairs in the conference.

Greckel asked if there were any ideas for potential lunch or keynote speakers. Dibble suggested that the Lt. Governor would be a good choice.

Greckel noted that since scenario 1 would draw from throughout the state, that a location such as Columbus may be best.

## Technology Task Force Report

Richey began by recommending that the SIRDP taskforce partner with a similar effort being conducted by Cris Fulford, the Director of High Speed Communications with the Indiana Office of Rural Affairs. With this effort, we would combine task forces.

Task force chair Jim Rice commented that the technology task force would have three objectives. First, conduct a nation wide search for replicable rural broadband technology models. Second, create a "do-it-yourself" manual that can assist rural communities create their own technology initiatives. Finally, hold a one day workshop to disseminate the information. Rice noted that he and Fulford didn't believe that service providers would serve on the task force but that the task force would seek input from them. Rice reported that the task force would hold their first meeting on April 20 at 10:00am in Indianapolis.

Ron Ackman noted that he had heard that Cinergy was experimenting with new broadband technology. Gary Shelley responded that they were experimenting in suburbs of Cincinnati with broadband over power lines and that if the test were successful; they hope to expand throughout the service area. Kent Yeager asked if there was a timeline for the tests. Shelley said they would hopefully be completed by the end of this year. Fulford commented that South Central REMC

was experimenting with Broadband over power lines and running wireless off of there.

Fulford reported that the Office of Rural Affairs was pursuing a broader agenda by also creating a funding guide for communities as well as a catalogue of the current technology infrastructure available in the state.

## Benchmarking Task Force Report

Richey commented that the benchmarking task force last met on March 23. In attendance were Chuck Andres, Pam Hageman, Vicki Perry, Carol Rogers, Thayer Richey, Scott Burgins and Catie Kosinski. Richey reported that the overall goal for the project is – five years from now - to look back and see what has changed and why.

The task force hopes that SIRDP can use the information to pick projects to tackle, but such benchmarking should precede a strategic plan. Also, the project should reflect the Indiana Rural Development Council's REDS report.

The key points the task force agreed upon were:

1. The need for input from community leaders.
2. The need for a “wow factor” that will catch people's attention.
3. We will study Southern Indiana as a whole and some set of sub

regions.

Brenda Swartz asked if the benchmarking would cover the entire 39 county area and Richey responded that it would. Greckel asked if the task force would be looking at historical data and, if so, collecting historical data can often be troublesome. Richey responded that where possible, we would look at historical data. Fulford asked who would be the audience for this study and Richey stated that there would be two audiences: 1) local leaders and 2) the general public. Swartz asked if we would herald those communities that are doing well and offer remediation for those who are struggling. Richey replied that we would most likely not be able to offer any programmatic remediation for the problems.

Greckel commented that the biggest issue for the task force will be exactly what areas to study. Richey agreed and said that they would need to decide by the end of the summer. Judy Gray suggested that we look at the areas that were examined in the original Hudson Institute study. Swartz suggested that it would be worthwhile to keep in mind potential funding sources and the areas of study that they are interested in. Gray commented that the responsibility of funding is being pushed down to the local level and that there is no feasible way that localities can deal with these issues and that we should be careful not to give local leaders a list of problems that can't be fixed.

# Scottsburg AIC Task Force Report

There will be another Scottsburg AIC planning retreat to be held on May 17 & 18.

## Presentation

Charles Selby, Daviess County Chamber of Commerce

Charles Selby of the Daviess County Chamber of Commerce informed the board about the various innovative projects currently underway in Daviess County. The projects include the creation of a business incubator/education center in Washington which includes a partnership with Purdue. Among other programs, there will be English as a second language courses offered at the site. Another initiative was an entrepreneurship program being conducted in Daviess County by Ball State. Finally, there is a five county cooperative marketing effort getting underway in the region known as Southwest Indiana Merchants (SWIM).

## Member Updates

Bill Fattic of HUD announced that HUD has issued SuperNOFA funds for FY 2005 and will be holding upcoming webcasts for the various grant areas. These webcasts will be archived and can be viewed at any time. For more information visit <http://www.hud.gov/offices/adm/grants/fundsavail.cfm>. Fattic also discussed a HUD brochure titled "Why Not in Our Community, Removing Barriers to Affordable Housing". To view this report online visit [www.huduser.org](http://www.huduser.org)

Charley Dibble of the Greene County Economic Development Corporation reported that one entrepreneur from Greene County has been pursuing the production of soy silk and that up until now; the only place to get this product was from China but that there is no reason why it can't be produced in Greene County, Indiana. Brenda Swartz reported that the Small Business Innovation grants will be available starting June 15 and are perfect for that type of project. Dibble also reported that the KPT Tile plant had sold to Bedford Metals which makes frames for Corvettes and some Cadillac models and could bring 100 jobs to the county.

Judy Gray of the Orange County Economic Development Partnership reported that there were two new bidders for the casino license, Larry Bird/Nevada Gold and CFC/Lauth group. CFC bought the French Lick Resort and plans to put in 80 million worth of renovations. It is expected that the license will be awarded on June 22.

Jess Helsel of the Washington County Economic Growth Partnership announced that Vicki Kellerman has been named as their executive director. Helsel stated that Kellerman and Judy Gray have been working on some regional initiatives.

Vicki Kellerman of the Washington County Economic Growth Partnership stated that she is trying to get up to speed in her new position and that Jess Helsel has been a great help to her. Kellerman noted that there has been some industry expansion in the county which is creating new jobs.

Robert Peacock of the Scott County Economic Development Corporation reported that Scott County has been working on a virtual health initiative which can provide help from mental health clinical psychologists to many institutions such as hospitals, retirement homes, correctional facilities etc. Peacock also reminded the group there would be another Scottsburg AIC planning retreat on May 17 & 18.

Kent Yeager of Indiana Farm Bureau commented that Harrison County is in danger of losing a significant portion of its riverboat money. Yeager reported that Farm Bureau believes that it has been a good legislative session so far but that a lot can still happen. He commented that some local governments and schools could be hurt by the new budget and that rural and suburban areas could be affected the most. Yeager also commented that he was struck by how much value there was in the IRDC grants that were awarded and that the value far outweighs the actual grant monetary totals.

Jim Rice of Hannum, Wagle, & Cline Engineers agreed with Yeager about how impressive the IRDC grant projects were and this underscores that we need greater participation in SIRDP because we can assist many of these groups. Rice commented that our fall symposium should be an outreach tool for SIRDP.

Ray Kassab of Handex reported that there was still plenty of brownfield money to be had. Kassab also reported that the Excess Liability Trust Fund legislation was now tied up in the General Assembly with the Colts/Convention Center bill. Finally, Kassab noted that the town of Winamac received \$50,000 grant from the IRDC to install two wireless hotspots and that the project will be up and running within five months.

Cris Fulford from the Indiana Office of Rural Affairs remarked that she is very pleased to have been a part of SIRDP recently and that she has learned a lot. Fulford reported that the broadband finance authority legislation is still alive and that both the Governor and Lt. Governor are watching out for the bill so that it will survive. Fulford commented that her office is partnering with the SIRDP tech task force for the community planning guide followed by a funding guide and an industry survey of our current technology infrastructure.

Mayor Dave Abel commented that it was remarkable how well the different entities were working together in Daviess County. Mayor Abel commented that their county has had help from above and that more communities should add prayer to their economic development strategy.

Ron Ackman of Bicknell reported that their town needs a new sewage treatment plant which would cost \$5 million with only 2,500 residents to pay for it. Ackman commented that he was impressed with IDEM's new sense of cooperation rather than punishment.

Lisa Locke of the Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis reported that their organization will present an immigrant population conference in Louisville on September 22 & 23.

Brenda Swartz of Indiana University Southeast commented that she visited a junior achievement facility in Louisville with Lisa Locke. Currently there is a program for 5<sup>th</sup> grade children which teaches them about running a city. They will begin a program for 9<sup>th</sup> graders soon which deals with personal economics. The facility will be open for tours on May 4<sup>th</sup> and anyone interested in attending can contact Brenda at [bswartz@ius.edu](mailto:bswartz@ius.edu). Swartz commented that it would be great to get all 5<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> graders in the region to go through the program.

Fay Greckel reported that Floyd County is also concerned about losing some of their riverboat money. Also, New Albany is out of compliance with the EPA on their sewer system. They have been working on it for several years and they haven't been able to do any new hook-ups to the system. They need to have the system approved by the EPA by the end of April. Greckel also commented that New Albany will be breaking ground on a conference center soon.

The meeting adjourned at 1:00pm

# Executive Committee Report

## IRDC Grant

SIRDP recently received its fully executed agreement for the IRDC's Rural Regional Partnership Grant. This will allow SIRDP to begin drawing funds and allow the task forces to begin their work. Beginning with the June meeting, task forces will report to the board on their scope of work, timeline and budgets for the projects outlined in this grant.

## Fall Symposium

At the April board meeting, two fall symposium scenarios were discussed. The most popular scenario was to hold a conference for all IRDC grant recipients.

Under this scenario, SIRDP staff would explore partnering with the IRDC to hold a fall conference which would convene all of the IRDC grant recipients. This will:

- Give the IRDC an opportunity to see the progress of the various grant programs
- Provide a forum for rural groups from throughout the state to share ideas and experiences

Included in the program would be a keynote/lunch speaker. Since this conference would draw from throughout the state, a more central location such as Columbus might be considered.

It was recommended by some that we combine some aspects of the two scenarios by trying to involve the Office of Rural Affairs, Department of Agriculture and Indiana Economic Development Corporation.

# Treasurer's & Resource Development Report

**General Account** Beginning Balance: \$21,569.72

<b>Expenditure</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Amount</b>
SDG	April Board Meeting Expenses	\$290.74

**General Account** Ending Balance: \$21,278.98

**Entrepreneurship Account** Ending Balance: \$922.80

**Tobacco and Rural Development Account** Ending Balance: \$22,503

**Agricultural Account** Ending Balance: \$1,930.00

## Housing Task Force Report

SIRDP staff has been pursuing counties that are interested in conducting Housing Needs Assessments. These assessments are sponsored by the Indiana Housing Finance Authority. Currently, SIRDP is planning to apply for assessments in Brown County and Pulaski County in Northwestern Indiana while pursuing one or two other possible counties. Applications are due to IHFA on June 6 and projects will begin in late August.

Doing the assessments would have two benefits:

- 1) SIRDP would gain exposure in new areas.
- 2) It would create a new revenue stream for the group.

SIRDP conducted successful assessments in Dearborn and Posey Counties in 2004. SIRDP staff will handle all of the technical work which includes demographic research, market studies, vacancy rates, etc. as well as help develop an affordable housing strategy for these communities.

## Technology Task Force Report

SIRDP has joined with a statewide task force on rural broadband telecommunications. The task force was initiated by the Indiana Office of Rural Affairs. Because both the IORA and SIRDP had a similar project, to develop a broadband guide for rural communities, the two entities are working together.

After a few meetings among Cris Fulford, Jim Rice, Brian O'Neill and Thayr Richey, the statewide task force was formed.

To-date, the task force has held two meetings. At the most recent meeting, on May 5<sup>th</sup>, the group reviewed some initial models for an Indiana guide and discussed how the guide might be used.

### Task Force Members

Name	Affiliation
Teresa Brading	City of Charlestown
Cris Fulford	Indiana Office of Rural Affairs
Tom Jones	Mayor, City of Linton
Lisa Malchow	Pulaski County Community Development Commission
Larry Mand	IU Southeast
Brian O'Neill	SIRDP
Bob Quadrozzi	Jay County Development Corp.
Jim Rice	Hannum Wagle & Cline Engineering, SIRDP
Thayr Richey	SIRDP
Christy Steele	Muncie-Delaware County Indiana Economic Development Alliance
Jon Wright	Purdue ITAP

Currently the task force is researching possible models for a guide for rural communities in Indiana. At its next meeting, on May 26, the task force will outline the guide. The group intends to complete the final draft of the guidebook by the end of summer.

# Entrepreneurship Task Force

## IRDC Grant

The entrepreneurship task force met twice to plan IRDC funded project. The task force has decided on a mentoring model that would compliment rather than duplicate existing services.

As a result, the task force would like to recommend to the board that we fund two regional pilot projects in the SIRD region and also develop best practices manual. We further recommend that regions interested in being selected for funding, provide an outline of their program at the June board meeting.

The following is our recommendation for the parameters of the project.

1. A “mentoring brain trust” is established made up of:  
A banker, a lawyer, an accountant, a successful entrepreneur, a business school faculty person etc.
2. The “brain trust” would mentor at least six promising entrepreneurs for the duration of the project.
3. A mechanism be created to pre-select the entrepreneur candidates.
4. A volunteer project manger(s) must be available.
5. The selected project must demonstrate a source for candidates.

The “brain trust” members would be paid a token honorarium and would provide appropriate technical assistance and referral services as needed by the entrepreneur.

Other: the total grant allotted for this project is \$30,000.00.

We will have to determine the break down of the funds, for example:

\$11,000.00 for each of two projects and \$8,000.00 for the manual.

Or

\$12,000.00 for each of two projects and \$6,000.00 for the manual.

## **USDA RBEG Grant**

Due to an oversight, SIRDP has more funds remaining in its USDA RBEG grant than previously thought. Staff believed that there were only funds remaining to cover administrative costs and a mandatory audit. We were notified that we still have \$23,562 remaining in the grant and that an audit is not required. The task force will develop a plan for utilizing the remainder of these funds



Committed to the future of rural communities.

## Broadband Awareness Information Sessions

### THE USDA RURAL BROADBAND ACCESS LOAN AND LOAN GUARANTEE PROGRAM

June 8, 2005

SUPERCOMM

McCormick Place, Chicago, IL

We invite you to attend an information session on June 8, 2005 at SUPERCOMM, and hear from the USDA Rural Development - Utilities Programs staff about financing that is available now for deployment of Broadband and telecommunications services in rural communities. Rural Development has more than **\$2 billion in funding** available this year for the ***Rural Broadband Access Loan and Loan Guarantee Program***. The information sessions will provide detailed information for prospective loan and loan guarantee applicants and other interested parties on the eligibility requirements for the program and the types of loans available. Also covered are the loan application process and requirements, including: Loan Purpose, Loan Maturity, The Business Plan, The Market Survey, The Engineering/System Design, Financial Information, Credit Support, Loan Collateral and Security Requirements.

**Free Information sessions will be held on Wednesday, June 8, in Room S-104 on Level 1 South, McCormick Place, 2301 S. Lake Shore Drive, Chicago, Illinois, at the following times: 9:30 a.m., 11:00 a.m., 12:30 p.m., 2:00 p.m., and 3:30 p.m. No advance registration is required for the USDA Information Sessions. However, registration is required for SUPERCOMM. Register at [www.SUPERCOMM2005.com](http://www.SUPERCOMM2005.com). Registration for SUPERCOMM is free for all attendees until Friday, May 6, 2005.**

For information on the Broadband Awareness Information Sessions, please contact Mary Campanola, USDA Rural Development, Washington, DC at [mary.campanola@usda.gov](mailto:mary.campanola@usda.gov); 202-720-8822. Media contact: Claiborn Crain at [claiborn.crain@usda.gov](mailto:claiborn.crain@usda.gov); 202-720-1263.

NOTE: The Broadband Loan Application Guide will be provided at the workshop. You can also download the guide from the Rural Development website at <http://www.usda.gov/rus/telecom/broadband.htm>.

#### About the USDA Rural Broadband Access Loan and Loan Guarantee Program:

The USDA Rural Broadband Access Loan and Loan Guarantee Program provides loans and loan guarantees for the construction, improvement, and acquisition of facilities and equipment for broadband service in eligible rural communities. Priority is given to applications that are proposing to serve areas where no residential broadband service currently exists. Information on the USDA Rural Broadband Access Loan and Loan Guarantee Program is available at: <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov>.

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