

**EXECUTIVE/PERSONNEL/LIQUOR COMMITTEE**  
**November 9, 2020**

Present: Matt Wells, Acting Chair  
Molly Alaria, Ray Koonce, Brian Wilbur

Absent: Donna Hibbetts

Others present: Michael Gianasi, Venise McWard and Jan Bland in attendance. Via [freeconferencecall.com/](https://freeconferencecall.com/) phone: known participants—Becky Edwards, Vicki McMahan, Mary Renner, Jeff Nolan, Mike Havera and others.

The Executive, Personnel, and Liquor Committee met on Monday, November 9, 2020 at 6:30 p.m. in County Board meeting room with a 19 person limit, second floor of the Christian County Courthouse, Taylorville, Illinois. The purpose of the meeting was to address any agenda items, any personnel issues, policies, and any other matters properly brought before the Committee. There was a quorum: Matt Wells, Molly Alaria, Ray Koonce and Brian Wilbur.

**COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY**

The meeting was called for an attempt to answer further questions on the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy and how other programs/processes as eminent domain, other grants, TIF and Enterprise Zone may work with or conflict with CEDS.

Member Brian Wilbur requested that both Jeff Nolan and Mary Renner be allowed to speak as guests on the topics for questions and answers which would exceed public comment time limits. Acting Chair Matt Wells accepted a motion from Ray Koonce and a second from Brian Wilbur to open the discussion for Jeff Nolan and Mary Renner as speakers other than public comments. A roll call vote polled all ayes and the motion carried.

Jeff Nolan's question and beliefs are that eminent domain could be obtained if the CEDS was in place and more specifically the wind companies could be declared a public utility through CEDS. Mary Renner's responses:

- She has been in the economic business for 38 years and neither she or many colleagues have never come across anything like the relationship between CEDS and eminent domain.
- CEDS is a strategic tool to finance large 50/50 grants for infrastructures in municipalities.
- It is a plan for a "state determined" region of counties to come together stating their strengths and weaknesses through lengthy analysis.
- The Economic Development Agency governs CEDS by policy not eminent domain.
- In order for a municipality to be awarded a grant from the EDA, a public hearing is required. If there are any legitimate objections or controversies at the hearing, they will not award the grant.
- A recent example of such a grant was the Taylorville Industrial Park. At that time Christian County was covered under West Central Development Council, however, now the EDA does not recognize West Central for those grant applications.

- Partners in Progress was created to write and update the strategy plan for the group of counties including Christian, Montgomery, Macoupin, Calhoun, Green and Jersey. Their cost was a minimal \$1300.00 for each county where as if any county were to go on their own the cost could easily cost \$70,000. Standing alone is not favorable in the eyes of the EDA and points are low towards the application.
- These are not the only grants available and do not need CEDS [example USDA], but none with the magnitude needed for infrastructures.
- This would be a tragedy for the county if this is not passed.

States Attorney Mike Havera was asked to respond to the topic from the legal standpoint.

- After consulting with Griffin, Winning, Cohen & Bodewes legal firm, CEDS has no bearing on whether or not eminent domain is obtainable. They are two different processes.
- Illinois has not declared wind to be a public utility.
- During the time the County was associated with West Central, eminent domain was not asked for or received thru CEDS funding.
- Again, eminent domain can only be determined in the courts.

Several public comments were heard. With no further discussions, Ray Koonce made the motion to recommend the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy to the full Board with a second by Brian Wilbur. A roll call vote polled all ayes: Ray Koonce, Brian Wilbur, Matt Wells and Molly Alaria. The motion carried.

A motion was made by Brian Wilbur and seconded by Molly Alaria to adjourn. A roll call vote polled all ayes and the motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Matt Wells  
Acting Executive/Personnel Chairman