

RESOLUTION NO. 2012-143

RESOLUTION BY THE FINANCE AND HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE REGARDING THE STATUS OF MINORITY MATCHING GRANTS AND MANUFACTURING RENEWAL GRANTS AND FUNDING OF LAUNCH BOX PROGRAM

To the Honorable Members of the Racine County Board of Supervisors:

BE IT RESOLVED by the Racine County Board of Supervisors that the reallocation of \$14,000.00 from the Racine County Manufacturing Renewal Grant ("MRG") program to the Racine County Economic Development Corporation to fund the "Launch Box" initiative is hereby authorized and approved.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED by the Racine County Board of Supervisors that any internal accounting within Public Works and Planning Services Department's 2103 Budget that may be recommended by Finance Department is authorized and approved

Respectfully submitted,

1st Reading _____

FINANCE AND HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE

2nd Reading _____

BOARD ACTION

Robert N. Miller, Chairman

Adopted _____

For _____

Against _____

Absent _____

Q.A. Shakoor, II, Vice-Chairman

VOTE REQUIRED: Majority

Thomas Pringle, Secretary

Prepared by: Corporation Counsel

Gilbert Bakke

Donnie Snow

John A. Wisch

Jeff Halbach

The foregoing legislation adopted by the County Board of Supervisors of Racine County, Wisconsin, is hereby:

Approved: _____

Vetoed: _____

Date: _____,

James A. Ladwig, County Executive

3
4
5 **INFORMATION ONLY**
6

7 **WHEREAS**, The 2010 “Building a More Entrepreneurial Racine” analysis
8 suggested that the City of Racine was experiencing a consistent decline in new
9 business starts and lagging growth rates among existing small businesses; and
10

11 **WHEREAS**, One of the recommendations within the above-mentioned report
12 included the creation of co-working space for entrepreneurs. As a result, a facility is
13 being planned with the assistance of the Greater Milwaukee Committee and their co-
14 working space termed MiKE. The collaboration and technical assistance space will
15 include classroom training and counseling by technical assistance partners. It will
16 provide both work and meeting space for entrepreneurs and wireless internet. Each
17 member will be provided a key fob to allow access to the space 24 hours a day, 7 days
18 a week. It is important to note that there is no fee to become a member; the
19 entrepreneur simply completes an application, which is reviewed, evaluated and
20 accepted by RCEDC Staff; and
21

22 **WHEREAS**, A location has been identified in Downtown Racine and RCEDC
23 staff has been working with the property owner regarding renovations that would need
24 to be completed. As indicated above, we are requesting financial assistance from
25 Racine County in support of this co-working facility. The total amount requested is
26 \$14,000 and will be used for the first year’s rent for the facility; and
27

28 **WHEREAS**, There are funds currently available in the MRG Program, which has
29 been in place since 2005. The grant is recapitalized annually in the amount of \$25,000.
30 While utilization of the MRG has increased, this Fund did not utilize all of the funds
31 during the recessionary period. Therefore, there is a carryover balance of \$33,756, in
32 addition to the \$25,000 allocated for 2013; and
33

34 **WHEREAS**, The total year one project budget for the Launch Box program is
35 \$148,930, as indicated in the table below. To date, funding in the amount of \$99,930
36 has been committed by the City. In addition, three grant applications totaling \$35,000
37 have been submitted and we are awaiting a funding decision, which we expect in the
38 near future.
39

Source	Amount	Use
City of Racine	\$99,930	Staff and Operations
County of Racine	\$14,000	Facility Rent
Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation	\$25,000	Furniture and Fixtures
SC Johnson Foundation/Racine Community Foundation	\$10,000	Operations
TOTAL:	\$148,930	----

40
41 Once all funding is secured, RCEDC will finalize the lease negotiations with the property
42 owner and renovation will begin. A grand opening is anticipated by June 1, 2013; and
43

3
4 **WHEREAS**, The 2013 overall goals for the Launch Box program including the
5 following activities and metrics for success:

- 6
7 1. Launch Box One-Stop Center - Launch Box will establish and manage co-working space that will
8 be located in downtown Racine.

9
10 **2013 Goal:**

- 11 a. Fifty businesses will become members of the Center.

- 12
13 2. Networking and Collaboration Events – A series of events will be held to encourage interaction
14 and collaboration among entrepreneurs including group training, webinars and social
15 networking.

16
17 **2013 Goal:**

- 18 a. Twelve direct events will be held.

- 19
20 3. One-on-One Technical Assistance – Upon joining the Center, Launch Box staff will meet with the
21 entrepreneur to conduct an assessment of the specific needs that will help grow the business.
22 This will include basic questions regarding business plans, financing, marketing, customers and
23 suppliers, etc. From that point, Staff will make the appropriate referral to one of the Launch Box
24 partners in order that appropriate assistance can be provided to the entrepreneur.

25
26
27 **2013 Goals:**

- 28 a. One hundred entrepreneurs/small businesses will use Launch Box as a resource for one-
29 on-one referrals to partner agencies.
30 b. In order to better facilitate the needed assistance to entrepreneurs, Launch Box will
31 expand the list of technical assistance partners to include fee based private sector
32 consultants with the expertise necessary to solve the challenges of entrepreneurs. A
33 total 40 consultants will be sought based upon the 20 key development areas outlined
34 by Growth Wheel.
35 c. Launch Box will coordinate quarterly meetings with Lead Partners to share ideas and
36 encourage continued support for City business.

- 37
38 4. Ombudsman – As in 2011 and 2012 Launch Box will continue its proactive role in serving as an
39 intermediary and ombudsman for the entrepreneur as they work to navigate City Hall to secure
40 permits and licenses to operate in the City.

41
42 **2013 Goals:**

- 43 a. 12 entrepreneurs/small businesses will receive assistance with regard to City hall
44 approvals and permits.
45 b. Create 24 resource “Did you know” emails to summarize and provide pertinent
46 entrepreneurial news articles, potential opportunities for entrepreneurs or inform them
47 of available resources.
48 c. Following the issuance of the SEC guidelines, maintain, and add to LB website, a crowd
49 funding database to be provided to entrepreneurs seeking funding via an online source.
50 d. Continue creation of 6 industry specific brochures for the City.

- 51
52 5. Fast Pitch 2013 - While it’s important to provide direct resources to entrepreneurs and small
53 businesses, Launch Box must also cultivate public support and recognition for the importance of

3
4 entrepreneurship in the community. This was accomplished in 2012 by hosting the First Annual
5 Racine/Kenosha FastPitch Business competition. In 2012, 44 entrepreneurs participated in this
6 event. Due to its success, a 2013 Fast Pitch will be held. Launch Box will promote and encourage
7 City of Racine businesses to participate in this competition.

8
9 **2013 Goals:**

- 10 a. Launch Box will identify Fourteen City businesses will participate in the 2013
11 competition.
12 b. The top scoring City of Racine business will receive recognition through a special
13 Mayor's Entrepreneurial Award.

- 14
15 6. Open Innovation – Launch Box will develop an Open Innovation Program that will provide
16 entrepreneurial teams with the opportunity to compete to solve an operational problem
17 identified by a local established business. This program will promote collaboration among
18 entrepreneurs with the potential for new start-ups around identified ideas. This program is
19 currently operating at MiKE in Milwaukee and will serve as a model for Racine.

20
21 **2013 Goals:**

- 22 a. Staff will be working with MiKE in the planning of Innovation Week n/k/a Flying Car
23 (June 1st – 10th) in order to learn best practices in developing this program.
24 b. Two open innovation projects will be completed.

- 25
26 7. Small Business Assessments –Launch Box will continue to interview existing small businesses with
27 the goal of determining challenges and opportunities for their businesses. These surveys provide
28 the Launch Box staff with important information regarding the programs and services that are
29 needed to grow small businesses in the City, as well as build the relationships with the business
30 owners enabling Launch Box staff to provide on-going mentoring services.

31
32 **2013 Goal:**

- 33 a. Assessments will be conducted with twenty-five businesses.
34