

January 3, 2014

To: The Citizens of Laclede County

From: Laclede County Commissioners

Re: Facts on who defunded REDI in 2013



1. REDI's full board, in November of 2012, was told by Danny Rhoades that giving any raises to REDI employees could cause REDI to lose County Funding. The board was informed it was important to consider that information, and in less than a few seconds the board voted to accept the budget with the raises included. The message was a warning from Danny Rhoades to the REDI board to keep them from losing their funding.
2. The REDI Executive Board was told in no uncertain terms that if they approved the full board's decision to go ahead with the projected budget, including employee raises of any kind, they could lose county funding.
3. The REDI Director knew all along of the Commissioners warning to not fund REDI unless the raise question was cancelled. The REDI Director confirmed this to the board in a meeting early in 2013.
4. The REDI Board Chairman confirmed to Danny Rhoades, after a lunch meeting at Applebee's Restaurant in early 2013, that REDI needed the County's funding more than the director needed a raise.

There is no question and "NO Spin". REDI knew if they gave raises that it could cause their funding from Laclede County to end. They voted both full and executive boards to proceed with raises and doing that, they knowingly voted to cancel funding from the county.

In every REDI meeting Danny Rhoades attended, and the raise proposal was brought up, Danny warned the board that if they kept the raises in their budget they were voting to possibly lose county funding. REDI raises were voted in and REDI lost funding as warned. The REDI group had a choice; they decided. The Commission explained several times how to keep their funding and the REDI group chose to ignore the notice.

Now the question has been brought up to the Commission, "Don't you believe that Laclede County needs economic development?" The answer has always been yes. We do care about economic development and that is why we asked REDI not to choose to lose their funding several times. It was stated in the Commissioner's budget hearing last week that the REDI board still believes that the REDI benefit raises should have been given.

The two salaries at REDI are \$82,000.00 plus and \$25,000.00 plus. Laclede County employees' wage average for over 100 salaries is \$22,700.00 plus. The short version of the facts is "REDI voted to approve their benefit raises even though they were told numerous times that the Commissioners probably would NOT approve funding for REDI if this happened. This is the "plain unedited truth".