

Economic Development & Tourism

April 8, 2021

Present: Chair Ron Luethe, Nodji VanWychen, Cedric Schnitzler, Brett Larkin

Guest Speaker: Greg Evans

Advisory Members: Heidi Prestwood, Roxie Anderson, Tina Thompson, Brad Hanson, Rob Wilson

Others: Mindy Hemmersbach, Richard Folkedahl

Approved Absent: Tina Osterberg, Adrian Lockington

The meeting was called to order in the Monroe County Board Assembly Room at 9:00 am by Chair Ron Luethe.

Introductions

Amended minutes stating wrong date for April meeting.

Minutes Approval – Motion by Brett Larkin second by Nodji VanWychen to approve March 11, 2021 meeting minutes. Carried 4-0

Tourism Publication Options – Greg Evans from Evans Print & Media Group

- Discussion of 101 things to do in Monroe County with possible ad in Newspaper. Would like to get the ad out sometime in May, before Memorial Day.
 - Sample of ad for next meeting of at least a half of a page for both County and Fort McCoy to get a discount. Sample of ad would be emailed to board members. Discussion/Action at next month's meeting.

5 Minute Reports-

Monroe County Land Use Planner – Roxie Anderson

- EMS Monitor System Update – 5 stations ready to install and should be installed in the next couple of weeks. Signage is underway as well.
- Grant Buy Out – 4 properties acquired, 2 have been demolished. April 15th will know the outcomes of Grant applications for the Flood Warning System for Norwalk Dam and another property acquisition that didn't meet FEMA requirements.

7 Rivers Alliance – Chris Hardie (Absent)

Hidden Valley – Rob Wilson

- Magazine Update - Magazine was handed out during meeting. The magazines have been distributed to advertisers in magazine. Tradeshow discussion, still uncertain of which ones will be happening. Discussed that magazines could be displayed at the ITBEC and WCA La Crosse booths.

Fort McCoy – Tonya Townsell

- Covid Update-Vaccines starting
- No Armed Forces Day Open House but discussion of extended open hours every Friday during summer (June, July and August) from 12-4 p.m. except for July 2nd, 2021. Also extending Saturday hours to 9-3 p.m.
- Discussion of having Board and Tina Osterberg visit possibly in May (looking at the 4th)
- Discussed the 1.8 billion dollar impact Fort McCoy had last year in the area that helped ease the impact in the area.
- Third permanent transit barrack in the working since WWII , ground breaking April 15th.

Sparta Chamber – Heidi Prestwood

- May 1st is Rails to Trails Celebration and Bike Expo. Trail will not be finished but going forward. (8-2 p.m.)
- Discussions on Butterfest, Kayak Rendevous, Fourth of July, Center Shot Archers event coincides with Crazy Dayz, Concerts in the Park
 - Center Shot Archers is happening all over U.S. and finishing in Sparta which coincides with Crazy Days, looking at a group of at least 1,000 extra people.
 - Concerts in the Park going to have concession stands again and having a good line up of bands.
- Also Sparta Chamber has new merchandise

Tomah Chamber – Tina Thompson

- Updates on downtown Thursday Nights
- 150th Anniversary for Fire Department on August 28th. Participants coming from all over U.S., talks of a parade.
- July 3rd will be the Fourth of July Parade
- Discussion of ATV parade to break record and back filling events that didn't happen last year

Local History Room – Jarrod Roll (Absent)

ITBEC – International Trade, Business and Economic Development Council – Nodji VanWychen

- Meeting is tomorrow (4/9) at American Legion
- Discussion of Booth at WCA in La Crosse County of having Hidden Valley Magazine and Ad from Evans Print & Media Group at booth.

Additional Area Events

- Tomah Brad Hanson and Tina Thompson discussed couple of hotels looking to expand, possible hotels for the downtown and southern side of Tomah close to hospital and walking distance to downtown.
 - Uptick projection discussion of the last 5-10 years
- Crosswalk discussion for downtown Tomah and by area schools

Financial/Invoices – Tina Osterberg (approved absent)

- Ron updated on the public bike stands.

County Administrator Report and Website Merge Review to be discussed on Next Month's Agenda.

Broadband Discussion and GEO Partners

- Cedric put together a team of people in the community to talk about broadband and possible GEO partners. Any action would go through the Monroe County Economic Development and Tourism Committee. Discussion of possible government funds and also to keep Tina Thompson in the loop.

Wisconsin County Association Booth in La Crosse

- Discussion led by Nodji VanWychen about having Hidden Valley magazine and Tourism ad at booth.

Bike Repair Stations Update

- Stations have arrived, Milt Leis volunteered his time to setup. Discussion of recognizing Milt for volunteering his time.
- Wild Cat DNR (Andy Haffele) wants to know how much to install bike workstand. Ron Luethe handed out Public Bike Workstand Installation Estimate. Ron Luethe proposed to up the amount from \$333 to \$350 for material to install. Motion by Nodji VanWychen and second by Brett Larkin. 3-0 carried
- Discussion of moving bike station that Sparta Chamber is storing to McMullen. Chad Ziegler said it wouldn't be a good location.

Next month agenda items-

- Warren's bike repair station
- Website
- Broadband Discussion and GEO Partners
- Review Advertisement from Greg Evans
- Sparta Chamber Website
- Tomah Chamber Website link
- Guest Speaker – Erica Culpitt Marketing Director and on Butterfest Committee

Next meeting date will be May 13th, 2021 at 9:00 a.m. in the Monroe County Board Assembly room

Motion to adjourn by Nodji VanWychen second by Brett Larkin carried 3-0 10:16 a.m.

Recorded By: Mindy Hemmersbach

Financial & System Controls Coordinator