



MONROE COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM COMMITTEE

202 South K Street, RM 1

Sparta, WI 54656

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Regular Monthly Meeting
Monroe County Board Assembly Room
210 W. Oak Street – Room 1200
Sparta, WI 54656
9:00 a.m.
Thursday, July 11, 2024

Remote Meeting Information

<https://monroecountywi.webex.com/> or **Join by phone:** +1-404-397-1516 United States Toll
Meeting Number: 2485 031 3684 **Access Code:** 248 503 13684
Password: Touring

Agenda

1. Call to order/Roll Call
2. Next Month's Meeting Date/Time
3. Minutes Approval of June 13, 2024
4. Public Comment Period
5. River Travel Media Update
6. Financials/Invoices – Discussion/Action
7. 2024 Budget – Discussion/Action
 - Photography
 - Brochures/Maps
 - Trail Signs
8. 2025 Budget – Discussion/Action
9. Economic Development & Tourism Conference Planning – Discussion/Action
 - Timeline and Committee Duties
10. Broadband Updates and Grant Opportunities – Discussion/Action
11. E-Bike Charging Stations – Heidi Prestwood-Funkhouser
12. Rustic Roads Program – Roxie Anderson
13. Coulee Cap Update – Joey Esterline
14. Vision for 2024-2026 – Discussion
15. Strategic Plan Items Related to Economic Development & Tourism
16. Outreach to Monroe County Businesses - Discussion
17. Next Month's Agenda Items
18. Adjournment

Adam Balz, Committee Chair

Date notices mailed: July 5, 2024

The Mission of the Economic Development and Tourism Committee is to grow Monroe County's economy through the coordination and promotion of its resources.

Committee Members: Adam Balz, Joey Esterline, Jason Jandt

Citizen Members: Tucker Gretebeck, Maila Kuhn, Sean Truskowski

Advisory Members: Heidi Prestwood, Jarrod Roll, Tonya Townsell, Tina Thompson, Roxie Anderson, Chris Hardie, Brad Bauges, Jon Bingol

exploremonroecounty.org

<http://www.co.monroe.wi.us/committees/economic-development-commerce-tourism-committee/>

Economic Development and Tourism Meeting

June 13, 2024

Present: Adam Balz, Jason Jandt, Joey Esterline

Citizen: Maila Kuhn

Advisory: Heidi Prestwood-Funkhouser, Roxie Anderson

Others: Adrian Lockington, Chris Jones

Meeting was called to order at 9:02 a.m. by Chair Adam Balz in the Monroe County Board Assembly Room.

Roll Call

Next Month's Meeting Date July 11, 2024 at 9:00 a.m. in the Monroe County Board Assembly Room

Motion by Maila Kuhn second by Joey Esterline to approve the May 9, 2024 Meeting Minutes. Carried.

River Travel Media Update: Adrian Lockington provides updates on campaign and the release of the Economic Impact for 2022-2023. Monroe County was leading in comparison to all 72 Counties.

Financials- Invoices- Adrian Lockington comments to RTM Invoices paid

2024 Budget- Discussion Only. Adrian Lockington comments on the 2024 budget. Photography, Brochures & Maps under review.

2025 Budget- Discussion Only. Adrian Lockington comments to budget season. Will have a proposed 2025 budget for committee next month.

Economic Development and Tourism Annual Conference

- Resolution Creating Non-Lapsing Account for Use of Monroe County Economic Development and Tourism Conference Funds. Adrian Lockington provides information on resolution. Motion by Jason Jandt second by Joey Esterline to approve the resolution creating a non-lapsing account for the Economic Development and Tourism Conference. Carried.
- 2025 Conference Date- Motion by Maila Kuhn second by Jason Jandt to host Conference on April 10-11, 2025. Carried.
- Conference Planning RTM Partnership Opportunity – Discussion/Action – Adrian Lockington comments to RTM Proposal. Answers Questions. Motion by Jason Jandt second by Joey Esterline to approve RTM Conference Planning Full Service Proposal in the amount of \$5,550 plus 20% of sponsorship sales. Adrian Lockington will continue to oversee conference planning with RTM

and Committee. Timeline and Delegation of duties shall match RTM timeline. Carried.

Broadband Updates and Grant Opportunities – Roxie Anderson provides updates on BEAD and DCIP Grants.

Vision for 2024-2026 – Discussion- Adam Balz will compile suggested actionable items for further discussion.

Strategic Plan Items Related to Economic Development & Tourism – Adam Balz comments to Vision and Ideas.

Next Month's Agenda Items

1. SMRT Bus Program
2. RTM Update
3. Economic Development & Tourism Conference Planning – Discussion/Action
 - Timeline & Committee Duties
4. E-Bike Charging Stations – Heidi Prestwood- Funkhouser
5. 2024 Budget Discussion/ Action
 - Photography
 - Brochures/Maps
 - Trail Signs
6. 2025 Budget Discussion/ Action
7. Rustic Roads Program – Roxie Anderson
8. Broadband Updates & Grant Opportunities
9. Coulee Cap Update- Joey Esterline
10. Vision for 2024-2026
11. Strategic Plan Items Related to Economic Development & Tourism

Motion to adjourn meeting at 11:01 a.m. by Joey Esterline second by Maila Kuhn. Carried.

Recorded by: Adrian Lockington, Executive Assistant Administration

Couleecap Board of Directors
Meeting Strategic Planning Session

Pre-Read

Housing and Energy are two major program areas of Couleecap. They have also been two areas of discussion consistent throughout strategic planning discussions by board and staff. We will consider these areas in more detail at the June Board of Directors meeting. This document will serve as general background for the workshop at the upcoming meeting.

Housing Facts: Coulee Region

- Rental vacancy rates are consistently lower in our area than the national average. According to the Census ACS data, the La Crosse area has had rental vacancy rates from 1.37%-3.32% lower than the national average since 2016.
- Homeowners do not fair better. Available home inventory to purchase is less than 1%. According to the Federal Reserve, it has not been this low since 1978.
- The median age of homes in our area is 1973-1978. 21% of homes in our area were built before 1939. Homes of this age often have lead paint and other issues that need repair. Repairs and upgrades can be costly.
- When a housing market is this tight, affordable housing is often rented by people who could afford higher rents. This leaves lower income residents out in the cold...literally increasing homelessness. The shortage of rental homes for extremely low-income residents in WI: 13,484.

Housing Access:

- In a tight housing market, landlords may have multiple applicants for each vacancy. Applicants with no credit or poor credit, inconsistent housing references, incidents reported on background checks, or those who cannot afford application fees may be denied or not considered.
- In our area, more housing vouchers (i.e. Section 8 vouchers) are allocated than used. One of the most frequent reasons cited is that landlords will not accept housing vouchers for payment.
- While illegal, housing discrimination exists. Many incidents go unreported. Tenants who report may not have their leases renewed or their landlord may find other reasons to evict.
- Many local rental properties have been purchased by large, out-of-town corporations that will not work with housing programs and do not provide proper tenant support.

Housing Affordability:

- 68% of very low-income renters in our area are considered 'severely cost burdened'. This means they pay more than 50% of their income on housing.
- 20% of all renter households are considered severely cost burdened.

Energy Facts: Coulee Region

- 60% of low-income households in Wisconsin are considered 'severely energy burdened'. Severely energy burdened households are paying more than 10% of their household income on energy.
- In the Coulee Region, households in poverty spend an average of 14-20% of their household income on energy – much greater than the threshold for 'severely energy burdened'.
- The highest portion of their energy cost is for the cost of electricity.
- Air conditioning is a large driver of electricity use in the summer. WI is no longer only considered a cold-weather state. 2019-2023 were the five hottest years on record for WI in almost 130 years.