

**MONROE COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, COMMERCE & TOURISM COMMITTEE
MONTHLY MEETING – 6-13-19 – Village of Kendall Board Room – 219 W. S. Railroad St.**

PRESENT:

Committee Board Members (CB): Nodji Van Wychen; Dean Peterson

Citizen Members (CM):

Advisory Members (AM): Tonya Townsell – Ft. McCoy (AM); Jarrod Roll – Local History Room (AM)

Economic Development & Tourism Coordinator: Steve Peterson

Absent: Mark Halverson (CB); Kevin Ravenscroft – Timberwood Bank (CM); Tina Thompson – Tomah Chamber of Commerce (AM); John Hendricks – Sparta Chamber of Commerce (AM); Tina Osterberg – County Administrator (AM)

The meeting was posted in accordance with the open meeting law. Meeting was called to order at 9:09am by Chair Nodji Van Wychen. Roll call was taken.

Next Month's Meeting – Thursday, July 11th – 9:00am – Sparta. S. Peterson will coordinate with John Hendricks on the location and making the arrangements.

Minutes – Motion by D. Peterson to approve the minutes. Second by J. Roll. Motion carried.

Financial/Invoices – S. Peterson said there were no invoices to be approved. Peterson outlined a Grow Tomah digital marketing campaign that the City of Tomah, Tomah Chamber & Visitors Center, Forward Tomah and others would be partnering on. He asked the Committee to allow up to \$1,000 remaining in the marketing/promotions line item of the E.D. budget be approved for that project. Motion by D. Peterson to allocate up to \$1,000 for the project. 2nd by N. Van Wychen. Approved.

Appointment of Vacant Citizen Members – The Committee has not found any replacements at this time for seats vacated by Bernadine Arena and Mary Jo Hill. Both stepped down from their positions on the Committee many months ago. The Committee agreed that any new additions to the Committee be put on hold to spend time finding the right recruitments.

EDCT Committee 2020 Plans – There was discussion and the Committee felt the #1 priority was to get the E.D. Coordinator's contract into the 2020 budget. It was discussed that an increase in the contract should also be added since the contract has never been increased in over 6 years when the contract was created. S. Peterson said that every year his expenses would go up with more recruitment, costs and needs. The Committee wanted to address this further when County Administrator Tina Osterberg could attend our monthly meeting again.

County Parks Brochure – J. Roll passed around the proof of the new brochure to Committee members to get their feedback and any changes. Roll is coordinating the effort with Shae Jilek from the Tomah Chamber & Visitors Center. A budget of \$500 was already approved and the brochure will be going to print and would be available by next month's meeting.

ATV Trail Map – S. Peterson told the Committee that there have been inquiries about a County ATV map from tourists and there is nothing available to them. Peterson suggested that the Committee contact the County ATV group and see if we could partner on creating that map? N. Van Wychen

suggested that Peterson contact the Highway Department and get a contact person's name for the project.

Campground Brochure – S. Peterson followed up last month's discussion about a reprint of the County Campground brochure. Peterson explained that he was involved with the first printing of the brochure in the late 90's. It was a grid layout brochure showing all the amenities available at each campground, public or private in the County. He hoped to get access to that template again to create a new brochure. The Committee asked for a follow up on the project next month and funds would be allocated through the tourism budget to do a reprint.

GO MONROE COUNTY Activities Guide RFP – the Committee discussed using an RFP for the 2020 Go Monroe County Activities Guide. This would include a signed contract with the winning bid company. The Committee did not have an RFP in 2019 and felt that it led to many gray areas of responsibility and funding between the County Committee and Evans Printing. The Committee was going to follow up with T. Osterberg, Lisa Hanson and Sharon Folcey to see if there is any past contract/RFP on file that can be used to create the new 2020 RFP. The Committee felt that the RFP needed to be in place no later than August 1st.

County Administrator's Report – no report

Monroe County Economic Development & Tourism Coordinator Report

PROSPECTS

Phase 1 – initial contact

1. natural vitamin/supplement distribution – Tomah
2. fishing equipment/guide superstore – Monroe County
3. Ice fishing vehicle manufacturer – Monroe County
4. insect organic fertilizer plant – Monroe County
5. Foreign employment service – Monroe County
6. medical software company – Tomah
7. metal coating fabrication – Monroe County
8. meat processing facility – Monroe County

Phase 2 – narrowing down potential locations and/or site visits

1. Garbage truck manufacturer – Tomah/Sparta
2. Transfer/distribution center – Tomah
3. Food processing plant – Sparta
4. Coffee additive company – Cashton
5. Hydroponics plant – Cashton
6. Distribution center – Tomah
7. Food flavoring coating plant – Monroe County
8. Hotel – Sparta (dependent on 2nd phase feasibility study)

Phase 3 – in the finals

1. Industrial Hemp CBD Oil Processing – Kendall
2. Hotel – Tomah
3. Restaurant/Bar & Grill - Tomah

4. Organic compost company – Cashton/other rural areas
5. Grocery food outlet pods – Kendall/Wilton/Norwalk
6. Corn Board processing plant – Sparta/Tomah/Kendall
7. Franchise Retail store – Tomah (dealing with broker and name of company is a secret yet)

IN THE WORKS

WI Assembly Rural Development Committee Hearing – was 1 of 3 people invited to testify at the hearing in the Capitol in Madison on workforce housing issues in the State of Wisconsin. I was part of the WEDA group that spoke with the State Representatives during their 3-hour hearing. The other Counties represented were Sauk & Barron Counties.

North Dakota Visit – took a contingent from Kendall to North Dakota for 2 days of meetings with the Bio-Sunn company reps and others associated with the Industrial Hemp projects. This was the next phase of finalizing the project in Kendall.

Community Venture Network – Site meetings with 2 prospects in late June and early July. Both are scheduling 2 days of meetings and site tours of areas around the County.

Dollar General – working with a potential site in Kendall. Involves possibly working out an agreement with the DNR on some of the right of way land adjacent to the bike trail through the community.

Elroy-Sparta Bike Trail – working with the DNR on getting the trail repaired and open yet this season. Currently closed from Norwalk to Elroy. The Kendall Depot, the official headquarters of the trail has been closed for 2 years now and am working with forming an agreement between the DNR and the Village of Kendall and have the Village run the Depot during the bike trail season. This closure is having a significant negative impact on the businesses along the trail. They have been without the trail now since late August 2019 and I'm afraid some may not stay in business if they don't get the trail open soon.

GROW TOMAH digital campaign – Digital web site & mapping is 3/4s done. Anticipated launch of site is late June. Working with Wisconsin Badgers on a marketing campaign involving their programs for the football & basketball seasons.

Gen 3 building – Tomah – the housing & professional offices are now open. Great addition to Tomah & the County.

South Pointe Business Park – Sparta – Dental clinic building is close to completion. The AMS Micromedical building is on schedule and taking shape. A new Martin Warehousing building has been started and they expect to move into that facility by July. Working with 2 other prospects that are looking at potential expansions in Wisconsin, specifically at South Pointe.

Tomah Associates land – the parcel of land across from the hospital & clinic construction projects is showing activity. Working with some development companies who may join in the developing of that area.

Connect Community – The premise for this program this year is to work closely with Norwalk, Wilton & Kendall pertaining to the repairing and fully opening of the Elroy-Sparta Bike Trail.

MEETINGS

- SW-ITBEC Meeting - Sparta
- WI Downtown Action Council Board Meeting – La Crosse
- Hidden Valleys Board meeting – Richland Center
- Village of Kendall Board Closed Session
- North Dakota meetings – Bio-Sunn
- WI Rural Partners Board meeting – Rice Lake
- WI Partners Association – meeting with Executive Director – Cashton
- Meeting/Site Visit – prospect – office building & potential manufacturing plant
- Conference call meetings – agencies/utilities for proposed projects in the County.

- Economic Development Resources Meeting – La Crosse
- Federal Reserve meeting – Madison
- Downtown Pop Up Show Program – meeting – Cashton
- WEDA Workforce Housing Conference Call meeting
- 14 – Bio-Sunn conference calls regarding the project in Monroe County
- Business in Focus Magazine – article follow up meeting
- WI Cranberry Discovery Center – Warrens – marketing strategic planning session
- WI Dept of Tourism Showcase meeting – La Crosse
- WEDC meeting – Madison – prospect meeting
- Potential Childcare Facility project meeting – Sparta

S. Peterson gave a power point presentation about the Industrial Hemp company potentially coming to Kendall in the near future. He explained to the Committee what CBD Industrial Hemp all is about along with the plans for the company.

REPORTS:

Local History Room – J. Roll reported on many things going on in the LHR. The Art Outdoors at the Wegner Grotto County Park will be on Saturday, August 24th from 9am – 3pm. Over the past few months, over 1,000 school children have visited the LHR on spring field trips. Roll announced that the LHR was receiving a national award for the A-Z display. The American Appreciation of State & Local History Award will be presented in Philadelphia in August. The LHR already had received a State Award for the display.

Fort McCoy – T. Townsell reported that the base visit by Vice-President Mike Pence went very well. There were many last-minute logistics, but she was proud of how the whole team at Ft. McCoy came together to make it work seamlessly. Townsell announced that there are extended regular hours for the Commemorative area at Ft. McCoy. June 7, 21; July 2, 26; August 9, 23; Sept. 6, 20 – 12:00pm – 4:00pm. June 15; July 20; August 17; Sept. 3 – 9:00am – 3:00pm. Townsell said this is training season at the base so there are a lot of troops in training for the next many months. The Mud Run was a great success again this year. The Red Arrows veterans’ group have scheduled another visit to Ft. McCoy. Townsell said the Community Appreciation Night will be on August 22nd. Townsell reported that there is lots of construction projects going on throughout the base and the Main Gate construction is moving right along.

Sparta Chamber of Commerce – no report.

Tomah Chamber & Visitors Center – no report.

7 Rivers Alliance – S. Peterson reported that continued work on the WISE Plan moves on. Housing & childcare issues are still a priority with the organization as well.

Hidden Valleys – S. Peterson reported that in a partnership with SW-ITBEC, the Hidden Valleys Story Road project is moving forward. The HV sales team has had an orientation on the digital marketing project and will be implementing that into their print advertising plans for the 2020 magazine. The goal is to have the Story Road app up and running by early 2020.

SW-ITBEC – S. Peterson reported that an invitation letter was drafted to be sent out to all non-member Counties inviting them to join our monthly meeting the rest of the year at no cost to their County. The goal is to educate them on the value of SW-ITBEC so they will push to have the membership added in

their 2020 budgets. The County E.D./Tourism Subcommittees are the people SW-ITBEC hopes will join for the rest of 2019. Peterson also reported that a revised SW-ITBEC Opportunities Grant application has been completed and a digital application is also available on the SW-ITBEC web site – www.southwestwisconsin.net

Upcoming Events/Activities around the County – The Deke Slayton Museum 20th Anniversary Open House will be held on the Courthouse courtyard on June 15th from 10:00am – 4:00pm. There will be a traveling space museum and block party with food, music & fun. It was announced that Alli Karrels, the Deke Slayton Space & Bicycle Museum Executive Director, will be leaving at the end of June for a new position at the Wade House.

N. Van Wychen announced that the WI Cranberry Discovery Center in Warrens will be opening to the public again. As a co-owner, Van Wychen said that 3 bus tours have already been booked and they hosted a Warrens Cranberry Festival meeting with a great turnout in taking a tour of the museum and enjoying ice cream. Van Wychen also reminded the Committee that the Cranberry Blossom Day at Wetherby Cranberries just outside of Warrens will be on June 29th starting at 9:00am.

Agenda Items for next month:

- County Parks Brochure
- County Campground Brochure
- County ATV Map
- Go Monroe County Activities Guide RFP discussion

Motion by D. Peterson to adjourn. 2nd by J. Roll. Meeting adjourned at 11:55am.

Submitted by:



Steve Peterson