

**MONROE COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, COMMERCE & TOURISM COMMITTEE**  
**MONTHLY MEETING – 9-12-19 – Tomah Health - Tomah**

**PRESENT:**

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

**Citizen Members (CM):** Kevin Ravenscroft – Timberwood Bank

**Advisory Members (AM):** Tonya Townsell – Ft. McCoy; John Hendricks – Sparta Chamber of Commerce; Tina Thompson – Tomah Chamber of Commerce

**Economic Development & Tourism Coordinator:** Steve Peterson

**Guest:** Ryan Egstad – Egstad Insurance & Investments; Greg Evans – Evans Printing & Media Group

**Absent:** Tina Osterberg – County Administrator; Mark Halverson (CB); Jarrod Roll – Local History Room (AM)

The meeting was posted in accordance with the open meeting law.

The Committee was given a tour of the new Tomah Health hospital complex by CEO Phil Stuart. The healthcare facility will be opening its doors on October 2<sup>nd</sup>. A ribbon cutting and open house will take place on 9/13-14 for the general public. The \$64 million dollar project replaces the current Tomah Memorial Hospital.

Meeting was called to order at 9:55am by Chair Nodji Van Wychen. Roll call was taken.

Van Wychen introduced Ryan Egstad to the Committee. Egstad will become a Citizen Member on the Committee upon appointment by the County Chair.

**Next Month's Meeting** – Thursday, October 17<sup>th</sup> – 9:00am – WI Cranberry Discovery Center - Warrens. The meeting will be 1 week later than the normal monthly meeting date due to a conflict.

**Minutes** – Motion by D. Peterson to approve the minutes. Second by T. Thompson. Motion carried.

**Financial/Invoices** – S. Peterson presented 3 invoices to approve. The first invoice was for \$717.25 to Minuteman Press in Tomah for printing the 2,500 County Campground & Rustic Lodging Guide. The bid was approved at the August meeting. The 2<sup>nd</sup> invoice was for \$200 for the WEDA Fall Conference in Stevens Point that Peterson will be attending. Peterson told the Committee that he would pay for the hotel room and other expenses. T. Thompson questioned why the Committee doesn't pay for all the expenses instead of Peterson? Peterson pointed out that it wasn't in the budget, so no money is there to be used. Thompson urged the Committee that in the 2020 budget, those types of expenses be paid by the Committee. The 3<sup>rd</sup> invoice was reimbursing Peterson for mileage for attending the Hidden Valleys Board meetings, which he represents Monroe County on. Peterson presented the invoice of 578.84 for the 7 meetings he had attended so far in 2019. Motion by D. Peterson, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Van Wychen to approve the invoices. Approved.

**EDCT Committee 2020 Plans** – The Committee discussed that the budget will be submitted again, and that the E.D. Coordinator contract will be put back into the budget. The Committee members who did not attend the August meeting were updated on the process and the reasoning behind it. All agreed that an increase in the contract needs to occur since there has never been an increase in it for 6+ years.

S. Peterson also recommended that the Committee review the budget layout at next month's meeting to fix categories and shift funds where they need to be so the budget coincides with the expenses we will be paying in 2020.

**GO MONROE COUNTY Activities Guide RFP** – Greg Evans presented a summary of the 2019 campaign, which included the inventory left, the distribution location list, the advertisers, the 2020 advertising sheet and the process and target dates for publishing the 2020 guide. Evans said there were 9 cases left of the 34,000 that were printed. Van Wychen suggested that Rob Wilson from Hidden Valleys be contacted and to see if he would help with distribution next year. D. Peterson volunteered his drivers at Martin's to help deliver boxes of guides at area Tourism Centers.

Evans had concerns about the County having the back-cover ad at no charge since it was a high valued ad space. Evans and the Committee compromised, with the County taking a full-page ad in another area of the magazine for ½ price. Motion by D. Peterson and 2<sup>nd</sup> by Van Wychen to spend \$825 on a full-page full color ad in the 2020 Guide. S. Peterson questioned how it would be paid? Either in 2020 or pay for it off the remaining \$650 in the budget and the balance paid from the 2020 budget? It was decided that the payment will be worked out between Evans and the Committee.

Hendricks told the Committee that his first trade show isn't until late January so if the guide wasn't printed by the 1<sup>st</sup> of January, there was still time to get them done in time.

**County Administrator's Report** – no report

**Monroe County E.D. Coordinator's Report**

### **PROSPECTS**

#### **Phase 1 – initial contact**

1. Camper rental/customizing company – Tomah
2. Distribution Center – welding/metal materials – Tomah
3. Workforce Engagement company – Monroe County
4. Boat accessories company – Monroe County
5. Biomass Energy plant – Monroe County
6. natural vitamin/supplement distribution – Tomah
7. fishing equipment/guide superstore – Monroe County
8. Ice fishing vehicle manufacturer – Monroe County
9. insect organic fertilizer plant – Monroe County
10. Foreign employment service – Monroe County
11. medical software company – Tomah
12. metal coating fabrication – Monroe County
13. meat processing facility – Monroe County

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

1. Transfer/distribution center – Tomah
2. Food processing plant – Sparta
3. Hydroponics plant – Cashton
4. Distribution center – Tomah

5. Food flavoring coating plant – Monroe County
6. Organic compost company – Cashton/other rural areas
7. Multi-use complex – Cashton

### **Phase 3 – in the finals**

1. Coffee additive company – Cashton
2. Industrial Hemp CBD Oil Processing – Kendall
3. Corn Board processing plant – Sparta/Tomah/Kendall
4. Dollar General - Kendall
5. Hotel – Tomah
6. Restaurant/Bar & Grill – Tomah

### **IN THE WORKS**

**Community Venture Network** – Traveled to the Twin Cities on 8/8 and met with 14 prospects. 8 of them I'm doing follow-ups currently.

**Elroy-Sparta Bike Trail – Kendall Depot** – worked with the DNR and the Village of Kendall Board on final lease agreement with the Kendall Depot. This included mass cleaning/repairs on the building and grounds along with the inside of the Depot. The Depot opened on Labor Day weekend, selling passes and passing out bike trail information. Because of the late season opening, hours will be limited with a few weekend activities. The agreement is for the entire 2020 season when more things will be planned.

**South Pointe Business Park – Sparta** –The AMS Micromedical building is finished and the transferring of equipment is continuing. A new Martin Warehousing building is progressing well and they expect to move into that facility by late fall. Working with 2 other prospects that are looking at potential expansions in Wisconsin, specifically at South Pointe.

**Financial institutions coming to Tomah** – Union Bank has begun construction on their new location. The 1<sup>st</sup> Community Credit Union building is under construction as well.

**Sparta building recruitment** – a large building will become available and have started to recruit businesses to look at that venue for future relocation or expansion.

**St. Mary's Ridge Creamery building** – recruiting businesses for this building.

**Cashton Feed Mill/Tobacco Warehouse buildings** – working with potential developers to tear down the buildings and build a multi-use facility mixing in light manufacturing, retail and housing.

**Monroe County Campground Brochure** – new guide for campgrounds & rustic lodging in the County has been printed. Includes new layout, updated information and amenities grid.

### **MEETINGS**

- Testifying – Assembly Transportation Committee - Madison
- WI Downtown Action Council Board Meeting – Milwaukee
- Hidden Valleys Board meeting – Darlington
- Map-N-Tour – 3D mapping updating & marketing
- WI Rural Partners Board meeting – Tomah
- Kendall Water Treatment Plant Grand Opening
- D.N.R. meetings – Kendall
- Partners for Rural America Conference – Springfield, Illinois
- 7 Rivers Alliance Board meeting – Camp Douglas
- 9 – Bio-Sunn conference calls regarding their project in Monroe County
- WEDC Board meeting – Madison
- Prospect conference call with developers

- ECO-DEVO meeting – La Crosse
- Aptiv Meeting – Sparta
- SW-ITBEC meeting - Sparta

S. Peterson updated the Committee on the latest with the proposed Kendall project and that a formal announcement will be coming within a few short weeks. Peterson also reported that the Village of Kendall Board reached an agreement with the WI Dept. of Natural Resources on reopening the Kendall Depot as the official headquarters of the Elroy-Sparta Bike Trail. Peterson said that his wife Lori will be subleasing the Depot from the Village for the rest of this year and the bike season in 2020. The Depot was open on Labor Day weekend with a great crowd. He did reiterate the frustrations of not having the entire bike trail open yet because of repairs and it may drag out until the summer of 2020.

## REPORTS:

**7 Rivers Alliance** – S. Peterson reported that the State of the Region breakfast will be coming up in November highlighted by the head of the Federal Reserve in the Twin Cities as the keynote speaker.

**Hidden Valleys** – S. Peterson reported that sales of the new Story Road phone app are underway with the magazine ad sales. It will be a great addition to an already successful magazine.

**SW-ITBEC** – S. Peterson that they continue to work on a branding campaign and will have a booth at the WI Counties Association Conference on 9/23 in Wisconsin Dells.

**Local History Room** – Van Wychen reported that the County Board unanimously approved paying all expenses for Jarrod Roll to travel to Pennsylvania to accept a national award to the Local History Room.

**Fort McCoy** – T. Townsell reported Community Appreciation Night took place on August 22<sup>nd</sup>. Military training continues on the base. Construction on the 2 main gates are scheduled to be done by December. The base is getting ready for the upcoming deer hunting season.

**Sparta Chamber of Commerce** – J. Hendricks reported that Business after 5 is Sept. 19<sup>th</sup> at South Post on Ft. McCoy. The Legislative Breakfast is on Sept. 30<sup>th</sup>. Sparta Fall Fest is on Oct. 9<sup>th</sup>. He said the progress of the new bicycling murals in the downtown area is going well and one more mural is on the schedule pending funding.

**Tomah Chamber & Visitors Center** – T. Thompson reported that the Cranfest buses will happen again this year but expenses continue to go up so the Chamber will be looking at whether to keep it going in the future. The alley work is wrapping up with new infrastructure and fiber optic throughout the downtown area. New streetlamps are being installed throughout the downtown area. Discover Wisconsin continues filming in the downtown area for an episode that will air in 2020. Thompson said the Thursday Concert Series exceeded expectations with huge crowds and despite the growing pains it will continue for the next 5 years in the downtown area. Manufacturing Day is coming again where manufacturers connect with the students on future employment with great benefits. Meca Sportswear has been nominated for the “Who made it in Wisconsin?” contest. Voting will be taking place soon. J. Hendricks said that Mathews in Sparta is also a nominated business.

**Upcoming Events/Activities around the County** – Van Wychen reported that over 900 riders on the Riders Across Wisconsin bicycle ride stopped in Warrens on their trip. They made a stop at the WI Cranberry Discovery Center. She reminded everyone about the Warrens Cranberry Festival on Sept. 27-29. Van Wychen informed the Committee about the Public Harvest Day at Wetherby Cranberries in Warrens on

Oct. 5<sup>th</sup> from 9am -11am. There will also be other activities in Warrens that day.

S. Peterson told the Committee about the misprint in the new Campground & Rustic Lodging Guide. The phone # and address for the Wilton Campground area is wrong. Peterson said he went off the Google Search info and now finds out that both were wrong. It was discussed of doing a label or handwriting the right info and it was decided by the Committee, that even though it was too bad about the misprint, spending time and money to fix it was not needed. They would make the change when someone gets the guide and the digital version on the web site is correct. Committee felt it is a small usage guide that will just be corrected with the reprint next year.

**Agenda Items for next month:**

- EDCT Committee 2020 Plans
- 2020 Budget
- Go Monroe County Activities Guide
- Monroe County Economic Development Conference

Motion by D. Peterson to adjourn. 2<sup>nd</sup> by T. Thompson. Meeting adjourned at 11:37am.

Submitted by:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Steve Peterson", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Steve Peterson