

MONROE COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, COMMERCE & TOURISM COMMITTEE
MONTHLY MEETING – 11-14-19 – Monroe County Board Room - Sparta

PRESENT:

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

Citizen Members (CM): Ryan Egstad – Egstad Insurance & Investments; Kevin Ravenscroft – Timberwood Bank

Advisory Members (AM): Tonya Townsell – Ft. McCoy

Economic Development & Tourism Coordinator: Steve Peterson

County Administrator: Tina Osterberg

Absent: John Hendricks – Sparta Chamber of Commerce (AM); Tina Thompson – Tomah Chamber of Commerce (AM); Jarrod Roll – Local History Room (AM)

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

Meeting was called to order at 9:00am by Chair Nodji Van Wychen. Roll call was taken.

- **Next Month's Meeting** – Thursday, December 12 – 9:00am – Monroe County Local History Room – Sparta. Jarrod Roll will be contacted to set up the date.
- **Minutes** – Motion by H. Halverson to approve the minutes. Second by D. Peterson. Motion carried.
- **Financial/Invoices** – T. Osterberg reported that the 2020 Hidden Valleys ad contract had been signed and the funding for the ad has been approved in the budget. Motion by M. Halverson to pay \$2,805 for the ad. 2nd by D. Peterson. Approved. S. Peterson asked the Committee to consider paying the \$125.49 for his registration at the WI Downtown Action Council Summit on Oct. 15-16 in Green Bay. T. Osterberg said the committee could do a line item transfer within the budget and pay for the registration. N. Van Wychen urged the Committee to fund a new Museum Brochure with funds left in the budget. T. Osterberg said a line-item transfer of \$500 could be taken from Education and put in Marketing/Promotion. She suggested that the Committee do one motion for all the line-item transfers at one time. Motion by M Halverson. 2nd by D. Peterson. Approved. N. Van Wychen asked the Committee to look at the left-over funds in the 2019 budget and bring any ideas/projects to the December meeting for discussion.
- **EDCT Committee 2020 Plans** – With the decision by the County Board Supervisors to cut the E.D. Coordinator contract, the next phase is the transition before the end of the year with things. S. Peterson has been working on and passing them on to community leaders he's been working with on prospects. S. Peterson and T. Osterberg will be meeting after the Committee meeting to outline the process. N. Van Wychen told the Committee that there was discussion of combining an E.D. position with Extension like the past position that Will Cronin held, but there wasn't support by Board members to go that route.
- **GO MONROE COUNTY Activities Guide RFP** – no discussion but G. Evans would be contacted to meet with the Committee at the December meeting to proof the new guide. S. Peterson said that he had given Evans the ad for the guide for the County but heard nothing else from them.

- **County Administrator's Report** – T. Osterberg reported that an active shooter exercise planned for the County offices had been cancelled. She said that much work is being done with the 2020 Census Committee at this time. Osterberg said that discussions have been held on creating a flood warning system for the watersheds in hope of monitoring flood levels before the disaster strikes. She reported that the County IT Director had retired, and they were in the process of the transition in that department.
- **Monroe County E.D. Coordinator Report**

PROSPECTS

Phase 1 – initial contact

1. Workforce Engagement company – Monroe County
2. Biomass Energy plant – Monroe County
3. natural vitamin/supplement distribution – Tomah
4. Ice fishing vehicle manufacturer – Monroe County
5. insect organic fertilizer plant – Monroe County
6. Foreign employment service – Monroe County
7. medical software company – Tomah
8. metal coating fabrication – Monroe County
9. 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. 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. Hotel – Tomah
5. Restaurant/Bar & Grill – Tomah
6. Convenience Store – Monroe County

IN THE WORKS

Elroy-Sparta Bike Trail – Kendall Depot – co-hosted a very successful community wide Halloween Party at the Depot. Will become an annual event. Working on event calendar already for next year's bicycle season, with marketing and trade show appearances.

South Pointe Business Park – Sparta –AMS Micromedical had its ribbon cutting. The 100,000 sq. ft. Martin Warehousing building is progressing well and they expect to move into that facility by late fall. Brooks Equipment has secured their new location and will begin construction in 2020.

Financial institutions coming to Tomah – Union Bank has begun construction and the 1st Community Credit Union buildings are progressing well and will be open before the end of the year.

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.

MEETINGS

- Attended – Economic Indicators Breakfast – La Crosse

- Attended – WEDA Fall Conference – Stevens Point – sit on the WEDA Board of Directors representing Monroe County
- Attended – WI Rural Partners Summit Sub-committee meeting – Marshfield – sit on the WRP Board of Directors representing Monroe County
- Presentation – Mississippi River Regional Planning Commission meeting – La Crosse
- Attended – WI Downtown Action Council Summit – Green Bay – sit on the WDAC Board of Directors representing Monroe County
- WRP Board of Directors Meeting
- 8 – Bio-Sunn meetings & conference calls
- Testifying – Assembly Joint Ag Committee - Madison
- Attended – Hidden Valleys Board of Directors meeting – Richland Center – representing Monroe County
- Digital marketing strategy meeting – WI Cranberry Discovery Center
- 7 Rivers Alliance Board of Directors meeting – representing Monroe County
- Land Broker meeting – potential client options for properties available in Monroe County
- Aptiv Meeting – Sparta – co-sponsoring a Workforce Solutions Luncheon & Forum – Nov. 6th – Jake’s Northwoods
- SW-ITBEC meeting – Sparta
- Market & Johnson meeting – discuss future projects in Monroe County

S. Peterson also reported that LADCO & the La Crosse Chamber of Commerce have reached out to him and are planning to take over a regional Economic Development Conference since Monroe County will not be doing one again in the future. Peterson also informed the Committee that he is stepping down from the WDAC, WRP & Hidden Valleys Boards of Directors. The County would have to find a replacement on the Hidden Valleys board.

- **5 Minute Reports**

- **Sparta Chamber** – no report
- **Tomah Chamber** – no report
- **7 Rivers Alliance** – S. Peterson reported that the State of the Region meeting featuring the head of the Federal Reserve in the Twin Cities was very well attended. 7 Rivers Alliance is hosting a cooperative housing summit in December.
- **Hidden Valleys** – S. Peterson reported that magazine will be proofed next week by the board and publication will be out by 1/1/20. He reported that the digital app campaign with the ad sales for the magazine has been going well. This concept was a step out of the board’s comfort zone, but they are taking a very positive approach to the campaign.
- **SW-ITBEC** – S. Peterson reported the December meeting will be a review of all projects funded by SW-ITBEC in 2019 through matching grants and donations.
- **Local History Room** – no report

- **Fort McCoy** – T. Townsell the Main gate will reopen on 11/23 with much anticipation. Gate 20 will open in mid-December. That gate is used mostly for deliveries. Ft. McCoy is in the process of putting together a natural disaster exercise and that will tie into the County and surrounding Cities as well. T. Townsell said Ft. McCoy continues to promote its cold weather training courses. She added that up 7 new houses will be built on base and should be completed by the summer of 2021.

- **Upcoming Events/Activities Around the County** – no report
- **Agenda Items for next month:**
 - EDCT Committee projects with available 2019 funds.
 - EDCT Committee 2020 Plans

Motion by D. Peterson to adjourn. 2nd by M. Halverson. Meeting adjourned at 10:13am.

Submitted by:



Steve Peterson