

**Monroe County Economic Development, Commerce and Tourism Committee**  
**Regular Monthly Meeting, August 11, 2016**  
**Wisconsin Cranberry Discovery Center, Warrens, WI**

Present: Committee Members: Sharon Folcey, Nodji Van Wychen, Dean Peterson  
Citizen Members: Pete Reichardt, Dennis Berg  
Advisory Members: Tonya Townsell, Bernie Arena, Tina Thompson, Paul Harms  
Economic Development Coordinator: Steve Peterson  
Guests: Cathy Schmit, Jenny Kuderer, Lisa Herr, Lee Nerison

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

The meeting was called to order at 9:30 a.m. by Chair Folcey. Roll call was taken.

Paul Harms was welcomed as a new advisory member. He is with the Three Bears Resort.

Motion by Van Wychen to approve the July 14, 2016 minutes. Second by D. Peterson. Motion carried.

The budget was reviewed. D. Peterson made a motion to approve the invoices as presented. Second by Van Wychen. Motion carried.

Motion by D. Peterson to send Arena and Van Wychen to the fall state tourism conference in Eau Claire, WI. Second by Van Wychen. Motion carried.

Van Wychen invited the attendees to the grand opening of CranGrow, 23879 Aspen Ave., in Warrens at 11 a.m. She said the \$20 million dollar venture will employ around 50 local people. It has a 440,000 barrel capacity. 30 independent growers have made an investment in the facility. 75% of the sales will be exported. Governor Walker will be speaking at the event.

S. Peterson gave the EDCT coordinator report which included the following items:

- 2017 ED conference will be a 2 day event and held at Three Bears.
- The WEDC is looking to set a brand image. Peterson is on the board.
- Scenic Bluffs health facilities had a re-grand opening.
- A news release will be issued on the SET (Stronger Economies Together) program which includes Jackson, Juneau and Monroe counties.
- He has met with Oakdale and Norwalk communities about the Connect Communities project.
- The Bike Me Fun Ride is slated for June 3, 2017. It has partnered with Anbucs, a project of some Gundersen Lutheran nurses that helps get bikes for handicapped children.
- The Elroy-Sparta Bike Trail will remain open as usual this fall but because of the presence of long-eared bats in the tunnels, it will close earlier in 2017.
- Multi Stack in Sparta is expanding its business.
- A 42 acre business park is opening in Tomah.
- The Tee-Pee will be demolished this fall. A 4-story complex will be built in its place.
- A \$6 million dollar co-op project is taking place in Wilton.
- USEMCO in Tomah received a revolving loan for a project.
- Mary Jo Hill is remodeling the former Kendall Motors.

- Monroe County will be featured in an 8 page spread in the "Business in Focus" magazine in November. It has a circulation of 392,000.

Herr stated that SET has resources that will qualify us for funds after the training period.

Arena reported that Hidden Valleys will be meeting in Monroe County on September 21, 2016 at Perkins Restaurant in Tomah at 11 a.m. Monroe County will be featured in the 2017 magazine. She noted that we need to get different photos for use in the Hidden Valleys magazine, other advertising and on the website.

Motion by D. Peterson to allow up to \$500 to purchase photos for advertising and promotions. Second by Berg. Motion carried. Schmit noted that a W-9 will have to be filled out for each vendor. Arena will draft a contract for use of the photos. Harms stated that aerial photos are also a nice option.

Townsell reported that Fort McCoy will be expanding its cold weather training. They are approaching 150,000 troops this year for training. The commemorative area is now open two Fridays a month to the public. Lou Ann Mittelstaedt will be retiring from the public affairs office. Townsell is looking for links of things to do and see in the area to entice people to come here. She also noted that Mittelstaedt would be a source for county photos.

Thompson said four bids were received for the renovation of the DNR building. It will consist of four offices, a history and art area, a co-working space and an exterior elevator. She noted that Tomah is in a growth mood.

S. Peterson announced that ITBEC is actively recruiting new member counties including Trempealeau, Jackson, Crawford and Buffalo.

Schmit noted that the jail is on track with Phase 2. She stated that valuations are up in the county by 4% and Monroe County has been at the top the last several years.

Motion by D. Peterson to adjourn. Second by Folcey. Motion carried.

The next meeting will be September 8, 2016.

*Bernie Arena, Recorder*