January 8, 2015 Minutes

Monroe County Economic Development, Commerce & Tourism Committee

Activity Room Rolling Hills, Sparta, WI

Meeting was called in accordance with the open meeting law requirements.

Committee members present: Sharon Folcey, Nodji Van Wychen, Dean Peterson,

Bruce Humphrey, Jim Schroeder

Citizen member present: Carol Ostrem, Mary Jo Hill

Advisory members present: Jarrod Roll, Bernie Arena, Tim Hyma, Tina Thompson

Economic Development Coordinator: Steve Peterson

Guests: Greg Evans (Evans Printing)

Meeting called to order at: 9:00 am

Approval of minutes of previous meeting:

Motion by J. Schroeder to approve the December minutes as presented. Second by N. Van Wychen.

All Ayes, motion carried.

Committee Financial Review:

2014 budget was discussed. Sharon Folcey suggested that all invoices get approval at each meeting prior to submitting for payment. 4 invoices for 2015 and 2 invoices for 2014 were submitted for approval. There was a Minuteman Press invoice from February 2014 that is in question of being paid. Leslie Schreier, AP Clerk, will check into this and update. N. Van Wychen asked about budget over/short and S. Folcey said that they are in line for the 2014 Budget and have not overspent. The next purchase that isn’t in the budget yet may be a new projector. Motion by D. Peterson to approve invoices as presented, seconded by N. Van Wychen. All Ayes, motion carried.

Economic Development Coordinator Report:

Steve discussed the upcoming conferences and meetings he will be attending. He’s got marketing plans going with 2 small businesses in Tomah. Discussed the Southside Lumber property in Tomah becoming a parking lot for the aquatic center. The Kwik Trip project will be changing the intersection in Tomah. An outside Tomah business is expanding. A new business opened by Wal-Mart. The Kendall School project is currently on hold. There is a small business in Norwalk that wants to expand which is currently home based. Veterans Project on hold. Currently working with Greg from Evans Printing on brochures. Steve mentioned that there is a new trend with small businesses wanting to expand and the financial institutions are being very helpful. N. Van Wychen mentioned that Warrens has now gotten rid of their Police Dept. and will have the County Sheriff’s office on-call. Nodji also mentioned that the bank will be closing in Warrens. There was some discussion on Jellystone and 3 Bears being slow during the winter months and Steve said that a new CranBrew Eatery is being created to boost business. Tina Thompson mentioned that it is geared towards being very family friendly and also that they have opened up to offer multiple caterers instead of just one. Tim Hayes wondered about the Driftless Project and Steve mentioned that it is on hold at this time but needs to be investigated.

Video Update:

Steve discussed the video on the website. Mentioning that there will be 2 versions per year. One on health care and the other related to recruitment. There was a question on if they were available thru a YouTube channel and Steve mentioned that, yes, he has all videos available thru YouTube but that it hasn’t been promoted. The video will be tweaked and updated as expansions occur.

EDCT Conference:

The EDCT conference is slated for February 26, 2015. Steve mentioned that the morning speaker cancelled so he is actively searching for someone to do the morning spot. Governor and Legislative letters have been mailed. Greg Evans is doing a brochure that he will be mailing. Sponsorship forms will be going out Monday that are available for $500, $250, and $100. Steve said that currently there is a lot of sponsorship interest just by word of mouth and that there will be about 24 booths available with possibly 4 more out in the hall. Tomah and Sparta Chambers will be putting a conference notice in their newsletters. There was discussion about not having Break-Out Sessions so everything can be in one room. There will be a Continental breakfast and lunch will be soup and wraps with Val’s Bakery bringing in cupcakes and possibly cookies. Steve asked if Cranfest will be donating treats as well. Nodji will check into it. Steve will be meeting with Leslie to go over mailing lists, letters sent, and finalizing the conference details. Nodji asked when registration was due and Steve said it will be February 13th. Registration will be $25 for individual and $50 for booth + 1 registration. There will be no guarantee on electricity for booths. Steve discussed that there will be a national syndicated radio talk show host doing a live broadcast in the morning until 11:00 am. Then, Josh Tolley, will also speak at the conference. Steve noted that Josh is an international known mentor for business development, he is a dynamic speaker that creates energy and gives tips to businesses. He will also be offering a sign-up for “Boot Camp” as well. Steve requested to pay $1000.00 down and to have a check for $1000.00 on the day of the conference for Josh Tolley for a total of $2000.00. Motion to approve payment to Josh Tolley in the amount of $2000.00 made by J. Schroeder, seconded by C. Ostrem. All ayes, motion carried.

Go Monroe County EDCT Publication:

Greg Evans has been very happy with the way this project is moving and they have sold numerous ads and will be wrapping up in about 1 week and he plans on going to press on February 1st. Bernie has been very helpful and Heidi has gotten ad approvals done quickly. The magazine has gone from 45 pages to about 80+ and in full color. Also from pamphlet size to a magazine. Steve said he anticipates that once the magazine comes out, more business will be very interested for next year and that a lot of businesses putting in ads are not necessarily tourist related but the interest is strong. Lodging will be listed but not a full business directory. Jarrod Roll asked about a time frame when it would be available to the public and S. Peterson said he would like to reveal the Go Monroe County magazine at the EDCT Conference on February 26th. Sharon asked if the Advetorials were going well and Greg said that a few restaurants had been interested, but not very many. Greg reminded that EDCT has not put an ad in yet and that the Early Bird rate is $1650.00. EDCT would like to have a full page ad and Greg mentioned that the inside back cover is still available. J. Schroeder made a motion to approve $1650.00 to Evans Printing for the full page ad, seconded by D. Peterson. All ayes, motion carried.

5-minute reports:

*Hidden Valleys* – Bernie reported that they have printed the magazine for Hidden Valleys and are currently already working on next years’ magazine. They meet the 3rd Wednesday of each month.

*Tomah Chamber* – Tina discussed that currently Tomah is in a lull. Executive Board elections are at the end of the month. They are working at finally getting two boards together that have never met and that WTC is contracted to lead the formal meeting. Their current project is moving into and renovation the Ranger Station hasn’t had an update since the 1930’s. They have an Annual Banquet coming up at Cranberry County Lodge and also Freeze Fest at the end of the month.

*Sparta Chamber* – Tim discussed their Banquet coming up on Jan 24th and the Legislative Breakfast on Jan 26th. Cabin Fever will be Feb 28th. Canoecopia is coming up and they will have a booth there. In April, he will be attending a Wheel/Sprocket event in Milwaukee. They are currently working on a grant for a biking event that will tie in with Illinois and hopefully make the event bigger. The Holiday Lights and Holiday Train were a huge success. The group that did the Holiday Lights has now become a Non-Profit organization.

Fort McCoy – Sharon reported for Linda who responded via email that Fort McCoy is currently under new restrictions for admission on to the base which can take up to 45 minutes.

SW-ITBEC – Nodji reported that the American Legion is supporting the EDCT conference and will be paying for any ITBEC members to attend.

WATA – Steve reported that WATA has tripled its membership for 2014. He discussed the new unveiling of a WI Field Trips touring campaign. They will be handing out “Brown Bags” at the conference to promote the new campaign with “permission slips” from the Governor to attend the field trips. Nodji asked if there will be WATA Summit information at the up-coming Fruit and Vegetable Convention and Steve said he plans on attending and providing information.

Motion to approve to pay for the Tourism Conference in LaCrosse by Jim Schroeder, seconded by Bruce Humphrey. All ayes, motion carried.

Bikes and Berries/Local History Room – Jarrod reported that visitation is up 21%. He is hoping to use the Go Monroe County magazine to update the site on up-coming events in 2015. Jarrod asked for suggestions for other 2015 events to be posted on the website and Nodji suggested he speak with Bernie regarding Hidden Valleys being a great resource. Tina also suggested the Chamber links for event ideas. Jarrod discussed that people were coming specifically to the Local History Room. There has been great news coverage and the banners have helped. He’s put in over 400 hrs. visiting schools and attending meetings and may ask to adjust the budget. Tina asked about partnering with other local museums and Jarrod mentioned that there was a county organization that hasn’t been very active, but that he is always available.

7 Rivers Alliance – nothing to report.

No other business to report.

The next meeting will be at 9 a.m. on February 12, 2015 at the Cranberry Country Lodge.

Motion to adjourn at 11:03 a.m. by Nodji Van Wychen. Second by Dean Peterson. Motion carried.

*Leslie Schreier, Recorder*