

JANUARY 9, 2014 MINUTES APPROVED FEBRUARY 13, 2014  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, COMMERCE AND TOURISM COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES  
COMMUNITY SERVICES CENTER, BUILDING A, ROOM 409

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

**Meeting was called to order** by Chairperson Sharon Folcey at 9:04am.

**Committee Members present were:** Sharon Folcey, Jim Shroeder,

**Citizen Members present were:** Carol Ostrem

**Advisory Members present were:** Linda Fournier, Bernie Arena

**Members not present were:** Nodji VanWychen, Dean Peterson, Jim Rice, Jarrod Roll

**Others present were:** Steve Peterson, Monroe County Economic Development Coordinator; Georganne Gebhardt, Monroe County

**Due to lack of quorum, no official business was carried out.**

**Economic Development Coordinator report was given by Steve Peterson:** Currently working with the Cities of Tomah and Sparta to acquire more land. He is also working with Mary Jo Hill in Kendall to put together a strategic planning task force.

**2014 EDC report given by Steve Peterson:** 21 booths are reserved for the 2014 conference so far. The online registration and payment options should be up and running by the end of the week. Conference sponsors are set!

**Potential Project: Showing the value of the Monroe County Board:** Steve will be working on a brochure to put in the conference folder to let people know what EDCT Committee is all about.

**Citizen Members:** Mary Jo Hill and Pete Reichardt have shown interest in being citizen members of the EDCT Committee. Their resumes have been forwarded to Catherine Schmit for appointment.

**Hidden Valleys Report was given by Bernie Arena:** Copies of the 2014 edition of Hidden Valleys were distributed by Bernie Arena. They have a new partnership with Drift less Destinations and WI Ag Tourism, also with a new format.

**Fort McCoy report was given by Linda Fournier:** Things are well with Fort McCoy, still no budget in place.

**SW-ITBEC Report given by Steve Peterson:** Steve is revising a brochure for ITBEC to explain who they are and what they do.

**Wisconsin Ag Tourism report was given by Steve Peterson:** Launched Luv-R-Ag website. Steve briefly discussed the Governor's conference of Tourism, to be held March 2-4.

**The next meeting will be held on February 13, 2014 in a location TBD. Meeting adjourned at 10:23am.**

Georganne Gebhardt, Recording Secretary

FEBRUARY 13, 2014 MINUTES APPROVED MARCH 13, 2014  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, COMMERCE AND TOURISM COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES  
PICA GROVE LLC

**Prior to the meeting, the committee toured Pica Grove LLC in Sparta WI.**

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

**Meeting was called to order** by Chairperson Sharon Folcey at 9:44am.

**Committee Members present were:** Sharon Folcey, Jim Shroeder, Dean Peterson, and Jim Rice

**Citizen Members present were:** Carol Ostrem

**Advisory Members present were:** Linda Fournier, Bernie Arena, Jarrod Roll

**Members not present were:** Nodji VanWychen

**Others present were:** Steve Peterson, Monroe County Economic Development Coordinator; Georganne Gebhardt, Monroe County, Chris Hanson, Tomah Chamber of Commerce and Tim Hyma, Sparta Chamber of Commerce.

**Minutes of the December 12 & January 9 meeting were reviewed and approved on a motion by Schroeder, seconded by Peterson. Motion carried.**

**Committee Financial Report given by Georganne Gebhardt:** Georganne explained to the committee how pre-pays work, if a bill needs to be paid prior to the meeting, she will give it to the Finance department and get the committees approval at the next meeting. Due to last month's lack of quorum, a few pre pays were needed. It was also explained that Steve would bring his vouchers for approval the month before they are due and Georganne can get them to the Finance department at the beginning of the month so Steve doesn't have to wait until the middle of the month to be paid. Georganne explained that the supplies she ordered from Staples were directly billed to the Conference account, but she added them to the bottom of the voucher, so that the committee could approve them.

**The Committee Budget was discussed:** The budget adjustment from December was discussed and Georganne presented it to the Committee for 'official' approval. **Motion to approve December's budget adjustment was made by Schroeder, seconded by Peterson. Motion carried.** Vouchers presented were: 7 Rivers Alliance, 2014 Membership Dues. 2 – Minute Man Press, Brochures for the 2014 ED Conference. Top Dog Marketing, ED Conference Tote Bags, 2014 Web Hosting, Hidden Valleys, 2014 Membership Dues. Monroe County ED Coordinator Salary, pre-pay from January, February and March. SW ITBEC, 2014 Membership Dues. Bernie Arena, mileage, lunch and per diem. William Cronin and Georganne Gebhardt county credit card expenditures for 2014 ED Conference supplies. Image Pictures, GO MONROE COUNTY! Video. Proforma, USB Flash Drives for 2014 Conference. **Motion to approve vouchers by Schroeder, seconded by Peterson. Motion carried.**

**Economic Development Coordinator report was given by Steve Peterson:** Currently working with the Cities of Tomah and Sparta to acquire more land. He is also working with Mary Jo Hill in Kendall to put together a strategic planning task force to work on a "Downtown Revitalization"

Georganne Gebhardt, Recording Secretary

FEBRUARY 13, 2014 MINUTES APPROVED MARCH 13, 2014  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, COMMERCE AND TOURISM COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES  
PICA GROVE LLC

**2014 EDC report given by Steve Peterson:** Governor Walker has confirmed. 9 Counties will be represented, expecting a turnout of 250 people. Panelists are in place and confirmed. News release will be going out tomorrow (February 14<sup>th</sup>). E-Newsletter going out to remind everyone. The Sparta Chamber Ambassadors will be stuffing the 'goodie bags' on Tuesday the 25<sup>th</sup>. Booth set up will be on Wednesday (February 26<sup>th</sup>) from Noon to 6:00pm. Exhibitors are strongly encouraged to set up on Wednesday.

**Hidden Valleys Report was given by Bernie Arena:** Bernie asked for 4 boxes of Cranberry Taffy to take to the Tourism Conference, she will put a stand up sign out saying, "Compliments of Monroe County EDCT Committee". **Motion to approve payment of 4 boxes of taffy was made by, Rice seconded by Schroeder. Motion carried.** There was some discussion on whether the chamber would keep carrying the Monroe County Visitor's Guide. The guidelines state that they should have a chamber membership and they have not yet received the membership dues. Bernie spoke with Patty, who assured her that the Visitor's Guide would be out earlier this year. It was also suggested that we send a letter to remind them that they need to be a member of Sparta and Tomah chambers to have the Visitor's Guide displayed. Sharon will pen a letter to send to Patty and cc Doug, so that this issue may be resolved.

**Fort McCoy report was given by Linda Fournier:** Number of employees down from 2800 to approximately 2400 with furloughs and cutbacks. FY 2014 will approve 56 homes on South Post – Moving from 801 Housing in Tomah.

**SW-ITBEC Report given by Steve Peterson:** Steve is revising a brochure for ITBEC to explain who they are and what they do. It will be ready in time for the ED Conference on the 27<sup>th</sup>.

**Wisconsin Ag Tourism report was given by Steve Peterson:** A new bill closing loopholes on liability is being presented. Wisconsin Insurance Corporation supports the bill. Could help to expand the Cranberry Industry with Ag Tourism.

**Bikes and Berries/Local History Room report was given by Jarrod Roll.** January will update the calendar on the website, please send any additions to Jarrod. Local History Room met with Kurt Marshaus to discuss the green space they will be losing due to the Justice Center Project. Sparta Tourism will be supplying banners for the side of the building so that patron know that they are open during the construction.

**The next meeting will be held on March 13, 2014 in a location TBD.**

**Motion to adjourn made by Peterson, seconded by Schroeder. Motion carried unanimously.**

**Meeting adjourned at 11:36am.**

MINUTES PENDING COMMITTEE APPROVAL MARCH 13, 2014  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, COMMERCE AND TOURISM COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES  
OFFICE OF MONROE COUNTY EDC STEVE PETERSON

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

**Meeting was called to order** by Chairperson Sharon Folcey at 9:00am.

**Committee Members present were:** Sharon Folcey, Jim Schroeder, Dean Peterson, Nodji VanWychen and Jim Rice

**Citizen Members present were:** Mary Jo Hill and Pete Reichardt

**Advisory Members present were:** Bernie Arena

**Others present were:** Steve Peterson, Monroe County Economic Development Coordinator; Georganne Gebhardt, Monroe County, Chris Hanson, Tomah Chamber of Commerce and Tim Hyma, Sparta Chamber of Commerce.

**Minutes of the February 13, 2014 meeting were reviewed and approved on a motion by Schroeder, seconded by Rice. Motion carried.**

**The Committee Budget was discussed: Motion to approve vouchers by Rice, seconded by Peterson. Motion carried.**

**Summary of the 2014 ED Conference was given by Steve Peterson:** Please see attached. Steve discussed next year's venue possibly being Cranberry Country Lodge. He also discussed having sponsorship levels, i.e. Platinum, Gold, Silver, Bronze. Also for next year, we will try to cement the moderators ahead of time so they have time to go over the introductions. Pete Reichardt suggested that next year we have a panel on the possible financing options that some may not be familiar with, such as the TIF and RLF. There was also some discussion of having a presentation ready for next year, spotlighting the local individuals who have utilized the RLF. Also for next year, possibly think about having round table discussions with specific topics for the dignitaries so that they be more prepared. Next year's conference planning will be starting NOW! We will be updating the banners and working on getting things ready and organized to help things run smoothly.

**Economic Development Coordinator report was given by Steve Peterson:** Steve finished up the Tourism Conference right after the ED Conference, and then took a much needed, albeit short, break! He met with Roger Brooks at the Tourism Conference, who agreed to mentor him on the Kendall Task Force project.

**Business Retention and Expansion Program update given by Steve Peterson:** There was talk of getting back on track, now that the conference is over. Steve will be looking for volunteers to do interviews and will be having a volunteer meeting.

**Hidden Valleys Report was given by Bernie Arena:** Bernie reported that she had attended the Chicago & Milwaukee Trade Show and all went well! She will be attending 5 trade shows, along with 2 Conferences this year. There have been 70,000 Hidden Valleys Magazines printed this year, along with an additional 5,000 maps. The 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday in May will be their annual meeting and in 2017 Monroe

Georganne Gebhardt, Recording Secretary

MINUTES PENDING COMMITTEE APPROVAL MARCH 13, 2014  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, COMMERCE AND TOURISM COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES  
OFFICE OF MONROE COUNTY EDC STEVE PETERSON

will be the featured county for Hidden Valleys. A misquote for the Cranberry Taffy that was ordered for the trade shows was also discussed. It was decided that a letter would be drafted to Diane, at Humbird Cheese to discuss the price difference from the quote to the bill.

**Monroe County Visitor report given by:** Sharon will draft a letter to Patty about paying to rejoin the chambers and Georganne will set up a meeting with Sharon, Catherine, Patty and anyone else that would like to sit in, to discuss the plan of action.

**Sparta Chamber report was given by Tim Hyma:** Tim will be attending 9 trade shows this year. He asked the committee to honor an agreement that he found supporting the Tourism trade shows that he attends. Sharon suggested that he write up a proposal of what he would expect. May 2<sup>nd</sup> is the Premiere of Discover Wisconsin, hosted at Southside Saloon, everyone is invited. Tim also mentioned a Ben Biken ride in October from Port Byron IL to Sparta, Port Byron has a mini version of the Ben Biken statue.

**Tomah Chamber report was given by Chris Hanson:** March 19<sup>th</sup> Business after 5 will be hosted at the Heartland Cranberry Mall. March 26<sup>th</sup> will be a trip to Exopack, 45 people max on the bus, leaves at 7:30 a.m., RSVP to Chris ASAP. There will be Learn over Lunch Wednesday Mar 26, 2014, at noon, Servant Leadership with Tom Thibodeau, sign up is \$25 each or \$90 for all 4. Contact Chris Hanson for more information.

**SW-ITBEC Report given by Steve Peterson:** Gave a grant of \$600 for delegates going to Kazakhstan. Annual meeting is in May. Bernie Arena has been named the chair of the Tourism Sub Committee.

**Wisconsin Ag Tourism report was given by Steve Peterson:** Steve discussed the bill on the floor, covers loopholes, frivolous lawsuits. It is based on signage that will be posted on the property.

**The next meeting will be held on April 10, 2014 at String Swings in Ontario.**

**Motion to adjourn made by Schroeder, seconded by Peterson. Motion carried unanimously.**

**Meeting adjourned at 10:47am.**

APRIL 10, 2014 MINUTES APPROVED MAY 8, 2014  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, COMMERCE AND TOURISM COMMITTEE MEETING  
STRING SWING

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

**Meeting was called to order** by Chairperson Sharon Folcey at 9:00am.

**Committee Members present were:** Sharon Folcey, Nodji Van Wychen, Dean Peterson & Jim Schroeder

**Citizen Members present were:** Carol Ostrem & Mary Jo Hill

**Advisory Members present were:** Bernie Arena

**Members not present were:** Jim Rice, Pete Reichardt, Jarrod Roll & Linda Fournier

**Others present were:** Steve Peterson, Monroe County Economic Development Coordinator, Georganne Gebhardt, Monroe County, & Chris Hanson, Tomah Chamber of Commerce

**Minutes of the March 13, 2014 meeting were reviewed and approved on a motion by Mary Jo Hill, seconded by Carol Ostrem. Motion carried.**

**The Committee Budget was discussed: Regular bills were presented, including Hidden Valleys and the monthly fee for the Economic Development Coordinator. Additionally, a refund for Ben & Kathy Reimann for the 2014 ED Conference, the WATA membership dues, Monroe County Visitors Guide ad and 3 pages throughout the magazine. Motion to pay all bills EXCEPT THE 2 MONROE COUNTY VISITORS GUIDE by VanWychen, seconded by Peterson. There will be more discussion in a meeting next week with Patty Bakalars on the Monroe County Visitors Guide Invoices. Motion carried.**

**Economic Development Coordinator report was given by Steve Peterson:** Steve will be meeting with the new mayor of Tomah next week, Tuesday, to discuss economic development in Tomah. Steve discussed the projects he is currently working on. He also discussed expanding the Kendall task force project to include the villages of Norwalk and Wilton. There was discussion on possible venues for next year's conference; Steve will set up a meeting with Dippen's to discuss Cranberry Country Lodge as a possible host.

**Business Retention and Expansion Program update given by Steve Peterson:** The program is still moving forward, although slowly. Since Vicky's retirement from 7 Rivers, there has been some chaos and this project has been pushed back. Sharon suggested that we move forward on the project at least in Monroe County, until 7 Rivers could catch up. Steve thought that inviting local businesses to a breakfast session, where they could come to us, might save some time and volunteer hours. There was discussion and it was decided that it would be revisited at next month's committee meeting.

**Hidden Valleys Report was given by Bernie Arena:** Bernie reported that she is done with her trade shows and that Hidden Valleys will be wrapping up next Wednesday. They are looking for volunteers to deliver the magazine to save on postage. If you are planning a trip, let Bernie know! They have a new office manager and everything is going well.

APRIL 10, 2014 MINUTES APPROVED MAY 8, 2014  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, COMMERCE AND TOURISM COMMITTEE MEETING  
STRING SWING

**Monroe County Visitor:** Sharon scheduled a meeting with Patty next Thursday the 17<sup>th</sup> of April at 9:00 am in Catherine's office to discuss the lack of communication and a general disappointment with this year's timeline.

**Tomah Chamber report was given by Chris Hanson:** Chris discussed some of the plans for the CVB, possibly a park & ride by the Best Western in Tomah. He took the new Mayor, Shannon Hough, on a tour of Tomah and discussed her ideas on economic development for Tomah.

**SW-ITBEC Report given by Steve Peterson:** ITBEC'S recent activities were recapped. Sharon encouraged anyone who would like to attend the monthly meeting; held the 1<sup>st</sup> Friday of every month at the Tee-Pee Supper Club in Tomah.

**Wisconsin Ag Tourism report was given by Steve Peterson:** Steve discussed the liability bill that passed the senate and Governor Walker is getting ready to sign into law. This will be good for Ag Tourism, as it will protect from frivolous law suits. Membership in WATA has doubled recently and they are adding Wedding Barns to help get them in the right direction to branch off on their own soon.

**The next meeting will be held on May 8, 2014 at 9:00am Location: Tomah/TBD**

**Motion to adjourn made by Carol Ostrem, seconded by Jim Schroeder. Motion carried unanimously.**

**Meeting adjourned at 10:27am.**

**After the meeting, the committee toured the String Swing manufacturing plant.**

MAY 8, 2014 MINUTES  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, COMMERCE AND TOURISM COMMITTEE MEETING  
ROLLING HILLS ACTIVITY ROOM

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

**Meeting was called to order** by Chairperson Sharon Folcey at 9:04am.

**Committee Members present were:** Sharon Folcey, Jim Shroeder, Dean Peterson, Nodji Van Wychen & Bruce Humphrey

**Citizen Members present were:** Carol Ostrem & Mary Jo Hill

**Advisory Members present were:** Linda Fournier & Jarrod Roll

**Members not present were:** Pete Reichardt & Bernie Arena

**Others present were:** Steve Peterson, Monroe County Economic Development Coordinator; Georganne Gebhardt, Monroe County, and Tim Hyma, Sparta Chamber of Commerce.

**Bruce Humphrey was welcomed by the committee. Introductions were made by the members.**

**Minutes of the April 10 meeting were reviewed and approved on a motion by Van Wychen, seconded by Ostrem. Motion carried unanimously.**

**Vouchers were presented for review/payment:** Discussion on the Monroe County Visitors Guide bills. **Motion by Hill, seconded by Schroeder, to pay the bills this year and put out an RFP for future publication of a visitor's guide for the county. Motion carried unanimously. Motion by Hill, seconded by Schroeder to pay the other bills as presented. Motion carried unanimously.** Humphrey proposed a discussion with Catherine Schmit how to proceed with next year's visitor guide.

**Economic Development Coordinator report was given by Steve Peterson:** Currently working with local businesses; startups and relocations to Monroe County. Current projects are going well; many new projects are being discussed throughout Monroe County. Steve is working with local financial institutions to share interest rate specials with prospective businesses. Steve reported that the videos from the February conference are up on the GoMonroeCounty website, and the groundwork for next year's conference is being laid.

**Business Retention & Expansion Program Report by Steve Peterson:** Steve is still working on getting a possible breakfast meeting together for this program. The bigger project with 7 Rivers Region will be put on hold for now.

**Postage Line Item:** Sharon reported that the Chambers of Commerce used to get money to help with the postage for mailing the Visitor Guides. She requested that each Chamber put together a proposal to possibly be included in the 2015 budget.

**New EDCT Banners:** An RFP will be sent to local businesses for new trade show banners. The old banners will be brought to next month's meeting so that we can look at them and discuss any changes that we would like to new ones.

Georganne Gebhardt, Recording Secretary

MAY 8, 2014 MINUTES  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, COMMERCE AND TOURISM COMMITTEE MEETING  
ROLLING HILLS ACTIVITY ROOM

**Schedule Meeting Sites:** There was discussion on future meeting sites. Next month's meeting is already set up at Handishop. July will be Justin Trails, August is TBD, September Steve will try to get us into Advance Formliners, and October Nodji requested that we have at the Warrens Cranfest Building.

**Tomah Chamber Report:** It was reported that Chris Hanson has resigned his position at the Tomah chamber.

**Sparta Chamber Report was given by Tim Hyma:** Tim shared some of Sparta's upcoming events, including, a trip to a show, where they will discuss a possible Community Theater in Sparta, Downtown craft fair to be held in front of empty businesses to encourage entrepreneurs to fill some of those spaces, a 5-6 day bike ride for the fall festival, and the Sparta Concerts in the Park. He also reported a new bike trail going in.

Bruce suggested that Sparta may want to consider more bike racks downtown and around Sparta and also possibly taking control of the weed problem on the sidewalks downtown.

**Fort McCoy report was given by Linda Fournier:** Linda brought the Ft. McCoy newspaper and the Area Guide to share with the committee. Fort has been busy with training and currently has about 12,000 troops there. There is a new dining facility going in and new housing going up on South Post. Upcoming events include the 17<sup>th</sup> annual Armed Forces Day and the Army Soldier Show, AUSA Military Ball June 14<sup>th</sup> at Jake's Northwood's in Sparta.

**SW-ITBEC Report:** Nodji and Sharon attended the Wisconsin World Partners Summit in Stevens Point. Nodji reported that it was a good conference.

**Wisconsin Ag Tourism report was given by Steve Peterson:** Steve reported that the bill for limited liability was signed into law. The signage for the new law will be provided by Pica Grove, thanks to their presence at the ED Conference. Membership in WATA is up and the Discover Wisconsin Episode is ¾ sold.

**Bikes and Berries/Local History Room report was given by Jarrod Roll.** Jarrod reiterated that if you have anything for the calendar of events, you can send it to him at [mclhr@centurytel.net](mailto:mclhr@centurytel.net). Visits to the website are up 30%. Banners for the side of the museum are being ordered to remind patrons that they are open during the new jail construction. Business after Five is being held at the Deke Slayton museum on May 21. The History Live monthly program will be wrapping up this month.

Sharon brought a special deal from the WCA to have a booth at the September conference in the Dells. The regular booth price is \$800 and they will give it to us for \$250, which covers 2 attendees. Steve and one other person will attend. Tim said he would be willing to go. **Motion by Schroeder, second by Peterson to get a booth at the discounted rate. Motion carried unanimously.**

**The next meeting will be held on June 12, 2014 at Handishop in Tomah.**

**Motion to adjourn made by Ostrem, seconded by Schroeder. Motion carried unanimously.**

**Meeting adjourned at 10:31am.**

JUNE 12, 2014 MINUTES  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, COMMERCE AND TOURISM COMMITTEE MEETING  
HANDISHOP INDUSTRIES, TOMAH WI

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

**Meeting was called to order** by Chairperson Sharon Folcey at 9:02am.

**Committee Members present were:** Sharon Folcey, Jim Schroeder, Dean Peterson & Bruce Humphrey

**Citizen Members present were:** Carol Ostrem & Pete Reichardt

**Advisory Members present were:** Linda Fournier & Bernie Arena

**Members not present were:** Nodji VanWychen, Mary Jo Hill & Jarrod Roll

**Others present were:** Steve Peterson, Monroe County Economic Development Coordinator; Georganne Gebhardt, Monroe County, and Ryan Tichenor, Handishop Industries.

**Sharon Folcey opened the floor for nominations for vice chair. Bruce Humphrey nominated Nodji VanWychen. Folcey called for any more nominations. Motion by Bruce Humphrey second by Jim Schroeder to approve Nodji VanWychen as Vice-Chair. Motion Carried unanimously.**

**Minutes of the May 8 meeting were reviewed and approved on a motion by Schroeder, second by Humphrey. Motion carried unanimously.**

**Vouchers were presented for review/payment: Motion by Humphrey, second by Peterson, to pay the bills as presented. Motion carried unanimously.**

**Sharon Folcey presented the EDCT financial review, including a Budget Adjustment for the 2014 Conference. Humphrey moved to approve the adjustment, second by Peterson. Motion Carried unanimously.**

**Economic Development Coordinator report was given by Steve Peterson:** Currently working with local businesses; startups and relocations to Monroe County. Current projects are going well; many new projects are being discussed throughout Monroe County. Steve also discussed some closings of downtown Tomah businesses as well as new projects for Fort McCoy and a Chicago company looking to work with Amish to create high end Mission Style Furnishings. Tina Thompson will be the new CVB/Chamber Director for Tomah.

**Business Retention & Expansion Program Report by Steve Peterson:** 7 Rivers Region has a new director, hoping to kick start the BR&E Program.

**New EDCT Banners:** Sharon looked at some banners at Pica Grove. The next step will be getting pricing on the banners. Bruce Humphrey made a motion to approve up to \$500 for 2 new, updated banners for the EDCT Committee. Seconded by Dean Peterson. Discussion. After some discussion on pricing, Humphrey withdrew his motion to approve up to \$500 for new banners and made a new motion to approve up to \$1000 for 2 new, updated banners with stands for the EDCT Committee. Second by Peterson. Motion Carried unanimously.

Georganne Gebhardt, Recording Secretary

JUNE 12, 2014 MINUTES  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, COMMERCE AND TOURISM COMMITTEE MEETING  
HANDISHOP INDUSTRIES, TOMAH WI

**Tomah Chamber of Commerce Report:** It was reported that Tina Thompson will be the new CVB and Chamber of Commerce Executive Director. Pete gave a little background on Tina, from her time spent with F&M Bank.

**Hidden Valleys report was given by Bernie Arena:** Hidden Valley has 3 new board members. Next year she would like Monroe County to host a summer meeting and mentioned that we should consider budgeting for it. She reported that they printed 70,000 magazines and attended 4 trade shows this year.

**Monroe County Visitors Guide:** Discussion. Motion made by Schroeder to review other options for publishers and to keep the publication local. Second by Ostrem. Motion Carried unanimously.

**Sparta Chamber of Commerce Report was given by Ryan Tichenor:** Sparta is working on a single track bike trail, a sort of 'beginners trail'. Ryan also shared the summer's biking events and reported a successful Butterfest and Monroe County Dairy Breakfast.

**Fort McCoy report was given by Linda Fournier:** Linda reported that training troops are up from last year. She also reported that highway 21 will be closed June 23 – 30 to repair a RR crossing. Other gates will be open to get on Fort McCoy, but to go from Tomah to Sparta, you must find an alternative route. Linda also reported that the MWR concert will be held on August 9<sup>th</sup>, Boston and The Doobie Brothers are this year's acts.

**SW-ITBEC Report:** Sharon reported that she and Nodji have been reappointed to the ITBEC committee. The meetings are the first Friday of each month, 10am at the Tee-Pee in Tomah. She encouraged new attendees as the membership is down and they need some new input and direction.

**Wisconsin Ag Tourism report was given by Steve Peterson:** Steve reported that membership has doubled in WATA! The Limited Liability Law is working out well and locally owned company, Pica Grove has the contract to make the signage.

**Ryan Tichenor gave a short presentation on Handishop, what they do, who they are.**

**The next meeting will be held on July 10, 2014 at Justin Trails in Sparta.**

**Motion to adjourn made by Schroeder, second by Humphrey. Motion carried unanimously.**

**Meeting adjourned at 10:34am.**

JULY 10, 2014 MINUTES  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, COMMERCE AND TOURISM COMMITTEE MEETING  
JUSTIN TRAILS RESORT, SPARTA WI

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

**Meeting was called to order** by Chairperson Sharon Folcey at 9:02am.

**Committee Members present were:** Sharon Folcey, Nodji VanWychen, Jim Schroeder, Dean Peterson & Bruce Humphrey

**Citizen Members present were:** Carol Ostrem, Pete Reichardt & Mary Jo Hill

**Advisory Members present were:** Linda Fournier & Bernie Arena

**Members not present were:** Jarrod Roll

**Others present were:** Steve Peterson, Monroe County Economic Development Coordinator; Georganne Gebhardt, Monroe County, Tina Thompson, Tomah Chamber & Tim Hyma, Sparta Chamber.

**Minutes of the June 12<sup>th</sup> meeting were reviewed and approved on a motion by Schroeder, second by Ostrem. Motion carried unanimously.**

**Vouchers were presented for review/payment: Motion by VanWychen, second by Schroeder, to pay the bills as presented. Motion carried unanimously.**

**The new Tomah Chamber President, Tina Thompson, introduced herself to the committee.**

**Sharon Folcey presented the EDCT financial review, including the 2015 Budget worksheet. Committee will review the worksheet and finalize the budget at the August meeting.**

**Tim Hyma presented a request for financial support for Driftless Region (attached), for \$4000 for the 2015 budget, to help with brochures and other program costs.**

- **Have printed 20,000 brochures in June 2013, has less than 1000 left**
- **Cost breakdown, \$11,000 to print brochures, \$6500 for upkeep of Social Media/Web**
- **Initial start-up of program cost - \$100,000**
- **Covers 5 counties, with plans to expand**
- **5 routes now with a 6<sup>th</sup> in the works**

**Economic Development Coordinator report was given by Steve Peterson:** Steve gave an update on his ongoing projects for the County.

**Bruce Humphrey gave a short update on the Jail Project.**

**Business Retention & Expansion Program Report by Steve Peterson:** Program is at a standstill, now with the new director taking over. Will revisit late fall or early 2015.

**New EDCT Banners:** Pica Grove will have a proof for the August committee meeting that the committee can approve so that the new banners are ready for the WCA Conference in September.

Georganne Gebhardt, Recording Secretary

JULY 10, 2014 MINUTES  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, COMMERCE AND TOURISM COMMITTEE MEETING  
JUSTIN TRAILS RESORT, SPARTA WI

**Tomah Chamber of Commerce Report:** Tina Thompson gave an update on the Tomah Chamber.

**Sparta Chamber of Commerce Report:** Tim Hyma gave an update on the Sparta Chamber.

**Hidden Valleys report was given by Bernie Arena:** Bernie Arena gave an update on Hidden Valleys.

**Monroe County Visitors Guide:** Discussion. The subcommittee will meet on Thursday July 24<sup>th</sup> to finalize the RFP for the "Official" Monroe County Publication. The meeting will be held at 10:00am at the Sparta Chamber Office.

**Fort McCoy report was given by Linda Fournier:** Linda gave an update on Fort McCoy.

**SW-ITBEC Report:** Steve gave an update on ITBEC.

**Wisconsin Ag Tourism report was given by Steve Peterson:** Steve gave an update on WATA.

**The next meeting will be held on August 14, 2014 at Wal-Mart Distribution Center, Tomah, WI.**

**Motion to adjourn made by Schroeder, second by Peterson. Motion carried unanimously.**

**Meeting adjourned at 10:42am.**

August 14, 2014 Minutes  
Monroe County Economic Development, Commerce & Tourism Committee  
Walmart Distribution Center, Tomah WI

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

**Committee members present:** Nodji Van Wychen, Dean Peterson, Bruce Humphrey

**Citizen members present:** Carol Ostrem, Pete Reichardt

**Advisory members present:** Jarrod Roll, Linda Fournier, Bernie Arena

**Others present:** Steve Peterson, Monroe County Economic Development Coordinator; Tim Hyma, Sparta Chamber Director

**Meeting was called to order** by Vice Chair Nodji Van Wychen at 9:05 a.m.

**Minutes of the July 10, 2014 meeting were reviewed and approved on a motion by Humphrey, second by Ostrem. Motion carried.**

**Bills were reviewed and approved on a motion by Humphrey, second by D. Peterson. Motion carried.**

**Tim Hyma requested \$4,000 in support for the Driftless Region motorcycle promotion. Motion by Humphrey to delay action. Second by D. Peterson. Motion carried.**

**The 2015 budget was reviewed. No action taken.**

**Facebook Page discussion. S. Peterson said there would be no cost involved. Reichardt noted that 1.7 billion people visit Facebook. Motion by D. Peterson to go ahead with the project. Second by Humphrey. Motion carried.**

**S. Peterson gave a report on the economic development news. Theisen's Home Farm Auto , a family owned, leading Midwest retailer will be opening their first Wisconsin location in Sparta at the intersection of Hwy. 27 and I-90. Dunkin' Donuts is open in Tomah. A TIF district is being developed in Tomah from the post office to Napa Auto. The 2015 Monroe County ED Conference will be February 26, 2015. ED workshops will take place in Sparta and Tomah in October this year.**

**Decals with Distinction in Sparta will have the new banners done before the end of the month. No action taken.**

**S. Peterson, Tina Thompson, and Hyma will attend the WCA conference. Fort McCoy will donate the stress hand grenades. Van Wychen will get dried cranberries.**

**5-minute Reports:**

**Arena reported on the status of Hidden Valleys. She asked the committee to review the text and photos for Monroe County and funnel any information on changes her way.**

**S. Peterson reported that the new Monroe County Guide RFPs were done. The title will be "Go Monroe County".**

**Hyma reported that the new Theisen store would create 40-50 new jobs in the area. Fall Fest in Sparta will be October 10-12.**

**Fournier stated there are currently 10,000 troops at Fort McCoy. She noted that the movie, "Fort McCoy" will debut the first week in September.**

**S. Peterson reported on Southwest ITBEC. They made a donation to the Holiday Lights group in Sparta.**

**S. Peterson reported on WATA, noting they were at the state fair. Membership is now at 110. The New York Times called for an interview about the new Ag Tourism law.**

**J. Roll reported that visitor numbers are up at the museum 10-20% each month compared to last year. The art event at the Wegner Grotto attracted 53 people.**

**Van Wychen noted that two positions are vacant at the extension office. We may need to garner support for the CNRED position which the county board will take up on November 7<sup>th</sup>. She also stated that the Warrens Village office has moved to the Wetherby Cranberry Warehouse.**

**Hyma noted that there is an ED grant opportunity with the Sparta Chamber.**

**The next meeting will be September 11, 2014 at Advanced Form Liners in Sparta, WI.**

**Motion to adjourn by Humphrey. Second by D. Peterson. Motion carried.**

*Bernie Arena, Acting Recorder*

September 11, 2014 Minutes  
Monroe County Economic Development, Commerce & Tourism Committee  
The Colonial Bowling & Banquet Center, Sparta, WI 54656

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

**Committee members present:** Nodji Van Wychen, Dean Peterson, Sharon Folcey, Jim Schroeder,  
Bruce Humphrey

**Citizen members present:** Carol Ostrem, Mary Jo Hill

**Advisory members present:** Linda Fournier, Bernie Arena

**Economic Development Coordinator:** Steve Peterson

**Guests:** Tina Thompson (Tomah Chamber), Tim Hyma (Sparta Chamber), Lisa Herr (7 Rivers Alliance),  
Jenny Kuderer (State Economic Development)

Folcey called the meeting to order at 9:05 a.m. Motion by Van Wychen to approve the minutes of the August 14, 2014 meeting. Seconded by Schroeder. Motion carried.

Lisa Herr, new Executive Director of the 7 Rivers Alliance gave a presentation on her strategic priorities for 2014-2015. They included: building collaborations, understanding regional priorities, re-connecting the ECO-DEVO group, offer value added events and services to investors and regional stakeholders, partnering with research institutions to conduct workforce development trends and launching an intern program.

The group posed the following concerns to her: the decline of mom and pop stores, the fact that young persons are not willing to take the chance on opening a business for themselves; the banking laws that limit growth in a community; the growing disconnect between college grads and their local communities.

Herr noted that she has spoken with 5 area colleges. One college is doing a survey called, "Graduating Senior Sentiment Survey". Kuderer noted that creating a community with the arts, etc. will help bring the 20-30 year olds home.

Motion by Schroeder to approve the bills as presented. Second by D. Peterson. Motion carried.

Hyma again presented the request for financial support (\$4,000) for the "Driftless Destinations" project. He anticipates an \$800,000 impact on the region which includes five counties. No action was taken.

S. Peterson gave his economic development report. Topics included the WCA banners being completed, February 26 date set for the county conference at the Cranberry Country Lodge. Food prices were a concern. Theisen's Home Farm Auto store has begun construction just south of Sparta. Other topics included the furniture project moving forward; WATA education day Nov. 12; Inside Edition on wedding barns.

S. Peterson requested that the county partner with the Tomah CVB to have access to Roger Brooks International site. It's a membership and half the cost is \$270.00. Motion by Van Wychen, second by D. Peterson to pay half the fee for this membership. Motion carried.

The new EDCT banners are finished. "Decals by Distinction" did the work. There is one for economic development and one for tourism. They will be displayed at the WCA meeting.

There was discussion on the RFPs for the county publication. No action was taken. It will be placed on the October agenda.

5 minute reports:

- Hidden Valleys: Arena stated sales were going well for the 2015 magazine. The next meeting is in Cassville on 9/17/14. She asked everyone to read the county section and get any changes in to her before September 30<sup>th</sup>.
- Go Monroe County: no changes.
- Chambers of Commerce: Hyma thanked Fort McCoy for the SBAF event. Fall Fest coming up in Sparta October 9-11. Thompson said she is working on the future location of the chamber, and re-evaluating the needs of chamber members. She spoke on the upcoming Rotary Beer & Sausage Fest, and stated the Business A.M. events were going well.
- Fort McCoy: Fournier noted that the movie "Fort McCoy" finally came out. It received rave reviews. By the end of August 130,000 troops will have trained at Fort McCoy which is more than all of last year. The new housing contract was awarded which will put 42 new homes on South Post.
- SW-ITBEC: Arena gave an update on the last meeting. A student from the "I Lead" School gave an amazing presentation on using the 3-D printer.
- WATA: There will be an Education Day in Plain, WI on November 12<sup>th</sup>. S. Peterson spoke at the Christmas Tree Growers Association meeting with 180 people in attendance. He said they are working on a noon to noon conference and hope to air their new Discover Wisconsin show at the conference.
- Bike and Berries/Local History Room: no report

S. Peterson requested the county consider purchasing a new power point projector. Motion by Van Wychen, second by D. Peterson to purchase the projector with the cost not to exceed \$600.00. Motion carried.

Motion to adjourn by Van Wychen. Second by D. Peterson. Motion carried.

The next meeting will be Thursday, October 9, 2014 at the Cranfest office building.

*Bernie Arena, Acting Recorder*

October 9, 2014 Minutes  
Monroe County Economic Development, Commerce & Tourism Committee  
Cranfest Office, Warrens, WI 54666

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

Committee members present: Sharon Folcey, Nodji Van Wychen, Bruce Humphrey, Jim Schroeder

Citizen members present: Carol Ostrem, Pete Reichardt

Advisory members present: Linda Fournier, Bernie Arena

Economic Development Coordinator: Steve Peterson

Guests: Tina Thompson (Tomah Chamber)

Chairperson Folcey called the meeting to order at 9 a.m. Motion by Ostrem , seconded by Humphrey to accept the September 11, 2014 minutes as presented. Motion carried.

Motion by Schroeder to pay the bills. Second by Humphrey. Motion carried.

S. Peterson said the two banners were done, and used at the Wisconsin Counties Association conference. One highlighted tourism and the other economic development. Folcey stated she would like to see a third banner with a map on it showing where Monroe County was. Motion by Van Wychen to purchase a third banner with a map. Second by Schroeder. Motion carried.

S. Peterson said the booth at the conference was a big hit. The Tomah and Sparta chambers each made up a basket for giveaway; Fort McCoy donated 300 grenades, and the Cranfest did 500 little packets of dried cranberries which were handed out to attendees. Tim Hyma (Sparta Chamber) and Tina Thompson (Tomah Chamber) also worked the booth. Thompson said everything was well received.

Folcey noted that usually this committee gives \$500.00 towards the leadership program. Van Wychen said there is a new twist to the program. Jackson County is out and Crawford County is in. Will Cronin will head up the program this year. Also, three 4-H junior leaders will be a part of the leadership training. Folcey will request an invoice from Cronin.

The fall tourism conference will take place November 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> in Brookfield, WI. The cost is \$130.00 plus hotel and mileage. Bernie Arena was designated to attend from the committee.

S. Peterson noted there were good conversations with Mathey Construction and the Elroy-Sparta Bike Board concerning the sand mining truck routes near Logan Road on the trail. Mathey engineers and the DNR are looking for ways to get around having 50-75 dump trucks crossing the trail every day. Safety concerns for bike riders and from Scott Gruen at Tunnel Trail Campground were topics of concern. Bob Ramsey is the new DNR ranger on the trail.

Brian Doudma is the new director of WHEDA. He may be a speaker at the conference in February. There may be some one on one meetings with speakers at the conference.

Theisen's Home/Farm /Auto Store task force had a two hour meeting at the Colonial going over what items of clothing and bulk items would work well in this area. They will employ 45-50 people locally. A job fair is planned in January with the store opening in April.

Other topics included a bakery prospect for Sparta; Papa Murphy's opening by Dunkin' Doughnuts in Tomah; new Kwik Trip to be built at Hwy. 16 & Superior Avenue; new fitness center by Burnstad's; TIF district in the City of Tomah; and Kendall School building being re-done to house homeless vets.

The sub-committee of S. Peterson, Folcey, Ostrem, Thompson, Hyma and Fournier will be sending out requests for proposal for production of the official Monroe County Guide for 2015.

#### **5-Minute Reports:**

**Hidden Valleys:** Arena reported sales were going well. She has received input from Fort McCoy, both chambers, and the Village of Cashton as far as text changes. Events have been typed up and have been submitted.

**Tomah Chamber:** Thompson handed out flyers on the Roger Brooks upcoming video series. The \$10 fee for each session includes lunch. She mentioned possibly doing a photo booth at an upcoming wine and dine event for travelers from Minneapolis and Milwaukee; and stated the shuttle to Cranfest was a huge success with very long lines on Saturday.

**Fort McCoy:** Fournier said 145,000 troops trained at the fort this year (up 20,000). Fort McCoy received an additional \$10 million funded by the Army Reserve. The contract has been awarded for the housing project (42 homes) bringing the total number of homes to 99.

**Sparta Chamber:** Ostrem stated this weekend is the fall fest in Sparta; plans are going forward for the Holiday in the Park; 46 entities attended the SBAF at the Country Inn.

**SW-ITBEC:** Will meet this Friday.

**WATA:** Has 2 opening on the board; membership is now set by anniversary date; the website is growing; wedding barns being actively promoted (now number 60 in state); Justin Trails has 37 weddings booked for the next year; Beth Wells working on schools and staff program; a noon to noon summit is being planned to coincide with the Discover Wisconsin video release; Steve Peterson will speak at a gathering of Ag Secretaries hosted by Ben Brancel in the spring.

Humphrey noted that the jail project is on schedule. Advance Form Liners did the wall and the cells built in Georgia fit seamlessly.

Van Wychen reported near 2,000 people came in bad weather to their public harvest day.

The Driftless Destinations funding was discussed. The committee is not a granting agency and funds are not available. No action taken.

Schroeder questioned S. Peterson on why old buildings in downtowns cannot be torn down to make progress. Peterson noted that many are owned by nomad owners and they hold the city captive.

Motion by Van Wychen to adjourn. Second by Ostrem. Motion carried.  
Date and place of the next meeting to be announced.

*Respectfully submitted by Bernie Arena.*

November 20, 2014 Minutes  
Monroe County Economic Development, Commerce & Tourism Committee  
Ground Round, Tomah WI 54660

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

Committee members present: Sharon Folcey, Jim Schroeder, Bruce Humphrey

Citizen members present: Carol Ostrem, Mary Jo Hill, Pete Reichardt

Advisory members present: Linda Fournier, Bernie Arena

Economic Development Coordinator: Steve Peterson

Guests: Tina Thompson (Tomah Chamber), Tim Hyma (Sparta Chamber), Greg Evans

Folcey called the meeting to order at 9:14 a.m. Motion by Schroeder to approve the minutes of the October 2014 meeting. Seconded by Humphrey. Motion carried.

Folcey stated that there were no budget cuts, but there are some changes. There is a new financial system in place whereby bills are paid by purchase order.

Bills were reviewed. There was discussion on the Josh Tolley small business boot camp held November 16, 2014 at the Sparta Barney Center. Both Ostrem and Peterson spoke on the great networking opportunity it was for the 34 participants. Tolley spoke on the benefits of getting to know your customer and other ideas to help small businesses. The program ran from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Attendees were in no hurry to leave the Sunday presentation. It was co-sponsored by State Bank who provided the lunch. Motion by Schroeder to reimburse Peterson for the \$500.00. Second by Humphrey. Motion carried. The program received coverage by Channel 8 TV and on Tolley's syndicated radio program.

Peterson had the new banner on display. Motion by Ostrem to pay the \$250.00 to Decals of Distinction of Sparta for the banner. Second by Schroeder. Motion carried.

Motion by Schroeder to pay the bills as presented. Second by Humphrey. Motion carried.

Economic Development Coordinator Report: (Peterson)

- Josh Tolley presentation was well attended. Many people made connections with each other. Tolley spent time working with individuals as well.
- The new Monroe County Economic Development Facebook page had 180 likes in less than two hours. The site has filters and Peterson monitors it as well.
- Working on the February 26, 2015 conference.
- December 4 is a Wisconsin Towns Association meeting at Pizone's in Tomah
- Lemonweir Telcom is now offering a 1 gig broadband service. This is huge for businesses.
- Nancy Vandermeer is willing to meet with this committee. She wants to be involved and help with what is going on.

- Sparta KFC is closed. The building is for sale.
- The Sparta Laundromat sites are for sale.
- Tomah has a new TIF district, south of the train tracks by Kelsey's.
- The Kwik Trip is expanding on Hwy. 12/16 in Tomah.
- Valerie Jones will be making cupcakes using the kitchen at the Masonic Lodge Building.
- Culver's dropped Sysco Foods as their delivery people.
- warrenslodging.com is marketing their own places
- Lisa Miller will operate a gourmet café and stained glass business at the former Schreiner's Photo Shop.
- Norwalk, Wilton and Kendall are working with the Connect Community program.
- Healthcare, the VA Hospital, and small business will be highlighted in the new videos being produced which will be completed by Christmas 2014.
- The Economic Development brochure will be updated and reprinted before the conference in February.

Motion by Fournier to re-create the economic development brochures and print 500. Second by Schroeder. Motion carried.

Folcey requested Peterson to have a report ready for the county board at the January 2015 meeting. She asked him to bring the displays and set them up as well.

Evans reported that the letters for advertising in the county magazine have been sent out. He has already received a few back with their ads. He will have it finished for the February 26, 2015 conference. Arena will do the narrative for Cataract. Folcey will write up the text for Leon. Any info for the magazine should be sent to [greg@evansprinting.com](mailto:greg@evansprinting.com). Peterson will set up a simple website for the project. Both chamber directors said they would put it in their respective newsletters. Evans will get the info to the chambers.

Hyma and Peterson gave a short synopsis of the ECO DEVO conference and the 7 Rivers Region report. It was a success bringing players together.

Conference update:

Peterson stated that Governor Walker's office needs an official letter to commit to the conference. Folcey will let the county administrator know this. Southwest ITBEC is donating \$500 to the conference. Prices have been set for breakfast and lunch with the Cranberry Country Lodge (Tyson Koput). Peterson is working on getting corporate sponsors. There is plenty of booth space. There was discussion on raising the fee for the booths. Motion by Humphrey to raise the fee to \$50. Second by Schroeder. Motion carried. Ostrem and Reichardt volunteered to be on the sub-committee, along with Folcey and Peterson. There may be some one-on-one appointments at the conference in 2015.

Arena reported that Hidden Valleys received their first proofs for the 2015 magazine. She passed the book around to the committee. There was discussion on changing parts of the ad in the inside front cover. Arena will take this back to the graphic artist. The website will change to gommonroecounty.com for the ad. She reported that ad sales were up. 75,000 magazines will be printed and distributed.

Hyma and Thompson reported on upcoming events in Sparta and Tomah respectively.

Fournier reported on happenings at Fort McCoy. They lost two small organizations, but one entity will bring 140 permanent soldiers in to Fort McCoy. Folcey stated she attended a powwow honoring Native American veterans at Fort McCoy which was very nice.

The committee will draft a document to request \$500 from SWITBEC to attend the "Wisconsin 2015 Sport Show" presented by the Leader-Telegram. It will be held March 20-22, 2015 at the Eau Claire Indoor Sports Center. Arena will put this request together for the SWITBEC's meeting on December 5, 2014.

Peterson reported that a WATA summit will be held March 30 and 31, 2015 at Wisconsin Dells. It will be a noon to noon conference. Stephanie Klett and Ben Brancel will be featured guests. They will also debut their new Discover Wisconsin video. He noted that membership in the organization has tripled this year. A new website is in the making. Peterson will be speaking at the Fairs Association gathering and the DATCP state department of Ag secretaries conference.

Arena reported on the Wisconsin Fall Tourism Conference she attended November 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup>. Speakers noted that the economy is not fully back but has sustained growth. She reported on sessions concerning social media trends, public relations, ADARA tracking agency and the state of the American traveler. Strong suggestions were to keep evolving, do a destination audit, and do community visioning.

There were no reports on the website or bikes and berries/local history room.

The next meeting will be at 9 a.m. on Thursday, December 11, 2014 at ServPro, 2451 Riley Road, in Sparta, WI.

Motion by Fournier to adjourn. Second by Schroeder. Motion carried.

Bernie Arena, Recorder

December 11, 2014 Minutes  
Monroe County Economic Development, Commerce & Tourism Committee  
SERVPRO®, 2451 Riley Road, 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

Advisory members present: Jarrod Roll, Bernie Arena

Economic Development Coordinator: Steve Peterson

Guests: Cathy Norris (SERVPRO®), Greg Evans (Evans Printing), Tina Thompson (Tomah Chamber)

Folcey called the meeting to order at 9:10 a.m. She introduced Cathy Norris of SERVPRO® who gave an overview of what the business does. Norris stated they are a 24/7 clean-up service, handling everything from fire damage to water damage and everything in between. They are working within a 2 hour radius of Sparta but will soon be expanding their area. They have been in the area for 7 years and currently employ 17 people. The committee introduced themselves to her.

Motion by Schroeder to approve the minutes as presented. Second by D. Peterson. Motion carried.

Folcey noted that the new county software is up and running, but there are some issues with the blending of the old information and the new. Under the new system obligated dollars will be sent out immediately. No financial review was available for this meeting. There was a question of whether the \$500.00 had been billed or paid for the leadership group. Folcey will check on this.

S. Peterson reported on the following items:

- Two bills were presented for approval . One for \$250.00 for the annual ED dues, and one for \$250.00 for early bird registration for the ED conference to be held at Winona Terrace February 11-14, 2015. Motion by Van Wychen to approve both of these bills. Second by Schroeder. Motion carried.
- The new ED Facebook page recently created has 200 likes.
- He attended the WEDC's annual training 12/2/14. A new way to share prospect summary info was addressed.
- He spoke to a Crawford County ED group at Gays Mills, WI. The topic was geared to Farmers' Markets.
- He attended the Wisconsin towns Association meeting held in Tomah.
- He is working with Greg Evans on the new county guide, and has created a website for the project.
- The two Laundromats and the KFC building in Sparta have been sold.
- Theisen's building is ahead of schedule.

- Val's Cup Cakery (Tomah) doing well. Lisa Miller (Schreiner's Photography Building) is working on her art studio/gourmet food business.
- He is working with Pete Fletcher on the Hwy. 33 project in Cashton. There will be a new roundabout at the Hwy. 27/33 intersection.
- New brochures for this committee have been printed.
- The woodworking project connecting the VA, Handishop Industries, and the Amish will not move forward.

S. Peterson stated he is working with Image Pictures LLC in Tomah to get two videos recorded. One video will be on health care and the other on retail small business. Roll questioned whether a tourism video would be forthcoming. S. Peterson said Tim and Pete Malinger at Image Pictures LLC are working on a documentary on the Elroy-Sparta Trail.

Schroeder voiced some concern on the new high power lines, wondering if they really do listen to the people at the meetings. The concerns were with the Amish community.

The EDCT conference is slated for February 26, 2015. It will be held at the Cranberry Country Lodge in Tomah. Thompson, Ostrem, Reichardt, S. Peterson and Folcey toured the building. This conference will be set up differently. Booths are \$50 and this includes one registration. Registration alone is \$25. Registration will run from 7 a.m. to 8:30 a.m. and will include a continental breakfast. 240 people are expected. There will be an a.m. and a p.m. break. A "Go Monroe County" passport will be given to all attendees to fill out to encourage them to visit all the booths. A drawing will be held for a half page ad in the Monroe County Guide and for two registrations to next year's conference. The conference will end at 4:30 p.m. Attendees can register on-line. Hold-the-date postcards will be sent out next week. S. Peterson said he will work with Evans to develop a program book on the conference. Schroeder felt we should put in testimonials about the good things that have come about from the networking at our previous conferences.

Tina Thompson said she is not receiving the e-mail notices concerning the agendas and minutes about this meeting. Folcey will straighten this out.

Evans updated the committee on progress of the county guide. They are using advertorials in the magazine. There will be a map in the middle and it will be 64 pages. It's coming along well.

Arena reported on the progress of the 2015 Hidden Valleys magazine. She was able to get the website changed on the inside front cover but not the words "Bikes and Berries . . . and so much more". Those changes will wait till next year. The files will be heading to Lacrosse Graphics for printing soon.

Thompson stated that the Tomah Chamber is in negotiations with the City of Tomah to develop a long term lease for the Ranger Station on Superior Avenue. This would give a permanent home to the Tomah Chamber. They will be doing some strategic planning at the end of January. Western Technical College

will lead the joint meeting. She mentioned the new TIF District, the Tomah Memorial Hospital commitment to expanding in Tomah, and the Kwik Trip project as examples of the City Council moving forward in a positive manner.

Van Wychen noted that there were no new invited counties at the December 5<sup>th</sup> meeting of SW-ITBEC. S. Peterson said a photo session was held with the recipients of the grants that were given out in 2014. More than \$10,000 in grants has been given out to organizations that are working to promote economic development and tourism in the area. This group will be developing banners to promote itself. Their new meeting spot will be at the Sparta American Legion on the first Friday of each month at 10 a.m. Everyone is welcome to attend.

S. Peterson said the WATA (Wisconsin Ag Tourism Association) conference will be held on March 30 and 31, 2015, probably at the Ho-Chunk Casino and Convention Center in Wisconsin Dells. Ben Brancel and Stephanie Klett will be main speakers at the event. The new Discover Wisconsin video will be premiered. He also said they will be contacting WATA members about "field trips" because they are working with a motorcoach tour publisher out of Minnesota setting up agriculture related tours.

Roll spoke about the Local History Room. A new display—"A Very 70's Christmas" is bringing in visitors from afar. He said unique hits on the Bikes & Berries website were up 20% each of the last two years. He questioned whether we have rights to the Discover Wisconsin videos and if we could get some up on the county website. It would also be good to get links to the snowmobile trails, skiing places and trout streams on the website. S. Peterson said we do have rights to the DW videos, and we will be using the gomonroecounty.com website for tourism. Everything that goes to the Bikes & Berries website will be funneled to the new site. Roll questioned his part on the new site as we move forward. This will have to be ironed out as we move forward.

S. Peterson said that the 7 Rivers Alliance is working on heritage tourism and agriculture tourism. This region covers Iowa, Minnesota, and Wisconsin. He said they are planning something for agriculture tourism in Vernon County in March. Membership dues are now \$300 and an invoice was sent regarding this. Motion by Ostrem to postpone this payment. Second by D. Peterson. Motion carried.

Folcey will present a grant proposal to SW-ITBEC as regards receiving \$500.00 to attend a trade show in the Eau Claire area March 20-22, 2015. It will be presented at the next ITBEC meeting.

The next meeting will be at 9 a.m. on January 8, 2015 at the Rolling Hills Activity Room.

A tour of SERVPRO® was conducted by Norris following adjournment.

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

Bernie Arena, Recorder  
December11MCECTC