

MONROE COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, COMMERCE & TOURISM COMMITTEE
MONTHLY MEETING – 4-13-17 – Rolling Hills Activities Room – Sparta

Present:

Committee Board Members – Sharon Folcey, Dean Peterson, Noji Van Wychen

Citizen Members – Bernie Arena, Paul Harms

Advisory Members – Tonya Townsell – Fort McCoy, Tim Hyma – Sparta Chamber of Commerce

Economic Development Coordinator: Steve Peterson

Absent: Pete Reichardt, Jarrod Roll, Tina Thompson, Dennis Berg, Mary Jo Hill

Special Guests: Greg Evans, Tim Evans

The meeting was posted in accordance with the open meeting law. Meeting was called to order at 9:03am by Chair Sharon Folcey. Roll-call was taken.

Motion by D. Peterson to approve the minutes of the Feb, 9th meeting. Second by T. Hyma. Motion carried.

B. Arena had to leave early from the meeting, so she reminded the Committee about the Hidden Valleys Annual Meeting on 5/17 in Richland Center. She hoped to see a good-sized group from Monroe County as we are the featured County on this year's publication. Arena also had the committee sample cupcakes that she would be ordering for the Annual Meeting. The Committee would be paying for the cupcakes. N. Van Wychen made a motion that 6 dozen cupcakes be ordered from Val's Gourmet Cupcakery in Tomah for \$216.00. Second by D. Peterson. Motion carried.

B. Arena also reminded the committee that she is retiring after the Hidden Valleys annual meeting and the County would have to appoint a new representative to the Hidden Valleys board. S. Folcey asked the committee to consider people who might be good choices to replace Arena.

Greg Evans gave an update on the Go Monroe County Activities Guide. There were concerns by the Committee about the distribution of the guide around the County. N. Van Wychen commented that guides weren't distributed in the Warrens area and asked G. Evans how they were being distributed and if a shipment could be left at the Warrens Cranberry Festival offices and area businesses could get their guides there for their individual businesses? G. Evans said he would coordinate with the Warrens area on a drop off point and make sure that everyone got access to guides. G. Evans said that 70% of the County were covered with guides at this point and the rest would be covered as soon as possible. There was discussion about how to handle getting guides into businesses that weren't advertising in the guide? The Committee's concern was that there were many businesses not advertising in the guide that would be great locations for distribution. G. Evans said they would try to get guides in those areas after they had gotten guides into all the advertising businesses.

There was discussion on an invoice submitted by Evans Printing & Media Group for reimbursement costs for shipping guides to travel centers around the State. Amounts included \$225.22 and two \$27.52 invoices. The RFP that was agreed upon by Evans and the Committee was very vague on if a

reimbursement should be made or that it is a cost that Evans must take on. G. Evans said that he would investigate it more and contact S. Folcey about it. No action was taken.

Tim Evans introduced himself to the Committee as the General Manager of the Monroe County Herald newspaper. T. Evans said he was attending to learn more about the committee's work and any possible stories that the newspaper could do in the future to promote the Committee's projects.

FINANCIALS:

- S. Peterson told the Committee that the \$700 fee for becoming a County Connect Community program had not been paid yet. The invoice is \$100 for each of the 7 villages that qualified for the program. D. Peterson made a motion to pay the invoice. Second by N. Van Wychen. Motion carried.
- No other invoices were presented.

MONROE COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COORDINATOR REPORT

- Was part of the 2nd interview panel with the 3 finalists for the Trempealeau County E.D. Director's position. Jeff Brown, who spent over 20 years as a Reporter for the La Crosse Tribune has accepted the position.
- Tourism Conference – Milwaukee – 3/12 – 14
 - Finalist - Legacy Award with 12 other worthy nominees. Gary Knowles was the 2017 recipient.
- Land tour in the Oakdale area for a major prospect- working with the Village on the project.
- Walk through with prospect at the Kendall School – follow ups to come
- Talked with Google on being part of next year's Conference and they have bookmarked the dates to send reps to the Conference to promote their "Put Your City on the Map" program along with other Internet marketing tools through Google. May be a major sponsor of the Conference.
- Met with Three Bears Resort on putting together marketing strategies for the Elroy-Sparta Bike Trail, BIKE ME Fun Ride and other events coming up this year.
- Wisconsin Downtown Action Council Board of Directors meeting in Sheboygan.
 - Monroe County will be hosting their September board meeting.
 - On the WDAC Summit Committee – November at Blue Harbor Resort in Sheboygan.
- Finished work on the new Monroe County Tourism web site with the new look from this year's book.
- 4/18 - Connect Community meeting – Norwalk, Kendall, Wilton coordinating a joint effort with the BIKE ME Fun Ride.
- Traveled to the Twin Cities to meet with a prospect and tour their current facility. Met with the Army Corps of Engineers at the St. Paul office on wetland issues in Monroe County.
- Met with Interim Monroe County Administrator Jim Bialecki to discuss E.D. efforts in the County and the role of the County possibly expanding in the future.
- Met with the Friends of the Elroy-Sparta Bike Trail on their financial issues and toured the Depot for finding potential groups to run the Depot this season.
- Met with the DNR Representatives on the upcoming BIKE ME Fun Ride and options for the Depot while the Friends of the Trail issues are being dealt with.
- Conference call with a prospect that I've been dealing with for over 10 months. We have made the cut to being the only site they are looking at in Wisconsin but competing with 4 other states.

- Completed a JEM Grant application with the Tomah Chamber of Commerce & Visitors Bureau for Vino Fest coming to Tomah in September.
- SET PROGRAM
 - Strategic plan has been sent to the USDA. Will be getting final approval in the upcoming weeks.
 - Hosting in Monroe County – Broadband Summit – May 22nd – 9am – 3pm
 - All internet providers in the 3 County area – Monroe, Juneau, Jackson – invited
 - Legislators roundtable on the Rural Initiative – progress report, assets for our area, what can we do to support the initiative?
 - Working with the Public Service Commission on coordinating the event.
- Part of Tomah’s Long Range Planning Committee and finalized the Master Plan for the downtown area of Tomah with a recommendation to the City Council to approve the plan.
- WISE (Workforce Innovation for a Strong Economy) Program
 - Interviews with companies in Monroe County have been completed and now the summaries of workforce, daycare, housing and transportation issues are being compiled.
- Working on a new SW-ITBEC brochure for future recruitment of counties. Trempealeau & Jackson Counties are very good prospects along with getting Juneau County back as a member.
- On the Music on Main Committee in Cashton. The one day music fest takes place on June 17th with 2 big stages on the closed off Main Street along with bands in the Community Hall. Looking to draw thousands of people and will be an annual event.
- BIKE ME FUN RIDE
 - Created and distributing 12,000 BIKE ME FUN RIDE brochures throughout the State through Ad-Lit as part of the JEM Grant.
 - Social media set up to market the ride
 - Sent out sponsorship materials out to 147 bicycling/outdoor companies in the U.S.
 - Local sponsorship plans have been sent out to businesses
 - Sparta is hosting the Pre-Ride Reception on 6/2 at Evans-Bosshard Park. The Sparta Chamber of Commerce is leading that effort.
 - Elroy is hosting a pancake breakfast on the morning of the ride on 6/3. All riders will leave from there in a progressive ride throughout the day heading toward Sparta.
 - Wilton is hosting lunch
 - Norwalk is hosting an ice cream break in the afternoon
 - Kendall is hosting the Post-Ride Celebration on the evening of 6/3.
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- ❖ **UPCOMING**
 - Prospect tours of the County each week for the next 3 weeks.
 - 4/21 – Community Venture Network prospect meeting – Twin Cities – meeting with 11 new prospects promoting Monroe County
 - Finalize the “Wheels & Water” promotion with Three Bears Resort on combining the waterpark with the Elroy-Sparta Bike Trail
 - Meeting with the Driftless Café on getting ideas and contacts with recruiting an organic restaurant in Monroe County.
 - Meeting with the Downtown Viroqua organization on pop up store successes, game plans and learning more about their successes with start-up businesses in their downtown.

- Learning the status of the JEM Grant for Vino Fest and a formal announcement of the festival.
- Connect Community meeting in Cashton. Looking at options for the feed mill property and business recruitments.
- Beginning process of working with area realtors on setting up a property/land directory on the County E.D. web site. May coordinate it with the Locate in Wisconsin feature.

REPORTS:

Monroe County offices – S. Folcey

- Administrative, Personnel & Finance Department offices have moved into the old Citizens First Bank building near the Justice Center
- Human Services/ADRC departments are moving into the old Gundersen Clinic building after renovation.

Ft. McCoy – T. Townsell

- Cold Steel exercise is going well
- The hiring freeze was lifted
- Armed Forces Day is May 20
- South Post Housing continues

SW-ITBEC

- N. Van Wychen commented that the group is continuing to recruit Counties and is working on a new brochure along with other recruitment ideas.

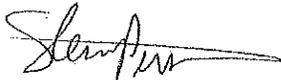
SPARTA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE – T. Hyma

- Sparta Transitions has a cadet matched with a host family.
- Passed out over 6,000 regional promotion pieces at the Wheel & Sprocket Expo in Milwaukee.
- Recruiting for new CEO with six candidates so far
- Finalizing strategic plan to implement later this year.

Next Committee meeting is tentatively scheduled for Thursday, May 18th at 9:00am at Farmers & Merchants Bank in Tomah.

Meeting adjourned.

Submitted by:



Steve Peterson