

**MONROE COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, COMMERCE & TOURISM COMMITTEE**  
**MONTHLY MEETING – 6-8-17 – County Board Room – Sparta**

**Present:**

**Committee Board Members** – Sharon Folcey – Chair; Dean Peterson

**Citizen Members** – Dennis Berg

**Advisory Members** – Tim Hyma, Tonya Townsell, Jim Bialecki

**Economic Development Coordinator:** Steve Peterson

**Absent:** Jarrod Roll; Tina Thompson; Nodji Van Wychen; Paul Harms; Mary Jo Hill; Pete Reichardt; Bernie Arena

**Special Guests:** – Cedric Schnitzler – Monroe County Board Chairman; John Hendricks – incoming CEO – Sparta Area Chamber of Commerce; Kurt Marshaus – Justice Center Project Manager

The meeting was posted in accordance with the open meeting law. Meeting was called to order at 9:05am by Chair Sharon Folcey. Roll-call was taken.

A welcome from J. Bialecki & C. Schnitzler to the Committee for having their monthly meeting in the new County Board room in the new Justice Center facility.

J. Hendricks was introduced to the entire committee as the new CEO for the Sparta Area Chamber of Commerce, after retiring as the Superintendent of the Sparta School District. Hendricks starts on 7/1 and is looking forward to taking over for T. Hyma, who is retiring. Hendricks will be an Advisory member on the EDCT Committee.

**Minutes** - Motion by T. Hyma to approve the minutes of the May 18<sup>th</sup> meeting. Second by J. Bialecki. Motion carried.

**Invoices:**

There were no invoices presented. S. Folcey informed the Committee that the \$700 for the Connect Communities program for Monroe County was paid.

S. Folcey reminded the committee that considerations should be started on the proposed EDCT budget for 2018 and reviewing the funds that are still available in the 2017 budget for projects yet this year.

D. Peterson suggested that after a few years now, the E.D. Coordinator contract budget line item should be addressed with a possible increase because of the Coordinator's efforts and the rising costs each year incurred as part of the contract.

T. Hyma urged the committee to consider possible funding in 2018 for the upcoming Discover Wisconsin TV show on biking around the State. The episode will air in 2010, but the taping will begin in 2018. With the importance of the Elroy-Sparta Bike Trail in the County, it should be considered. S. Peterson said he would contact Greg Smith from DW on details about the episode and what the investment might be?

The line item for Hidden Valleys will need to be reviewed now that Bernie Arena has retired and Nodji Van Wychen is taking over as our representative on the HV board. Expenses may change because of the change with our rep.

C. Schnitzler asked about the SW-ITBEC funding and the committee assured him that the funding would continue in the budget as there is real value for the County with funding matches for projects and events occurring in Monroe County. C. Schnitzler is in support of ITBEC but wanted an update on how the organization is doing and some of the projects they are supporting in the region.

#### **Monroe County E.D. Coordinator Report:**

- **Meetings**

- **7 Rivers Alliance** – 5/22 – Took Gabe Nelson, Public Policy Intern on a tour of Monroe County and the business parks.
- **Friends of the Elroy-Sparta Bike Trail Board meeting** – 5/22. DNR is taking over the depot for the season. Starting to request RFPs for next year's season. They said they had 5 interested parties already. The Friends group are starting to sell off their bikes from their rental service.
- **WXOW-TV 19** – 5/25 – appeared on Daybreak to promote the BIKE ME FUN RIDE
- **Live Music on Main Committee meeting** on 5/25 in Cashton. Working on promotion of the event with radio & print campaigns.
- **SET Meeting** – 5/26 - Strategic plan has been approved and we are in the process of starting our plan with a Workshop & Summit in the next 2 months.
- **Workforce Summit** – La Crosse – 5/31. Very informative day-long event hearing many different programs that lead to successful workforce recruitment & retention. This was the culmination of the first phase of the WISE PLAN.
- **WDAC Board Meeting** – Sheboygan – 6/2. Membership drive, fall Summit and Monroe County is hosting the September board meeting.

- **Prospects**

- Hosted a business that is looking at the Cashton area for relocation. Spent most of the day with meetings with Organic Valley who would be a major factor in their move.
- Final stages with business on relocating here in Kendall. HR staff and workforce agencies will be meeting over the next 2 weeks to form a workforce recruitment plan.
- Business looking to expand their company footprint is visiting the County on 6/14 for the day. Looking at locations in Sparta, Tomah & Cashton.
- Business visiting the County the week of 6/19 with not only possibly relocating their manufacturing facility but to place their product in some of our businesses in the County as well.
- Development company visiting the County the week of 6/26. Assisted living, multi-family homes & hotels
- Current company looking at a substantial expansion that will be completed in 2018. Continuing meetings with the broker & State on the proposal for the company.

- Working with tractor restoration company that could expand facilities in Tomah near the fairgrounds. Location & land an issue right now but working on options.
- **South Pointe Business Park – Sparta** – close to certification and going on the market. Quite a bit of interest in the park area by both manufacturing & commercial prospects.
- **Organic Valley Ghee & Cheese Processing Plant** – plant is finishing up its certifications and equipment set ups. Should be in full production in a couple weeks.
- **Mill Haven project** – ahead of schedule and getting a lot of buzz from people seeing the building going up.
- **Aldi's Expansion** – going well and will have a very large grocery store presence in Tomah.
- **CGI Video update** – we will be starting our E.D. video production in late June/early July.
- **MapNTour** – meeting with them to see what kind of virtual mapping tool we can use for the County through our web site and social media.
- **SW-ITBEC** – New information brochure for future recruitment of counties has been printed and starting the distribution to area county boards.
- **Chicago Federal Reserve** – working with the City of Sparta, Sparta Chamber on spearheading a small business credit survey in the community and looking at expanding it to County wide if possible. More information to come.
- **BIKE ME FUN RIDE** – [www.bikemeride.com](http://www.bikemeride.com)
  - Had 112 registered riders for the event. States represented were Missouri, California, Washington, Illinois, Minnesota, Michigan and Iowa.
  - Had 36 sponsors for the event
  - Sparta Chamber of Commerce & Mayo co-hosted the Pre-Ride Reception at Evans-Bosshard Park. Music with The Invaders Band. Already in talks with Mayo on expanding the opening night reception to include a Fitness Fair to showcase the area fitness centers, exercise and possibly a kids bike rodeo.
  - Elroy Ambulance Service hosted a pancake breakfast on the morning of the ride. We raised \$300 for their fundraising efforts.
  - Riders left from Elroy in a progressive ride throughout the day heading toward Sparta. We had the handicapped children with their new bikes lead the ride.
  - Wilton Sportsmens Inc. hosted a Brat/Hot Dog/BBQ lunch in downtown Wilton. We helped them raise \$350 for their fundraising efforts.
  - The Village of Norwalk with & Sew Much More hosted an ice cream break in the afternoon
  - Post-Ride Celebration Party in Kendall. Food by BP Smokehouse. Music by LB & the HiVolts. Auctioned off the Cow spotted bike and the money went to purchasing a 3<sup>rd</sup> custom made bicycle for an area handicapped child. We auctioned off baskets, Three Bears Resort gift certificate, Nutcase Helmets and smoked meat packages from BP Smokehouse.
  - Many people and organizations are excited about working on next year's ride now that they know what it was all about. Next year's ride is June 1-2, 2018.
- ❖ **VINO FEST** – [www.vinofest.org](http://www.vinofest.org)
  - The WI Dept. of Tourism awarded the festival a \$28,650 JEM Grant. The grant will be coordinated through the Tomah Chamber of Commerce

- Working very hard on sponsorships. Major sponsors are being secured and the marketing will be starting shortly.
- Finalizing the non-profits who will oversee the events at the fest to help them with their fundraising efforts.

**Go Monroe County Guide:**

- Evans Printing has had the contract for 3 years and the committee is strongly considering having another RFP cycle.
- S. Folcey reiterated that there had been a problem with the postage and shipping costs but it has been settled with Evans.
- There are still some concerns with the distribution of the guide and the lack of businesses buying ads in the Tomah & Warrens areas.
- There was discussion on the issue of the Tomah Chamber of Commerce doing their own guide instead of being in the County guide. It is a fundraiser for the Chamber, but maybe there could be some compromises worked out were both parties would benefit with one guide.

S. Folcey is going to contact Tina Osterberg in the Finance Department about the RFP process and putting together a new comprehensive RFP application.

**REPORTS:**

**Justice Center**

- C. Schnitzler announced the Grand Opening Ribbon Cutting Ceremony on September 29<sup>th</sup>. The plans are very vague yet as the committee is just being formed. Schnitzler invited anyone who wanted to be on the Committee to come to the next planning meeting on Wed., 6/14 at 5pm in the County Board Room. Initial plans include a program, ribbon cutting and tours. More plans to come.

**Monroe County Administrator**

- Justice Center construction is winding down. There are still some issues to be worked through.
- Rolling Hills complex – having issues with mechanical & utilities that need upgrading. Costs for that upgrade is \$3-\$4 million.
- Exploring options with the Rolling Hills Nursing Home facility. Badly outdated. A need for a new nursing home building but it is a very high price tag and would involve many public meetings. Costs have been in the \$60-\$70 million range. 42 of the 72 Counties in the State have nursing homes currently.
- There is some discussion about exploring a parcel of land along County B being developed into an assisted living complex.
- Exploring moving Human Services from Rolling Hills to the Courthouse. Preliminary renovation costs in the Courthouse for that move is in the \$5 million range.

**Local History Room** – no report

**Hidden Valleys** – no report

## **Ft. McCoy**

- T. Townsell reported that between 1,500 – 2,000 people attended the Open House at Ft. McCoy. There was a great response to the Vietnam War Veterans Welcome Home ceremony, commemorating the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of that war.
- There is preliminary discussion about a possible World War 1 reenactment to commemorate the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of that war.
- The housing project is close to completion with moving dates slated as early as July or as late as September. There will be 50 new homes on the barracks.
- Massive training units are going on now and will continue for the months ahead.
- The Ft. McCoy Golf Tournament will take place at River Run Golf Course in Sparta on June 23<sup>rd</sup>.
- Tickets for the Toby Keith MWR Concert on August 12<sup>th</sup> will go on sale on June 22<sup>nd</sup>.
- Business Community Appreciation Night at McCoy's on August 31<sup>st</sup> from 5pm – 7pm. Invitations will be going out in July.

## **7 Rivers Alliance**

- S. Peterson commented further about the Workforce Summit on May 31<sup>st</sup> in La Crosse which was the next phase of the WISE Plan. The next phase will start with feedback from the attendees at the Summit and a strategic plan is expected to be completed by early fall.

## **SW-ITBEC**

- S. Peterson commented on the new brochure and the potential of Jackson & Trempealeau Counties joining along with getting Juneau County back on as a member county again.

## **Sparta Chamber of Commerce**

- T. Hyma reported that Sparta Butterfest was here and a big weekend was planned.
- The first 2 cadets will be starting their jobs through the Sparta Transition Program which is spearheaded by the Chamber and the Challenge Academy. Goal is to get the paperwork completed to apply for non-profit status.
- June 14<sup>th</sup>, at Concert in the Park, is T. Hyma's Retirement Party.
- June 28<sup>th</sup>, at Concert in the Park, is J. Hendricks's Welcome Party.
- T. Hyma said that he and J. Hendricks have begun the transition meetings with Hendricks taking over on July 1<sup>st</sup>.
- Reminder of the Little Falls Railroad & Doll Museum's upcoming event featuring national artists with a railroad theme. You can get more details on the Sparta Chamber's web site.

## **Tomah Chamber of Commerce**

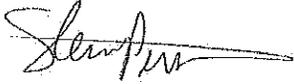
- T. Thompson could not attend because of moving their offices into their new location in the old DNR building. Their Grand Opening Gala will take place on June 9<sup>th</sup>.

Next Committee meeting is scheduled for Thursday, July 13<sup>th</sup> at 9:00am at the new Tomah Chamber of Commerce building in Tomah.

Committee members were encouraged to stay after the meeting for a personal tour of the Justice Center with Project Manager Kurt Marshaus.

Motion by D. Peterson to adjourn. 2<sup>nd</sup> by S. Peterson. Meeting adjourned at 10:35am.

Submitted by:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Steve Peterson", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Steve Peterson