

MONROE COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, COMMERCE & TOURISM COMMITTEE
MONTHLY MEETING – 7-12-18 – Cranberry Discovery Center – Warrens, WI

Present:

Committee Board Members: Nodji Van Wychen, Dean Peterson, Mark Halverson

Citizen Members: Dennis Berg, Mary Jo Hill

Advisory Members:, John Hendricks – Sparta Area Chamber of Commerce, Tina Thompson – Tomah Chamber of Commerce

Economic Development & Tourism Coordinator: Steve Peterson

Absent: Pete Reichardt (CM), Paul Harms (AM), Bernie Arena (AM), Jim Bialecki – County Administrator, Jarrod Roll (AM), Tonya Townsell – Ft. McCoy (AM)

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

Minutes –Motion by M. Halverson to approve the minutes. Second by D. Berg. Motion carried.

Economic Duties – the Committee reviewed the Composition & Duties outlined for the Economic Development, Commerce & Tourism Committee. It was decided that the Committee shall consist of 3 County Coard Supervisors, 3 Citizen members along with Advisory members that will participate in an advisory capacity on the standing committee. The Citizen & Advisory members shall not have voting rights on financial matters and shall not be compensated by the county for their participation. All non-financial matters, the Citizen and Advisory members will have voting rights on. In the past the composition stated ex-officio members, but the committee names them Advisory members so it was agreed to stay consist and change Ex-officio to Advisory. Motion by D. Peterson to approve these changes. 2nd by M. Halverson. Motion carried.

Financial Report – there were no invoices to approve. S. Peterson did advise the committee that he was mistaken with the committee’s sponsorship payment to the BIKE ME Fun Ride. He had stated that the County did not pay the sponsorship yet, but they had done so. Because the event was cancelled, Peterson said that the \$500 was returned to the County with \$250 of it going back into the marketing line item in the Tourism section and \$250 back into the marketing line in the Economic Development section of the budget.

Administrator’s Report – no report.

Monroe County E.D. Coordinator Report:

- Working with the child care center project in Cashton. WEDC, Bank of Cashton and I am working together on the incentives and time table for the opening of the new business.
- Met with Christina Dollhausen, Vernon County ED Coordinator and Sue McGinnis, Vernon County Clerk, to see about potential networking in the future.
- WDAC Board meeting – Fond du Lac – 6/18
- Working with the Town of Glendale on a new web site and networking with the residents in that township.

- Met with a Harvard professor who is doing a case study on Counties in Wisconsin. This was our 2nd meeting and her prospectus will be completed by the end of 2019.
- Meetings with a potential hotel project in the County. Finalizing investors and acquiring the property.
- Working with a potential retail store looking at Monroe County in 2019.
- Was a presenter at the WI Procurement Institute's annual Small Business Summit at Ft. McCoy on June 19-20.
- Attended the 7 Rivers Alliance ECO DEVO meeting in Whitehall. Met with ED Coordinators from Trempealeau & Buffalo Counties.
- WI Rural Partners Board meeting – Tomah. Setting up a Strategic Planning session in Tomah on July 25th.
- Completed the WEDA Award Nomination paperwork – Mill Haven Foods – Business Growth & Century Foods International – Economic Driver. Awards Banquet in August.
- Trying to work with the DNR on the Kendall Depot situation with it being closed most of the time during the peak part of the Elroy-Sparta Bike Trail season. Dept. of Tourism may be helping me on this effort.
- Prospect traveling to County in August to meet for 3 days with city, county officials along with State. Depts.
- Working with a prospect on relocating from Minnesota to the County in a currently empty building.
- Follow up meeting on the CDBG/RLF transformation to the State control in October.
- Prospect looking to expand their Wisconsin company in Monroe County. Had site visits on 7/10.
- Continuing to add things to the Map-N-Tour feature on the County E.D. web site
- Working with companies around the County on getting registered on the Inspire program offered through 7 Rivers Alliance.

- AROUND THE COUNTY....
 - SPARTA
 - South Pointe activity continues with infrastructure work
 - East Side Business Park's remaining lots are being re-evaluated by the DNR for wetland mitigation.
 - TOMAH
 - The multi-use complex on the old Tee Pee Supper Club lot has changed a lot over the past couple weeks as construction begins vertical.
 - The hospital project is moving along at a very fast pace and the Gundersen Clinic/Cancer Research Center construction is underway.
 - CASHTON
 - Dollar General building construction is underway with an opening in mid-late July.
 - Decisions are being looked at with the closed feed mill & tobacco warehouse buildings.
 - WILTON
 - United Cooperative's expansion is almost complete at the feed blending plant.

- KENDALL
 - More activity happening at the old School building. Goal is to add more retail/craft stores in the building. The Colors of Kendall celebration will mostly take place at that venue.
- WARRENS
 - USEMCO is moving out of it's facility in Warrens and consolidating things at their location in Tomah.

UPCOMING....

- Business Strategic Planning – 7/13
- Arts on the Square – Madison – July 14th & 15th – adding artisans to VINO FEST.
- WDAC Board meeting – Appleton – 7/16
- Prospect visit to the County – week of 7/16
- WEDA Board Meeting – Kenosha – 7/19
- Prospect visit to the County – week of 7/23
- Business Strategic Planning – 7/24
- WI Rural Partners Strategic Planning Session – 7/25 - Tomah
- SW-ITBEC Meeting – 8/3
- Prospect visit to the County – week of 8/6

REPORTS:

7 Rivers Alliance – S. Peterson reported that a Employee Retention & Recruitment Workshop will be held on Sept. 19th in Tomah.

Hidden Valleys – N. Van Wychen announced that Kelly Murray has resigned as the Monroe County representative on the Hidden Valleys Board. No replacement has been found at this time. It was suggested by D. Berg that if a replacement couldn't be found for a while that maybe each Committee member could rotate and attend the monthly H.V. Board meetings. The committee felt it is important to keep our relationship with H.V.

SW-ITBEC – no report as the group does not meet in July. The next SW-ITBEC meeting is on August 3rd at Branches Winery outside of Westby.

Local History Room – no report. N. Van Wychen said that everyone is very pleased with the new A-Z Display and the media coverage it's been receiving.

Ft. McCoy – no report

Sparta Chamber of Commerce

- Sparta has just been named a Connect Community by WEDC
- Taping of Around the Corner with John McGivern was a great success.
- 4th of July celebration went well despite the late rains
- Crazy Days on July 21st
- Museum Pig Roast fundraiser coming up at Justin Trails Resort
- Discover Wisconsin is back in the Sparta area taping for their future episode
- SAGBRAW bicycle ride will be starting and finishing in Sparta this year
- Working the Dept. of Tourism's booth at the Wisconsin State Fair on August 8th
- Cracker Barrel Legislative Breakfast – 7/30 – 7am – Sparta Family Restaurant

Tomah Chamber of Commerce

- Lease agreement finally finalized with the City of Tomah for the Chamber building
- 82 entries in the 4th of July parade – one of the largest crowds this year
- The old VIP Realty building is being revamped into a Wine Bar/Tapas/Marketplace destination
- Judy Faulkner has created a Pocket Park just off the downtown area behind one of her buildings
- Monroe County Workforce Alliance will be hosting a Retention/Recruitment event on Nov. 1st
- Business @ 5 at the Monroe County Fair on July 25th jointly with the Sparta Chamber.
- Migrant workers are traveling into the area, through local efforts of an employment agency, to work in the cranberry harvest
- The Museum in Tomah is hosting a couple events as part of their fundraising efforts. 8/5 – Remembering Frank King and 8/26 – Historic Murders in Tomah
- Back to School BBQ – 8/26
- Music on Milwaukee is progressing nicely
- Chill Zone replacing Calahan's Bar.
- Tomah Mayor Mike Murray vetoed the new ambulance building project and the City is going to go back the plans and look for options on how to cut the expense of the project somewhat.

Warrens Events – N. Van Wychen reported:

- Blossom Day drew a big crowd
- Sesquicentennial Celebration on July 3rd & 4th went very well. Large fireworks display. Vendors ran out of food and drink. Ho Chunk dancers performed on the 4th and was very well received.

UW-Extension update – N. Van Wychen reported:

- Erin Eggert has resigned her position and there is a hiring freeze, so replacing her may require doing a joint agent for both Monroe & Vernon Counties, so the staff person is funded by both Counties.

Next Committee meeting is scheduled for Thursday, August 9th at 9:00am at Covis (formerly UNIMIN) Sand Mine in Tunnel City.

Motion by D. Peterson to adjourn. Second by D. Berg. Meeting adjourned at 10:44am.

Submitted by:



Steve Peterson