

Wyandot County Office of Economic Development

Board Meeting Minutes Monday, July 10, 2017

Attendees: John Barnes, LuAnn Cooke, Paul Craun, Scott Dickey, Rick Ekleberry, Amy Hackenberg, Tristan Joy, Terry Mazzone, Rob McClure, Greg Moon, Jessica Moon, Randy Payne, Steve Seitz, Elaine Tschanen, Tim Vaughn, Paul Wagner

Approval of Meeting Minutes:

Motion: Tim Vaughn Second: Jessica Moon Approved

Financial Budget Update:

Motion: John Barnes Second: Paul Wagner Approved

Director's Update:

Old Business:

• **Project Updates**

- Connected Community Engagement Program
 - Greg gave a recap of the broadband program as being the program WCOED was awarded with through a group called Connected Nation. Wyandot County was one of the 5 OH communities selected to participate in this round of the program.
 - The technical report was completed and it was released to the public in mid-June at the Upper Sandusky Library. This report included the development of more detailed interactive maps, and recommendations for moving broadband access and adoption forward in the county.
 - This study identified areas where residents and businesses are left without any broadband availability, which has been relayed to the local internet service providers.
 - The information may also be useful when looking at funding future programs, or other forms of assistance where this information needs to be readily available.
- New Workforce Development Program
 - Since our last board meeting, Greg held a presentation session with the local schools along with some of our executive officers.
 - Upper Sandusky High School would like to take part in the effort.
 - The current Principal at Mohawk High School is stepping back into a teaching role, which is making it difficult to figure out who we will need to work with.

- Last Thursday, Greg met with the Principal of Carey HS who is very interested in moving this forward. After some discussions with their guidance staff, he believes WCOED may need to approach the school board to gain their support.
- As far as funding the initial \$15,000 implementation cost:
 - Greg has secured a \$5,000 commitment from the WCYP.
 - A grant was written in late-May to the AEP LEAP program for another \$8,000 in grant funds.
 - Greg also submitted a grant request to the United Way to cover the remaining gap. That funding however would not actually be received until late 2018 which would be used to support the ongoing costs of the effort.
 - If the AEP grant is awarded there would be less than a \$2,000 gap to get this program off the ground.
- Greg has received an MOU from our counterpart organization in Crawford County. It lays out these items:
 - Crawford would contract with the marketing company (COMSTOR) to develop the website, and pay the upfront costs. WCOED would reimburse Crawford half of that cost (\$14,875) for this Phase 1.
 - Phase 2 would include separate contracts with COMSTOR to use as many of their services as we think Wyandot County needs including: Marketing Consulting, Monthly Calls and Meetings, Website Maintenance and Support (Includes any and all changes/additions), and Design Services (On-call designers).
 - According to COMSTOR, the minimal ongoing annual cost would be about \$1,200 per year for website security & maintenance.
 - For reference, Greg reported by switching our WCOED website a couple of years ago, this is about the savings we have garnered annually. With the old website provided by Aardvark, WCOED paid about \$1500 per year, and now website costs are less than \$300 per year.
 - Crawford would also like to collaborate to develop a strategic plan to implement the program and share tasks between each county. This would include creating a Partnership Oversight Committee made of up 3 representatives from each county to develop and manage the strategic plan.
 - The MOU would last for 3 years. A copy of the proposed language was included in the agenda packet. Jessica Moon looked over the MOU and has changed some of the verbiage around but none of the content.
- Greg asked since the AEP funding is not yet confirmed, would WCOED be comfortable approving the execution of the MOU contingent upon the grant funding? Greg stated he would rather not wait another 2 months until our next board meeting before moving forward with this.
- There was much discussion about the program's value from board members. A motion was made from Terry Mazzone to move forward with the MOU providing WCOED would spend no more than \$2,000 out of pocket to fund the program. A roll-call vote was taken and the motion passed by a vote of 10 to 2.

- Kirby Tire Site
 - The commissioners and Greg had a discussion last week with the current staff at the Ohio EPA to discuss where the former Kirby Tire site stands.
 - This was brought up as they wanted to bring everyone on the same page before another state-level administration change happened.
 - The consensus from the group was that they would like something drafted in legal writing if possible, that would help to expedite the process should WCOED be able to move a solar development project forward. Back in 2013, the EPA would not commit to signing an updated MOU so this would be a good step in the right direction.
 - It was also discussed that in general, all the solar developers who have looked at the site indicated it was not financially viable due to the lack of electrical load in the immediate area. This combined with the state's lack of current support for renewable energy development is not helping this project come to fruition, and nothing may ever happen other than the site sitting vacant and collecting back taxes.
 - The group at OEPA is planning to research the situation further, and discuss it with the current EPA Director. Since the last discussions with the EPA, the staff that historically worked on this project has retired and the director has changed.
- Project Lead Tracking
 - Since last WCOED meeting there were 13 new leads for existing buildings, which is up compared to previous periods this year:
 - 4 of those building leads came directly into the WCOED office, which is also above the regular level. Greg was able to provide applicable buildings for those inquiries.
 - Greg was also able to submit the building in Carey for one state-generated lead, which included an RFI.
 - 4 new on site leads were received since the May meeting.
 - One of these leads was also received directly by the WCOED office, and Greg was able to provide a number of possible real estate options.
 - The remainder of the state generated leads was either for sites with rail service or an abundant amount of acreage, which excluded any of our available sites.

New Business

• New Projects:

- Arrowhead Spec Building 2
 - WCOED is currently working with Creative Plastic Concepts as the potential tenant for the new 101,000 SF speculative facility in Arrowhead Commerce Park.
 - Creative Plastics is in need of warehousing space, and may potentially use the building for production as well in later years although no commitment has been made. They are looking to eventually purchase the facility so they would be here for the long haul.
 - Greg did have conversations with the company on securing potential state-level assistance through our JobsOhio partners, but the job creation number

- for this project is a bit lower than those projects that are usually incentivized at the state level.
- Greg is also facilitating a potential Enterprise Zone, or real property tax exemption, agreement between the company and the local taxing jurisdictions. A negotiation team meeting was held last Wednesday, and the group decided to move forward with a 75% abatement for 10 years.
 - Greg will now be helping facilitate the passage of legislation among the Village, Schools, and County as well as getting all the necessary agreements signed and submitted to Columbus before the end of July.
 - In the Enterprise Zone agreement application, the company has committed to the creation of 6 new full-time permanent jobs amounting to \$190,000 in new annual payroll. Its capital investment in the project will roughly \$8.35 million.
 - Even though the initial job creation commitment is low, the company is predicting that there will be close to 20 people working in the facility after a couple years.
 - The Village and County, although the job creation number was low, both realize that supporting Creative Plastic's expansion will also enhance its capabilities at the Sycamore location. The company CEO indicated that annual growth has been roughly 35%, and WCOED wants to do what it can to keep its future operations local.
 - **Roadwork** – the Village has put out to bid for roadwork improvements surrounding the Arrowhead Commerce Park. These include widening and increasing the depth of a stretch of Elm Hill Road from SR-199 to Arrowhead Drive, and intersection widening at the other end of Arrowhead Drive and SR-199.
 - The estimate for this work was \$244,500. Grant funding was approved from both JobsOhio and ODOT Jobs & Commerce last year. This was due to Ohio job creation commitments by Vaughn Industries and the speculative development happening in the park.
 - The roadwork grant funding totaled \$212,250, which only leaves the Village of Carey with roughly \$32,000 or 13% of the project costs to cover. The Village was recently approved for a low interest loan program offered by ODOT, which will cover the local costs of both this Arrowhead roadwork and a widening project on CH-96 related to Continental Structural Plastic's recent expansion project.
 - Upper Sandusky Industrial User
 - Greg has met twice since our last meeting with an Indiana company looking to expand into NW Ohio, and has taken them through a couple facilities.
 - The company is looking for 40,000+ sq. ft., and would more than likely grow into more space. The operation consists of some production but mostly warehousing.
 - They would be looking at a handful of new jobs initially, but more than likely 20-25 jobs within the first couple years.
 - Upper Sandusky Retail Users
 - Greg has also fielded two new leads for retail users that are looking at the City of Upper Sandusky:

- One has since taken possession, or leased, the former Advanced Auto Parts building on E. Wyandot Ave. Remodeling of the building will be starting within the next month or so.
- Since they have filed for their license with the Auditor's office Greg was able to share that this business is Showplace Rentals headquartered in Marion. They have 13 locations spread throughout Ohio.
- The other lead was a broker working with a retail client in search of an acre of ground. Greg provided them with a number of options in the City so far. The metrics surrounding this project are unknown.
- Regional Coordinated Transportation
 - WCOED is an active member of the County's Coordinated Transportation Planning Group, and last month Greg attended a meeting of the higher regional group made of up representatives from Wyandot, Hancock, Putnam, and Hardin Counties.
 - This group primarily is tasked with studying and looking at public transportation gaps and options.
 - As the result of a grant submitted through an ODOT program, Wyandot County now has a 'Mobility Manager' or someone who is looking at these issues full time. She is tasked with finding the largest needs, such as getting people to work with no transportation, and how that may be possible through contract with outside public transportation services.
- Miscellaneous Items
 - Wyanstock
 - Greg estimates the net profit to be in the \$11 – 12K range again this year.
 - Greg thanked those WCOED members who support this event year after year.
 - WYP took in almost \$10,000 in sponsorships, but total expenses are around \$17,000 therefore, this event could not happen without the willingness of the local business community to donate.
 - FCNB Open House
 - FCNB is hosting an open house and BBQ picnic for the grand opening of its Carey Banking Center on Thursday, July 20th from 4:00 – 6:00 p.m.
 - New First Federal WCOED Representative
 - Amy Hackenberg who is an Executive Vice President and Southern Market Area President for First Federal Bank will be the company's new representative for the WCOED board.

Updates from WCOED Members: Each member present had the opportunity to share with the board what's happening with their business.

Next Meeting: Monday, September 11, 2017