

# Wyandot County Office of Economic Development

## BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Monday, March 12, 2018

**Attendees:** John Barnes, Cassie Carlson, Lenny Clouse, LuAnn Cooke, Joe Faine, Doug Frisch, Kathy Grasz, Rex Grasz, Mark Johnson, Roy Johnson, Brian Kimmel, Greg Knestrick, Terry Mazzone, Greg Moon, Lyneen Reinschell, Steve Seitz, Elaine Tschanen, Tim Vaughn, Laurie Vent, Paul Wagner, Gary Ward, Matt Wood

**Guests:** Rob Gagnon, John Heffernan, Terry Korczyk, Mike Gibbons

**Approval of Meeting Minutes:** Motion to Approve January 8, 2018 Minutes: Tim Vaughn; Second: Lenny Clouse Minutes Approved Call to Order

**Financial Budget Update:** Financial report as presented in the meeting packet was accepted

### WCOED Director's Update

#### Old Business

- **Project Updates**

- Project Mobile
  - Greg announced that WCOED continues to work with Transglobal on its move to the former Blackhawk Automotive building in Upper Sandusky.
  - The company has been performing interior demo for many weeks now and the facility already looks much different than it has for the past many years.
  - Since the last WCOED, meeting Greg has taken the lead Revitalization specialist from JobsOhio through the facility.
  - A new Phase 1 environmental assessment was completed and it was deemed that many of the needed infrastructure items including the roof, HVAC, etc. would qualify for JobsOhio's revitalization assistance.
  - Transglobal is still in the process of gathering quotes, and WCOED is still waiting on some other project information from the company, but as long as everything is submitted on time the company will garner some assistance in refurbishing this highly degraded facility.
  - This project will lead to 25 new jobs with an associated \$1M in new annual payroll, and the retention of 60 jobs and almost \$4M in annual payroll.
- Columbus-Toledo Midway Industrial Park
  - In order to initiate phase two of the CTMIP on the north side of Upper Sandusky, there must be a formal purchase option in place laying out terms for sale of the property.
  - With the help of Paul Wagner, WCOED had a good discussion with the property owner back in January, and have since delivered the owner a draft purchase agreement called Irrevocable Purchase Option for their 146 acres on the north side of US-23 & 30.

- This agreement also names the WCOED and City of Upper Sandusky as third party beneficiaries due to the fact that WCOED will not receive anything directly as a result of the sale of this acreage for industrial development.
- Beyond the terms of sale, the largest challenge in making this ground 'shovel-ready' is to have utilities in place and ready to go. The city has noted that extensions of its utilities would not be possible without the assurance that the acreage would be available for sale. Greg hopes to have something in writing by the next meeting.
- Upper Sandusky Retail Prospects
  - To add to the previous retail prospects inquiries WCOED has received in recent months, Greg also had an inquiry on the former FCNB branch on Church Street in Upper Sandusky. This came directly from a food related retail operation.
- **Project Lead Tracking**
  - Since the last meeting there were 13 new leads for existing buildings, which is quite a lot compared to recent years.
  - Unfortunately, due to the fact that there isn't any viable building space, there were only a couple of these leads that Greg could submit a proposal for. Those were both direct leads to the office and were for warehouse space.
  - There was 1 new lead for a bare site. Rail was a requirement for this lead as well as many of the building leads received over the last two months.

## **New Business**

- **New Members**
  - Mohawk Local Schools will have joined as a Gold Level Member with be represented by Superintendent, Ken Ratliff
  - Carey Exempted Village Schools is committed to join as a Gold Level Member represented by Superintendent, Mike Wank or High School Principal, Peter Cole
  - Wyandot Skilled Nursing & Rehabilitation Center has joined as a Silver Level Member and will be represented by Administrator, Greg Lonsway
- **Business Retention and Expansion**
  - The new BR&E survey is officially available to local businesses online.
  - The survey has been shortened by another 10 questions this year down to 25 to make it even easier and less burdensome for businesses to participate. This is quite a difference from the 77 question survey that was out there in 2011
  - Greg asked anyone who had not already taken the survey to please take 5 minutes to provide input to this annual effort.
  - The survey was shared electronically through the WCOED distribution list and both of the local Chambers and there are currently 22 completed surveys.
- **New Projects:**
  - Project Winter 2
    - Over the past couple of months, WCOED has been conversing with a company looking at a significant local expansion.
    - This manufacturer's project is predicted to involve a physical building expansion of 126,000 SF and a commitment of what could be over 100 new jobs.
    - While the local facility is one option the company has for this expansion, they also have the option of locating it in an area closer to their customers but Greg reported that it does sound like Wyandot County is in the lead.
    - WCOED has already initiated discussions with our JobsOhio partners to garner state-level assistance and are exploring what could possibly be offered locally. While the upfront cost of the project is a concern for the company, their additional workforce needs are another main area of concern.

- This expansion would help to solidify the company's commitment to Wyandot County, and would possibly lead to future local investment here which is why WCOED will do anything within its power to help encourage the local project coming to fruition.
- Warehousing Needs
  - Greg has had contacts with two companies, one in Carey and one in Upper Sandusky who are both searching for roughly 30,000 SF of warehouse space.
  - Greg has put both of these companies in contact with potential available spaces in the area.
- Kalmbach Feeds Truck Wash
  - Kalmbach Feeds is planning to break ground near the end of March or early April on its truck wash.
  - The facility will be located just south of Custom Ag, next to their pond, on State Route 199, on the North end of Upper Sandusky.
  - The Truck wash building will be approximately 3,500 square feet, built with concrete block.
- **Tax Incentive Review Council**
  - Last Tuesday evening the County Auditor and I facilitated a meeting of our local TIRC.
  - The TIRC is a group of trustees required to meet annually to review all of the open tax incentive agreements. During the month of February, reporting forms are delivered to all of these companies to verify they have met or are on track to meet their agreed to commitments. This meeting included representatives of the Village of Carey, Village of Sycamore, Crawford Twp., and Salem Twp.
  - Greg was happy to report that all of the local agreements currently in place were continued with one contingent upon some required reporting.
- **Qualified Opportunity Zone Application**
  - The federal tax reform, in addition to thousands of changes to the US tax code, created what is called the "Qualified Opportunity Zone" program.
  - Federal opportunity zones offer three tax incentives to investors:
    - A temporary tax deferral for capital gains reinvested in an Opportunity Fund
    - A step-up in basis for capital gains reinvested in an Opportunity Fund
    - A permanent exclusion from taxable income of capital gains from the sale or exchange of an investment in a qualified opportunity zone fund, if the investment is held for at least 10 years.
  - Governors of each state are required to nominate up to 25% of their qualifying census tracts. Qualifying tracts are based on poverty rates & median income.
  - The only tracts we had that qualified covered the City of Upper Sandusky. A couple weeks ago Greg made an application to have these tracts approved as a Qualified Opportunity Zone, which would be another economic development tool for the area.
- **Transportation Improvement District**
  - Greg has been working on another local Economic Development tool with the county to establish a TID covering all of Wyandot County. The TID creates a group of trustees that looks at area roadwork projects on an annual basis, and can then apply for funding only available to registered TIDs.
  - Greg worked to get our new state representative Riordan McClain added to our TID board of trustees.
  - During the month of May, WCOED will be able to both formally establish out local TID, while at the same time applying for funding of a local project.
  - Greg asked for anyone to let him know of any road work needed within the county.

- **Upper Sandusky Schools Business Advisory Council**
  - At the previous meeting WCOED approved a section of our meeting agenda will now include time for updates from any local schools that would like to participate as part of their Business Advisory Council requirement from the state DOE.
  - Laurie Vent provided members with OhioMeansJobs-Readiness Seal information. She encouraged members to speak at the Career Readiness class required for high school students. It gives students the chance to learn about work opportunities within Wyandot County.
- **Miscellaneous Items**
  - WCYP Meeting Involvement
    - As succession planning is considered with this group, representation from the WCYP at each one of meeting is helpful so that both groups have the opportunity to share information between the two entities. Brian Kimmel representing both Kimmel Cleaners and the WCYP spoke on the challenge they have in finding out why people come and go from the county. He also gave an update on WCYP upcoming events.
  - Ohio Certified Economic Developer
    - Greg will be entering the capstone course for the new OH CED program. Last year he completed 4 courses and enough elective hours to be eligible to sign up for the first capstone cohort. The cohort begins in April and wraps up in October. If he successfully complete the capstone project, which involves reporting and a final presentation, Wyandot will be among the first few communities with a Certified ED.
  - SmartAsset Study
    - The SmartAsset fourth annual study on the most efficient use of property taxes ranked Wyandot 3<sup>rd</sup> in Ohio. This is the third consecutive year Wyandot County has placed in the top 5.
    - The study shows counties getting the most 'Bang for their Buck' in property taxes. Wyandot County has a low average property tax rate, above average graduation rates, and low crime rates. Or in other words great local schools and public safety service agencies.
  - NORTH CENTRAL OHIO REGION INDUSTRY-MANUFACTURERS WORKFORCE ALLIANCE
    - This is a newly developed group and they are just at the beginning stages. The next meeting is Wednesday, March 21<sup>st</sup>, 9:30 @ the Marion Chamber.
    -
- **Updates From WCOED Members:** Each member present had the opportunity to share with the board what's happening with their business. update from WCOED Members & Guests
- **Guest Speaker:** Mike Gibbons – Candidate for US Senate

**Meeting was Adjourned**

**Next Meeting: May 14, 2018**