

Wyandot County Office of Economic Development

BOARD MEETING MINUTES Monday, July 8, 2019

Attendees: Michael Augenstein, John Barnes, Andy Bishop, John Caldwell, Bill Clinger, Lenny Clouse, Frank Gibson, Kathy Grasz, Rex Grasz, Brian Kimmel, Kurt Kimmel, Lori Marsh, Rob McClure, Ron Metzger, John Recker, Elaine Roynon, Steve Seitz, Ty Shaull, Elaine Tschanen, Tim Vaughn, Laurie Vent, Gary Ward

Guests: Melissa Ackison, Rich Ackison, Tasha Stanton

Meeting Called to Order: President, John Barnes

Approval of Meeting Minutes: Laurie Vent made a motion to approve the May 13, 2019 meeting minutes and a second was made by Lenny Clouse.

Financial Budget Update: Gary Ward reported that WCOED has spent \$300 more than last year but is still under budget and financially sound.

Director's Update

Old Business

- Project Updates
 - Village of Carey Developments - John Barnes reported:
 - Blanchard Valley Medical & Diagnostic Center is on schedule and plans on opening on August 5. There will be an open house Wednesday, July 31st – 4:00-6:00 p.m.
 - Casey's General Store construction has not started yet. There was an environmental assessment done, which usually means construction will follow soon.
 - Taco Bell has broken ground.
 - Vaughn Industries Expansion is going well.
 - Business Retention & Expansion (BR&E)
 - Another push has begun with the county's largest employers to respond to this year's questionnaire.
 - The questionnaire remains the same as last year so that trends can be more easily tracked from year to year.

- Out of the 17 responses so far, 75% indicated recruiting & retaining employees was a top challenge to doing business in Wyandot County, which is by far the number 1 issue of local employers.
- Of those who did report recruiting difficulty, skilled employees were indicated as the hardest to find or recruit.
- Only 65% of the respondents so far said they were in a growth state, while the remaining 35% said their business was stable. No one said business was declining.
- Only one respondent indicated they were still moving forward with a planned expansion. This is a project that was discussed in the past which includes some new rail siding and related material handling equipment with no additional job creation.
- Daycare
 - Greg has had more contact and a solid conference call with leadership of the large daycare provider based out of Toledo with facilities also in North Carolina.
 - After providing them with a lot of requested information, they backed out of a potential Wyandot County location citing unknown willingness and ability of area residents to afford quality daycare.
 - Greg continues to reach out to other providers in neighboring counties in which he consistently gets replies that they are not interested in opening another location as managing their current single location is difficult due to staffing and increasing regulations.
- Community Opportunity
 - In early April, Greg submitted a grant application to the United Way of Wyandot County to help fund the ongoing operational cost that are incurred for Community Opportunity. WCOED's half of that total cost is \$1,800 per year which covers system security, updates, and any changes requested as well as hosting fees.
 - Greg believes WCOED has been awarded that grant but has not received final confirmation. He has a follow-up meeting scheduled for July 22nd.
- Wyandot Employment Task Force
 - One of the major action items currently falls under the Communication workgroup, which is creating a Wyandot County HR Network for the benefit of HR professionals around the county.
 - This would not only be a medium for them to share resources with one another, but also for an outside individual to easily contact the HR representatives of our local businesses or vice-versa.
 - If you would like to have your HR leaders networking with this group, please contact Greg.
 - The Task Force is beginning to organize a 'roadshow' where task force members visit local organizations to let them know about the structure, mission, and progress of the group. There are speaking

engagements currently lined up with Rotary, the Young Professionals, Carey Village Council, and Safety Council.

- Project Lead Tracking
 - Since the May meeting there were 4 new leads for existing buildings
 - The one direct lead was from a broker looking for an available building of roughly 10,000 SF or a 3 acre parcel in Upper Sandusky. Greg forwarded quite a bit of information on parcels along the E. Wyandot Avenue corridor.
 - All of the leads from the state were for fairly sizable buildings of 100,000+ SF, which Wyandot County does not have.
 - Still in the running for Project Film – a specific NW Ohio lead for a roughly 20,000 SF building or a build-to-suit option. Greg has been working with Lenny and Adam at Clouse Construction and was able to quickly turn around an RFI for this lead on a 2.5 acre site in the Upper Sandusky industrial park, and the proposal is still in the running.
 - This lead is for a manufacturer of specialty plastic products that would invest roughly \$3M and create 30 jobs.
 - Year-to-date: 37% drop in building leads compared to 2018 (2018 – 24 ; 2019 – 15)
 - There has been only 1 new site lead since the last meeting.
 - Year-to-date: 1 less site lead than this time in 2018. (2018 – 5; 2019 – 4)

New Business

- New Members
 - WCOED welcomes 2 new members this month:
 - Mid-Ohio Energy Cooperative – Silver-level Member. Board representative will be Mike Augenstein, Director of Member Services & Community Relations
 - Blanchard Valley Health System – Gold Member. Board representative will be Elizabeth “Beth” Book, Director of Revenue Cycle
- Property Updates
 - Many commercial & industrial buildings changed hands over the past few months:
 - The former Care Caskets facility in Wharton was purchased by Joint Properties (Jay Gretzinger) in early June. Jay already has 20,000 SF of the building leased, but has another 50,000 SF available to lease for warehousing or light manufacturing space. Looking for \$0.15 - 0.25 / SF.
 - Joint Properties also acquired the former Wagner Ford property on Findlay Street back in May. All Greg could share at this time was that we could expect to see a new retail/service operation begin to take shape in that building sometime in the future.

- Casey's officially closed on the former Certified Oil station site and 4 adjacent homes in Upper Sandusky in early June giving the new fuel and convenience store location a roughly 220' x 192' area.
- First Citizens National Bank acquired the adjacent building that housed Children's' Village for many years in Upper Sandusky. Rob McClure reported that they closed on that property in December and they will be removing the back part of the building and doing some remodeling to the front.
- The former data operations center owned by First Federal Bank on Tarhe Trail was sold to Wyandot Memorial Hospital in late June. Ty Shaull reported that the hospital plans to relocate some of its non-clinical departments into this facility and take advantage of the building's networking capabilities. Departments relocating include Financial Services, Medical Records, Payroll, Marketing, and IT. Ample parking at the Tarhe Trail building will also help to alleviate the congestion at the hospital.
- New Projects
 - Wyandot Memorial Expansion
 - Ty reported on the hospital's planned expansion includes 3 new operating rooms, and central sterile and combined prep/recovery spaced for patients. This expansion will be on the north side of the hospital where the current helipad is located. The medical building to the south of the hospital will be torn down and the helipad will be relocated there. Ty shared a couple of pictures of what the new structure will look like.
 - They hope to break ground in October.
 - Wyandot Job Growth Rate – Recent PR:
 - Columbus, experienced 18% job growth between 2010 and 2018, but Wyandot's was 23% and Holmes' was 20%.
 - Shortly after the last board meeting Greg did an interview the WOSU-NPR live public affairs talk show All Sides with Ann Fisher.
 - That was then followed up with an online article and press release on this benchmark that made the rounds online, through local papers, and Greg got it placed in a recent issues of the Toledo Business Journal and Ohio Economic Development Association newsletter.
 - Kalmbach's Truck Wash
 - Andy Bishop reported that is coming along very slowly. There have been many weather delays.
- Upper Sandusky Schools Business Advisory Council-Laurie Vent and Tasha Stanton reported:
 - The school is currently going through what was successful last year, and what they need to expand on.
 - Tasha said her goal was to see what the students want. She feels that in order to get students to stay or return to Wyandot County it is more of a social issue-they need something to do. They want to know what

Wyandot County has to offer them when they have finished their workday. This is the information that she is getting when she talks to the students. She also expressed that students need to know more about what Wyandot County has to offer as far as employment opportunities.

- WCOED members continued the discussion on ways to reach students, to show them what Wyandot County employers have to offer and how to teach students life planning.
- Miscellaneous Items
 - Annual Dinner Committee
 - Greg, John Barnes and Greg Knestrick met in late May. The date of this year's annual dinner will be Thursday, Nov. 7th.
 - It is to be held at the new Moreno's banquet hall, The Vault, in Carey.
 - They have reached out to a potential speaker, but nothing has been finalized at this time.
 - Wyanstock Update - Brian Kimmel reported:
 - Brian thanked the many sponsors and said that it would not be possible without them. Reported sponsorships totaled over \$12,500.
 - This was the 6th year and this year they expanded the event to include Friday night as well as Saturday. Friday night had over 500 people in attendance and Saturday night had a typical crowd of roughly 1,000.
 - He reported that they took in over \$27,000 during the event, and expect to net close to \$17,000 this year after expenses. This money goes back into community scholarships and other charitable donations.

Meeting Was Adjourned