

Wyandot County Office of Economic Development

Board Meeting Minutes Monday, May 10, 2021

Attendees: Michael Augenstein, John Barnes, Conor Brobston, Dave Courtad, Jason Eibling, Doug Frisch, Frank Gibson, Mark Johnson, Brian Kimmel, Greg Knestrick, Sarah Lenhart, Ken Lucius, Angel Martin, Kyle McColly, Cassie Miller, Greg Moon, Jennifer Rathburn, Lyneen Reinschell, Brian Tschanen, Elaine Tschanen, Amy Wood.

Guest: Roger Hunker, APEX Clean Energy

Meeting Called to Order by President Greg Knestrick at 4:00 pm.

Approval of Meeting Minutes

- Doug Frisch made a motion to approve the March 8, 2021 meeting minutes and John Barnes seconded the motion.

Financial Update

- Greg reported that WCOED was running under budget. There are currently about \$1300 in receivables in which he will talk to Sara Pahl about. Dave Courtad made a motion to accept the financial report and Cassie Miller seconded the motion.

Old Business

- Wyandot Improvement Network ("WIN")
 - Poggemeyer Design Group, who is leading the community branding initiative came into town on April 29th to host kickoff meetings. A project team made up of the WIN board members was assembled along with a larger steering committee group that will help to inform and carry out the effort. There were morning meetings of these 2 groups and in the afternoon tours of the county and its municipalities were given.
 - This is a total \$34,600 project that will rebadge the county and its municipalities with similar branding with the outcome specifically being branding for The City of Upper, Village of Carey, and Wyandot County. All 3 entities have contributed \$4,000 toward the project, and the WIN itself will match \$4,000, which covers the first 2 project phases.

- Two grant applications have since been completed to fund other phases of the project, and formal supporter funding for other community organizations has been established.
 - An additional application for funding from the Fantasy of Lights was also completed last week.
 - Jason Eibling, WIN chairman, added that the Village of Sycamore was also heavily considering building branding for itself as a deliverable of this project.
 - The next step will be to spread information and awareness about the branding initiative to community stakeholder groups and to the larger public. Starting this week, some of the project steering committee will be presenting that information to groups like Rotary, Lions, City Councils, etc.
 - In ja few short weeks, a community wide survey developed by Poggemeyer will be released to capture ideas and feelings that residents, workers, and visitors have of Wyandot County and these specific communities developing branding.
 - Downtown Market Analysis
 - The reports for Upper Sandusky and Carey were posted a couple weeks ago and are available on the WCOED website.
- Project Updates
 - Project LP
 - NGL Supply Company is working on developing 10 acres on CH 35, which will operate under Sycamore Terminal Company, LLC (STC).
 - A meeting with the Ohio Rail Development Commission board was held in March.
 - ORDC offered a \$50,000 grant to help offset the cost of new rail siding as well as up to \$500,000 in low interest loans.
 - The total project is estimated at \$5.5M and will create 2 full time jobs.
 - Koehler Trust Property Development
 - The 146-acre property on the north end of Upper Sandusky continues to move through the SiteOhio authentication process.
 - Last week there was a virtual training held with the leading site selection firm for the program, along with the site owner and local utility partners from the City of Upper Sandusky & Sycamore Telephone Company. The training covered how this local team of experts would go about hosting an actual prospect visit at the site.
 - All studies have been completed (Geotechnical Report, Surface Water Delineation, Phase I Cultural Resources Study, Threatened and Endangered Species Preliminary, Site Appraisal, Utility Infrastructure Assessment, and Constraints to Development Site Assessment Study).
 - The Wetland Delineation did identify a .20-acre wetland area that is likely to be confirmed by the Army Corp. of Engineers in the next few months.
 - Although the archeological study did not identify a need for further exploration, after review of the findings the Ohio Historic

Preservation Office came back with 2 areas representing a total of 10 acres of which it is asking for further exploration.

- This was due to ODOT archaeologists finding a number of prehistoric artifacts back in 1993. Therefore this 10 acres will be removed from the total 140+ acres of the site for purposes of the SiteOhio authentication process.
- Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)
 - The 4-county CEDS involving Wyandot, Crawford, Richland, and Ashland counties is well underway.
 - The Steering Committee, including Greg and the other economic developers from each county is meeting bi-weekly.
 - There is also a larger Community Advisory Committee that features a diverse range of roughly 40 total stakeholders.
 - There are 3 WCOED executive officers, Greg Knestrick, Rex Grasz, and John Barnes, as well as Dave Courtad, Paul Wagner, Jason Eibling, Ty Shaull, and Mark Johnson representing Wyandot County.
 - This group had its initial meeting 3 weeks ago and is slated to meet every 1.5-2 months throughout the roughly 12-month long process.
 - Soon there will be targeted surveys distributed to help inform the SWOT analysis of the 4-county region as well as areas of focus.
- Investment Exploration
 - At the last WCOED board meeting, Chris Daris with Edward Jones, went through a few proposals outlining investment options.
 - This came about because WCOED's bank account has significantly increased in recent years and is resting near \$200,000.
 - Since that meeting the executive committee deliberated on the idea. Greg and Greg Knestrick had another in-person meeting with Chris on these options.
 - The executive committee came together on a proposal that they would like to put to the larger voting board today.
 - Some of the consensus was that WCOED could sustaining operations for at least 2 years with no income at all, and therefore the group was proposing a \$50-60,000 total investment.
 - The group also wanted to look at a conservative investment option to be on the safe side.
 - What the WCOED executive committee came to agreement on, and what is being proposing today is that the WCOED invest \$30,000 into the all-stock portfolio.
 - Doug Frisch made a motion to accept the proposal. Frank Gibson made a second and the motion passed unanimously by way of voice vote.
- Upper Sandusky Planning & Zoning
 - Greg reminded the board that the WCOED office officially took the reins of City Planning and Zoning as of March.

- Since that time, and since the weather has been breaking, zoning has been very active in general, but a lot of time has been spent working toward zoning ordinance updates that are needed, and a revamping of the zoning application process and information available online.
 - All in all, within a couple months' time there should be a more efficient processes in place that will require less time to carry out these duties and make it easier for customers on the other end of the process.
- Project Lead Tracking
 - Over the past two months there have been 3 new building leads and 7 new site leads.
 - As is indicated on the tracking sheet, one recent lead, Project Ice, Greg was able to complete the RFI for and had the Koehler Trust Property approved for the need. The need was 14 acres minimum to site a 125,000 SF facility.
 - Greg mentioned that If you also look closely, you will notice that 4 of those 7 site leads were for EV-related production operations.

New Business

- New Member
 - Marion Technical College joined the board as a gold level member. Mike Augenstein will represent the college on the board.
- Wage & Benefit Survey
 - Wyandot County has been included in a large-scale Wage & Benefits Survey effort of Industrial Employers. This is being accomplished through collaboration with our Seneca County ODJFS partners who were able to secure state level grant funding to carry out the project.
 - The survey is being conducted by Thomas P. Miller and Associates at a cost of roughly \$22,500 and will include the counties of Seneca, Hancock, & Wyandot.
 - Tomas P Miller & Associates is also being contracted by Sandusky County to carry out the same study for the Erie, Huron, Lucas, & Sandusky County area.
 - When all is said and done, WCOED will have valuable local data for Wyandot County employers and larger regional data to compare it to.
 - WCOED will provided feedback as to the survey questions a couple weeks ago, and the survey itself went live last Wednesday. Greg encouraged all of whom he's contacted to make sure to take part in the survey so there is a good local sample. These include manufacturers, logistics and warehousing type organizations.
 - The study report will be completed by the end of July.
- Upper Sandusky Tax Exemption
 - 2 weeks ago a CRA application for real property tax exemption was received from Primetime Excursions LLC.
 - Primetime Excursions is considering a new facility located at 230 Broadview Street (Highland Acres Subdivision, Lot 3), Upper Sandusky.

- The project would involve the phased construction of a set of 3 self-storage buildings and would invest roughly \$600,000 on the vacant 2.3-acre parcel. The project will begin in June 2021 and be completed by September 2021.
- WCOED worked to facilitate this CRA agreement with the City of Upper Sandusky, County, and the effected school districts. The negotiation team meeting was held last Tuesday and agreed to move forward with a 25%, 10-year exemption. At this rate and term, when factoring in annual associated fees, there was essentially no value to the company so they will not be moving the CRA forward.
 - Since Primetime Excursions has already purchased the property, all indications are that this development will move forward either way.
 - Primetime Excursions also owns the former Dance on Vance facility in Carey.
- Miscellaneous Items
 - Manufacturing Day
 - Due to students being unable to attend in-person tours this year, WCOED set up a turnkey offering with Dead Shark Productions (Tiffin) to film interviews and footage of processes at 4 different participating locations (Kalmbach Feeds, Vaughn Industries, Custom Glass Solutions, & Liqui-Box).
 - There are only 2 of them completed thus far. Those 2 have been posted under each company's respective Community Opportunity profile page and have shared the links with each of the local school districts so they can be viewed this year.

Guest Speakers

- Amy Wood, Northwest Career Ready – Shared information on the new Business Advisory Council that will include Carey, Mohawk, and Upper Sandusky Schools.
- Roger Hunker, APEX Clean Energy spoke on the Tymochtee Solar project.

Adjourn

- Kyle McColly made a motion to adjourn the meeting.