



# Russell County Economic Development and Convention & Visitors Bureau Advisory Board Meeting



*Thursday, May 11<sup>th</sup>, 2023 @ 7:30am @ Meridys*

## Meeting Minutes

### In Attendance

Duke Strobel, John Fletcher, Jon Birky, Don Varner, Karla Berry, Malinda Walker, Jim Cross, Jeannie Stramel, Aaron Talbott, Jon Quinday, Maggie Holloway, and Mike Parsons.

### Call Meeting to Order

Mike Parsons called the meeting to order at 7:32 am.

### Opening Notes:

The board received a letter of resignation, due to medical reasons, from Janet Funk. The office and board thanked Janet for her service to the board and wished her the best as she battles her ailments.

### Review and Approval of Minutes:

Jon Birky made the motion to adjourn, second by Karla.

### Review and Discussion of Financials:

A review of account 150 (CVB financials) and account 155 (eco devo financials) was held. No questions or concerns.

### Loan Programs:

Russell County Loan Program remaining balance of \$56,939.64. The monthly E-Community Profile was presented to the board. It was reported that the E-Community Program has two delinquent loans. Mike will work with NWKS PDCI and Network KS to get those back on track. No loan applications have been received, but several clients are exploring the programs.

### Clients/Projects/Programs:

**Luray Log Cabin** – Fundraising efforts update, quote from contractor for \$9,500 to replace roof. Partnership to help promote the project, roof work to start 2-3 weeks.

**Russell Play Park** - Discussion was held around the play park project, cost of 1.5 million, it was asked if a cvb funding request was suffice for their project, thoughts were that is draws people from other communities and off the highways, the board will entertain an application. We will reach out with an application at a later date.

**KDC Exporter of the Year Award** – Nomination for the award was made by the office for Agrilead, Inc., after further review the program is for international exports only – not US exports. The application was withdrawn.

**Office Structure/Duties** – Duke announced that after Ashley Wickhams resignation Mike was named Executive Director, Maggie was promoted to Tourism Director, and the receptionist position is currently being advertised.

**Project Rooster** – Business upgrades and expansion at LaSada Lodge.

**IDEA Works/Maker Space** – General introduction to the project – more to come next month. Discussion of LATCF funds and their potential use for project. Place for entrepreneurs to learn, network, and grow. Jim talked about the city cost of the buildings and the hopeful use of two downtown buildings.

**Project Bookworm** – Childcare project in Luray, partnership with Luray Community Foundation and Luray Childcare Coalition. Group home childcare provider in the old school building, working with Fire Marshall and grants.

**Recruitment Efforts** – working on pitching to Wally's for the RDI land, Louisiana clients (agricultural tarps manufacturing and distribution) still have potential to move to area – trying to keep contact.

**Project Quest** – Business startup (automotive industry), making plans and exploring funds - \$250,000. NRP incentive and use of program funds.

**Project Laser** – business startup (laser engraving), possible RCED Loan.

**Ash Apartments** – 9-unit renovation, exploring state incentives to find a fit, more discussion in the future, haven't presented findings/options to client yet.

**Intern Program** – number of interns was discussed, placement of said interns and the funding sources was also discussed.

**Potential Upcoming Programs** – request for quick books program – finding more information and cost, discussed other wants or needs for area programs.

**Bargin Bin Shopping** – new client looking for commercial space on main street, working to place him. SFSG was discussed, buildings were discussed.

### **Advertisements and Promotions:**

Much discussion was had about tracking advertisements and the possibility of using online promotions and QR codes to do it. The office requested advice on moving forward with large cost ads and how we track them. Further discussion was had about the benefits of digital media ads over paper. Maggie presented her newly designed ads for review.

### **CVB Funding Request Form Updates:**

The board was asked to review the application and make corrections/additions to make it work for them.

### **Additional Conversation:**

Further loan discussion was had about the process of loan approval and background checks. Mentorships for clients was discussed.

**Community Updates:**

Big Kansas Road Trip in Lucas next year, grants for tourism were discussed, Jon Quinday spoke about current city projects and endeavors, he also spoke with the board about comments/questions from past meetings and working together, and Duke spoke about the county and city working on an updated agreement.

**Motion to Adjourn:**

Jon Birky made the motion to adjourn, second by Karla.