



Russell County Economic Development and CVB Minutes

Date: 01/20/2022

Time: 7:30AM

Call to Order: Ashley Wickham at 7:31AM

In Attendance

Ashley Wickham, Janet Funk, Jon Birky, Daron Woelk, Trent Leach, Larry Hickman, Karla Berry, Mike Parsons via Zoom.

Approval of Minutes

Karla motioned to approve the November 2021 minutes; Janet seconded the motion. Motion approved.

Approval of Financials

Larry motioned to approve financials July 2021 through December 2021. Karla seconded the motion. Motion approved.

Russell County Loan Program

No report.

E-Community Loan Program

No report.

Economic Development Update

- **WKREDA Conf:** - December 8th & 9th, 2021 Russell County Economic Development hosted the WKREDA Conference. 50 participants from around the state attended the two-day conference at the Fossil Hotel filling up 23 hotel rooms. The conference was held during the day with a daycare presentation and a strategic planning workshop. Other activities included dinner at LaSada Lodge and an evening bowling session at Playdium Bowl. Russell County Economic Development hasn't hosted a WKREDA Conference since 2014.
- **Strategic Doing- Energy Center:** The goal of the energy center is to revitalize the oil patch museum and bring in all energy sources (adding wind and solar) and making it not only a museum, but a travel center and destination stop off of I-70 with a fueling station included on the 20 acres Russell Development Incorporated owns. Renderings of the project are available. Star Bonds (sales tax incentive through the State of KS) have also been discussed for this project to help repay for the project. No movement has been made currently, still in discussion phase.
- **Possible Housing Incentive Program:** Mike has developed a Housing Incentive Program. Planning on applying for grant funds from both Russell County Area Community Foundation and Dane G. Hanson in March of 2022. Program offers a range of incentives. Examples: paint program- grant for supplies and paint. Siding, windows & roof programs & outside remodels. Drafts of the plan are in place, modeled off a Norton, KS program. Grant donors (Dane G. Hanson is familiar with the program). Mike will present the drafts of the plan before grants are applied for.
- **Promotion Grant/Marketing Training:** Working with Fort Hays State University and others to bring Marketing Training to the area. Training will consist of 3 or 4 courses over a year. 75% of cost paid by Russell County Economic Development and 25% of cost paid by course attendees.
- **Childcare Task Force-** Program still in the works. No movement being made at this time.
- **Strategic Planning:** The plan is a working document on a continual basis. Main focuses and tasks have been identified. Tasks get added on as they come. (Additions & corrections can be made at any time). Review available at a different time.

Tourism Update

- **Upcoming Conferences** – Ashley will be going to Omaha, NE in February for International Boat & Travel Show, partnering with travel council to save money. This will determine if we need to have a booth set up in the future. This show is attended by families interested in traveling. In March Ashley will be going to Denver for the Denver International Sportsman's Expo.

Again, partnering with the travel council to save money. She will also be attending the Heartland Byway Conference in Leavenworth, May 3rd-5th. This is a National Conference that only comes to Kansas every now and then.

- **Billboards:** Do we change the Bob Dole Billboards? Do we include Spector or re-do?
- **Other News:** Ashely was voted to be Vice President of the NWKTC.

Funding Requests

No report.

Community Updates

No report.

Next Meeting

The next meeting will be Thursday February 17th, 2022 at 7:30am at Meridy's.

[illegible]



Russell County Economic Development and CVB Minutes

Date: 02/17/2022

Time: 7:30AM

Call to Order: Mike Parson at 7:35AM

In Attendance

Mike Parsons, Maggie Holloway, Jim Cross, Daron Woelk, Karla Berry, Malinda Walker.

Approval of Minutes

No quorum.

Approval of Financials

No quorum.

Russell County Loan Program

Current Balance- \$50,321.12. Mike is working on one delinquent loan. Itchy Trigger Finger loan is now closed out.

E-Community Loan Program

All loans are current, no delinquent loans. There is no longer a financial limit per region set by Network KS. We have given out 7 loans, a total of \$239,500.00.

Economic Development Update

- **SBA-** Working with Northwest Kansas Planning & Development Commission. We currently have 4 clients that are pursuing or going to pursue approximately \$1.2 – 1.4 million in SBA loans locally. 2 clients are in Russell City and 2 are in Russell County for expansions or startups. 2 are expansions, 1 is the purchase of an existing business and 1 is for startup.
- **Legislative Update-** Attended WKREDA's legislative meeting. Discussed expanding the budget for moderate income housing & affordable childcare. Mike also attended the Farm Bureau legislative meeting.
- **13 Ways-** Teamed up with Dane G. Hanson & Russell Specialty Books & Gifts with forming a "community book club" over '13 Ways to Kill Your Community'. 5-week program, 5 meetings to discuss the book. We will advertise this club and facilitate this book club. Meeting's will be at 12:00pm in Russell. After this class it has been discussed hosting one in Lucas later.
- **Annual Report-** Request city dues in March. Our dues are one tenth of the half cent sales tax evaluations. Mike has a presentation available for every city to view.
- **County NRP Update-** No movement being made at this time; project is on hold. We are waiting to see what the State is going to do. Currently stalled in senate.
- **Housing-** Mike is working on possible Waffle-Crete housing. Mike also plans to apply to Dane G. Hanson & RCACF for housing program funds.
- **OC Internship Program-** A partnership through Ogallala Commons. This year our goal to have 5 county wide internships. (We are not housing the interns, just finding them a sponsor and a host). Currently, Agrilead Inc. has agreed to sponsor 2 internships and host 1. Russell County Historical Society is going to host 2 interns and sponsor 1. We are talking with other entities like the City of Russell and Russell Regional Hospital.
- **Strategic Plan Update-** Working document that incorporates the NWKPDC comprehensive development plan. Mike is working with Kayla from the City of Russell on this. Housing is a huge goal on this-- new sub-division, senior living facility, incentive program on an annual level, increase development and restoration of rental properties. Childcare is another big goal with this project. Childcare Aware of Kansas is going to come join us to facilitate our first meeting. Looking for qualified people to be on the committee.
- **SBDC Programs or other wanted programs-** Our goal is to have more of those this year. We had 2 last year. These programs are free for us to host and facilitate county wide through SBDC and FHSU. Classes Mike would like to have- Resume/Cover letter writing training, Fundamentals SEO class, Business Plan Bootcamp & Life After Business.
- **Sunflower Electric Project-** Sunflower Electric wants to put in a 100+acre solar field east of Russell that ties into their grid. Supplemental energy during the peaks. Sunflower Electric hosted a meet and greet at the Fossil Hotel about it. There is an application with the county commissioners. Pending commissioners' decision.

- **Other Clients/Projects/Program-** 4 clients going through FHSU business plans currently. 3 businesses are startups, 1 business is expansion. BASE Grant letters of support for two clients. KIOGA is hosting mid-year convention here. We will be working with Andrea Krug Krause for visitor bags.
- **Other Discussion-** With new members we need to schedule a few meetings up in Lucas. New board members include, Malinda Walker, Jeannie Stramel & Morgan Jones. Meeting date is to stay on the 2nd Thursday of the week, if Mike cannot make it due to meetings, Ashley is supposed to present for him and vice versa. CVB Funding requests need to be discussed at the meetings instead of email.

Tourism Update

No report.

Funding Requests

No report.

Community Updates

Two fundraisers in Luray were held for fire relief. Quarter mania was put on and raised \$800.00+ for fire relief and Luray Community PRIDE did a taco bar/karaoke free will donation event bringing in \$6,682.23 for fire relief. Step Back in Time in Luray (Alice Hill) is still working on grants to combat food shortage. City of Lucas got their CDBG grants for water tower and nitrate plant, they got \$600,000.00.

Next Meeting

The next meeting will be Thursday March 10th, 2022 at 7:30am at Meridy's.

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Russell County Economic Development and CVB Minutes

Date: 03/10/2022

Time: 7:30AM

Call to Order: Mike Parson at 7:35AM

In Attendance

Mike Parsons, Ashley Wickham, Jim Cross, Trent Leach, Jeannie Stramel, Malinda Walker, Jon Quinday, Janet Funk.

Approval of Minutes

No quorum.

Approval of Financials

No quorum.

Russell County Loan Program

No update.

E-Community Loan Program

No update.

Economic Development Update

- **Project Cover**- Mike is working with the Kansas Department of Commerce & has responded to a RFI pertaining to a distribution center.
- **13 Ways**- Book club registration was closed at 16 participants. We are planning to eventually do one in Lucas or Luray. Program starts in Russell on next Monday. There has been a lot of interest in it. We currently have a waiting list for the next Russell Club.
- **wKREDA**- Mike attended wKREDA quarterly conference in Lincoln, KS. Learned about Historic Tax Credits, Rehabilitation Tax Credits, State and Federal. Plans to start out in Lucas and Luray first and apply for grant to get a survey done and do a district downtown for the National Register of Historical Databases. This would open eligibility for incentives, promotions, and others.
- **Project Doghouse**- Oilfield Business. Local man from Russell wants to buy the business from Great Bend and move it here. Estimated investment \$350,000-\$400,000. Business plan has been started. Exploring the SBA 504 plan.
- **OC Internship Program**- Currently have sponsors/hosts for 4 out of the 5 students. RCHS wants video and audio and a 2-year program, so they are still narrowing down students for that position. Mike & Jeff Ochampaugh plan on taking the interns to the retreat in Texas in June to get the students trained and started. Participating businesses: Agrilead, Inc. & Russell County Historical Society.
- **Dorrance Park**- Been working with them to get a new restroom and park equipment for the park. Helping them apply for 3 different grant sources.
- **Confidential Project**- Plans to close April 1st, 2022. Possible E-community loan for financing a business remodel.
- **Sunflower Electric Project**- Sunflower Electric meet with commissioner on Monday 3/7/22. Presented a PILOT. \$516,260 for a 10-year total – based off of the current mil levy. That is \$35,212 per year (\$352,120 over 10) from PILOT and then \$16,414 per year (\$164,140 over 10) of additional property tax on the land based of the current mil levy.

Tourism Update

- Ashely went to Omaha Nebraska for their National Sport Show. She went as part as Northwest Travel Counsel. Show was extremely family oriented, and she wants to go back next year just as Russell County. Attractions in Lucas and Wilson Lake spiked a lot of interest.
- In two weeks, Ashley plans on going to Denver for their National Sport Show. A lot of hunters attend the Denver show.
- In May is the National Byway Conference in Leavenworth, KS. Its only in KS every few years.
- She is working with her billboard reps, interested in purchasing one or two more.
- Hosting Northwest Travel Council event in October at Granny Mae's.

- Ashley and Maggie are in the process of going through the current guides for updates. Hopefully by next March we will have updated ones.
- Transient Guest tax looks good, passed fiscal year 2020 and are close to passing fiscal year 2021.
- We sponsored a giveaway with 1-70.

Funding Requests

No request.

Community Updates

- Jon Quinday spoke about Property Taxes, Smoky Hills PBS, the 24/7 expansion, the Holiday Inn Express, Wastewater project, the red jackets & a grant for the sidewalk going down 281.
- Lucas- Trent Leach & Jeannie Stramel spoke about the Nitrate plant, Grassroots Art Center, Switchgrass Art Coop.
- Luray- Melinda Walker spoke about the P-Building, another limestone building, water rights (need to speak with the mayor).
- Janet Funk reported on the Closet Boutique

Next Meeting

The next meeting will be Thursday April 14th, 2022 at 7:30am at Meridy's.

[illegible]



Russell County Economic Development and CVB Minutes

Date: 04/14/2022

Time: 7:30AM

Call to Order: Mike Parsons at 7:27AM

In Attendance

Mike Parsons, Ashley Wickham, Maggie Holloway, Jim Cross, Trent Leach, Jeannie Stramel, Malinda Walker, Karla Berry, Jon Birkey, Daron Woelk, Don Varner, John Fletcher, Jon Quinday (Virtual), Janet Funk (Virtual), Guest- Alice Hill, Guest- Sarah LaRosh

Approval of Minutes

Karla motioned to approve minutes from February 2022 & March 2022 as written. Daron seconded the motion. Motion approved.

Approval of Financials

Larry motioned to approve financials from February 2022 & March 2022. Jim seconded the motion. Motion approved.

Russell County Loan Program

\$48,764.85 in program left. \$4,500.00 loan approved for a mobile snowclone business from Gorham.

E-Community Loan Program

No change to fund amount. Sarah LaRosh from NetWork Kansas gave an update about what programs they currently have going on.

Economic Development Update

- **Project Cover**- Out of state clients came to town, went on a tour. Interested in a location near I-70.
- **Russell County Food Consortium**- Alice Hill from Step Back in Time Food Market in Luray came in and gave an update on how they are doing and how they would like to grow in the next few years.
- **Historic Survey Process**- Mike would like to focus on Lucas and Luray first. Can apply next year for the grants.
- **Vacant Lot Database**- A database for vacant lots has been requested for Russell and Lucas. Connie from the Lucas Chamber is working on the Lucas Database.
- **Grant Work**- Currently working with Gorham Fire Department and Bunker Hill Fire Department on grants.
- **NRP Tax Abatement**- 5 year, 50%, hopefully countywide. 12 townships, 4 school districts & county. Only for unincorporated areas, minus the lake area. Pending public hearing notices.
- **13 Ways Book Club**- This next Monday is the final book club meeting day in Russell. Registration for the book club in Lucas is open. Russell currently has a waiting list for the net round in Russell.
- **City Dues Requests- Presentations**- City dues will be focused on next month for requests & presentations.
- **Workforce Recruitment**- Plan drafted- Mike plans on going to the Colorado State Fair with wKREDA to work a booth.
- **Confidential Projects**- 2 businesses, 1 outside city limits, 1 in city limits. Applying for SBA Funds- both expansions around the \$400,000.00 mark.

Other Projects

- Lucas has an eatery/coffee bar in the works. They are currently working on a business plan.
- Luray is working on water rights, options with the City of Russell have been discussed.

Tourism Update

- Transient guest tax is close to \$85,000.00. Numbers come out in 2 weeks.
- Upcoming events include- National Byway conference, National Travel Week (FB), Blessing of the Bikes
- Omaha Sports Show- Ashley would like to do a Russell County booth next year
- Denver Sports Show- Ashley was unable to attend.
- Ashley is looking for other Sports Shows to attend.
- New Hotel is working with the city for a building permit. Hotel will have 65 rooms.

Funding Requests

Old 40 Bar & Grill- Blessing of the Bikes- \$500 request. Karla moves to fund, Jim 2nds, passed unanimously.

Russell County Historical Society- \$1000.00 request. Jim moves, Daron 2nds, passed unanimously.

Community Updates

- Lucas is looking forward to their Easter Egg Hunt and Alumni. Had an Art Day on 4/1 & It's also Brant's 100 year anniversary.
- Luray has their Easter Egg Hunt scheduled, Friendship Day is being planned, Craftique registration has opened, Alumni is happening this year, a new event (Buzzards Fest) will also be taking place.
- Post Rock Limestone- Has a July 10th bus trip scheduled

Next Meeting

The next meeting will be Thursday May 12th, 2022 at 7:30am at Lucas Community Center.

[illegible]



Russell County Economic Development and CVB Minutes

Date: 05/12/2022

Time: 7:30AM

Call to Order: Mike Parsons at 7:32AM

In Attendance

Mike Parsons, Ashley Wickham, Jim Cross, Trent Leach, Jeannie Stramel, Malinda Walker, Daron Woelk (Virtual), Jon Quinday (Virtual), Janet Funk (Virtual), Maggie Holloway (Virtual)

Approval of Minutes

Jim motioned to approve minutes from April 2022 with a spelling correction. Jeannie seconded the motion. Motion approved.

Approval of Financials

Trent motioned to approve financials from April 2022. Jim seconded the motion. Motion approved.

Russell County Loan Program

No applications currently to review.

E-Community Loan Program

No change to fund amount. No applications currently to review. One business with a current loan has requested that they go down to interest only payments until things start picking up. This is up to the loan review committee and Network Kansas.

Economic Development Update

- **13 Ways Task Force - Book Club** – Task Force formed out of the Russell 13 Ways Book Club. Task force hosted a two-list exercise hosted in Russell. Around 20 people attended. A Community Round Table with community influencers was discussed with a monthly meeting to improve communication. Second book club has started in Lucas.
- **Training and Workshops-** Setting up workshops/trainings with SBDC at FHSU, SBA & KDR. Goal is to have one every month until the end of the year. We would like to have some in Russell and up North in Lucas/Luray areas.
- **Project T-Bone-** Butcher Shop, looking for the right facility and location. Project is moving forward.
- **Luray Water-** 8 wells they need to do something with before the end of the year. Looking for the right avenue. Waiting on more information from the State.
- **Project Toothache-** Dentist would like to operate in Russell Co. and Osborne Co. Already has Osborne Co. business. He's looking to expand to City of Russell.
- **NRP Tax Abatement-** Scheduling the public hearing (1 meeting for all townships) to approve. Then the school districts followed by the county & state. Moving forward.
- **Project Whitetail-** Moving forward. Bought the Global Building. He plans to turn it into an outdoor sportsman center.
- **2023 Budget-** No fund increase requested. ED budget sent to board via email.
- **Housing- MIH-** Developing plans and discussing options to apply for MIH later this fall. NCPC offering demolition & improvements matching grant funds.
- **Base Grant-** The state opened a program, not one Western Kansas project was funded.
- **Project Cover-** Client that came for a county tour. Looking for location close to interstate. Building looked at didn't meet their needs, but they saw the development sites and the client liked the location and the community. Communication is still open. We are still in the running.

Other Projects

- Luray "P" Building, Mike met with Luray Community Foundation. They are working on the "P" building. They need to raise funds for the roof.
- Lucas Café, working on his business plan.
- City of Dorrance- updating park and bathroom facilities. They have received a grant for their park.
- Alice Hill- Luray- Looking for grants

- Project RCA- Submitted for a SPA 504 loan last month. Moving forward.
- Vacant Lot Data Base – creating a data base with the city of Russell.

Tourism Update

- Attended the Heartland Conference in Leavenworth.
- Visitors Guide updates
- Good Karma got Social Media recognition by the state
- Blessing of the Bikes had record breaking numbers with around 500 bikes
- Bought two more billboards, one by Salina and one by Oakley.
- Will resurface billboards next year
- Hosted a blogger last year, she's still posting about Russell County
- Love Grass Festival is set for August 11th-13th

Funding Requests

None

Community Updates

- City of Russell been advocating the legislature to start funding a local tax reduction program and the county city revenue program.
- County is getting ready to work on budgets
- Lucas City can take their water advisory off due to the new water plant up and running
- Luray Alumni sent out letters for the "P" building funding out to alumni to help raise funds.

Next Meeting

The next meeting will be Thursday June 9th, 2022 at 7:30am at Meridy's.

[illegible]



Russell County Economic Development and CVB Minutes

Date: 06/14/2022

Time: 7:30AM

Call to Order: Ashley Wickham at 7:30AM

In Attendance

Ashley Wickham, Jim Cross, Jeannie Stramel, Daron Woelk, Karla Berry, John Fletcher, Jon Birky, Maggie Holloway, Mike Parsons (Virtual), Jon Quinday (Virtual)

Approval of Minutes

Jim motioned to approve minutes from May 2022. Jeannie seconded the motion. Motion approved.

Approval of Financials

Jim motioned to approve financials from May 2022. Jeannie seconded the motion. Motion approved.

Russell County Loan Program

No update.

E-Community Loan Program

No update.

Economic Development Update

- **13 Ways Task Force - Book Club** – Wrapping up in Lucas. Succession Planning Workshop is a focus.
- **Training and Workshops-** One training/workshop every month until the year is over. Workshops currently scheduled are Marketing & Customer Engagement Workshop in June, Content Marketing 101 in July, and Cybersecurity in August. Had a request from Russell Regional Hospital to bring in a FHSU Customer Service Training. Plan on applying for grant funds for that training.
- **Project 22-** Possible land purchase/ building expansion in the City of Russell, started a business plan.
- **Project Promise-** \$400,000 expansions, services, and employees. Moving forward. Filed paperwork with Kansas Dept. of Commerce. Possible NRP applicant if it goes through.
- **Project RCA-** \$300,000 investment through SBA. Application was approved through the board. Waiting to hear back.
- **Project T-Bone-** Butcher shop in the northern part of the county. Working on regulations.
- **Food Project-** Alice Hill is still moving forward on the project. They meet Friday to go over everything again.
- **Childcare-** There was a strategic planning meeting with USD 407 and Russell Regional Hospital. Formed groups with childcare focuses. Looking at a Co-op Center. We have 2 clients that are interested in starting up childcare. A group in Lucas is looking to do something with childcare also. Setting up meeting with Scott Sproul with the Economic Innovation Center. Looking at grants through Hanson.
- **Workforce Development** – Hanson/EICI has a grant program for our workforce program. Potential grant money of \$60,000.00 for different things. More details coming. Just released.
- **NRP Tax Abatement-** Public hearing has been scheduled. Meeting with all townships tonight to vote on the plan. Next up, School Boards.
- **Bootheel Tractor Parts Inc.** – Opened up a distribution center in Russell. Distribution for agricultural parts.
- **Project 123-** SBA application and business plan around \$750,000.00. New service to town, 5 to 10 jobs starting out.
- **Housing-** Developing program including incentives for fixing and cleaning up. Hoping to add support funds for the upper level RHID for sprinkler systems to be included. Vacant lot data base with City of Russell has helped to narrow down the lots available for building projects. Housing Assessment Tool- it's preferred that it's updated every 2 years not 5 years. We can use statewide assessments to add to the

surveys. 3 main areas to start: K-18, Hwy 40, and Russell. Probably utilize the Housing Workgroup that's now formed to start on housing assessment tool. Applications will go live in July, due in September. Developers are meeting today about our project for the triplex and duplex additions. Waiting to hear updates.

- **Community Round Table** – June 16th, 6:00PM at Masonic Lodge. Goal is to get communication going. Monthly round table meetings.

Other Projects

- Mike went to Texas for Ogallala Commons Intern Retreat. One of the new interns attended.
- Met with Keith Haberer, and two others. Discussed an Emergency Resilience Plan. They want to create for the region/state to help other communities when faced with something like the 4 County Fire. Keith and Mike plan on going to the commissioners to get further permission to continue.
- CDBG- Changes have been made. Water and Sewer & Community Facilities got dropped out. They say this is the only year (most likely). Hopefully next year we can apply for those again.
- Met with Purefield Ingredients CEO & project partner. Developing project.
- Budget Requests Reports are due – Discussed on Tuesday 21st meeting for City of Russell.

Tourism Update

- Appointed NW Kansas Rep for TAC. 4 times a year go to Topeka.
- Guest Tax- \$83,205.84 currently. Ending this month.
- Purchased 2 more billboards, one by Salina and one by Oakley.
- Registered for Tourism Conference in Wichita
- Media Conference in Abilene. We will be promoted at two tables.

Funding Requests

Waldo Fire Department- Waldo After Harvest Fireworks- Requested \$700.00 – Received \$1500.00

Luray Friendship Day – Requested \$500.00 – Received \$1000.00

Lucas Adams Apple Festival – Requested \$3000.00 – Received \$3000.00

Jim motioned to approve event totals of \$1500.00 for Waldo's After Harvest Fireworks, \$1000.00 for Luray Friendship Day, \$3000.00 for Lucas Adams Apple Festival. Jon Birky seconded. Motion approved.

Community Updates

- City of Russell – Housing project waiting on tax credits. Holiday Express purchased more land, ongoing project. Received funds for Edward Ave. Road Project. Water tower and sidewalk on South Fossil are being worked on. Discussing water infrastructure.
- Lucas- Main Street Café is still ongoing with a business plan. Waiting on a tax sale.

Next Meeting

The next meeting will be Thursday July 14th, 2022 at 7:30am in Luray

[illegible]



Russell County Economic Development and CVB Minutes

Date: 07/14/2022

Time: 7:30AM

Location: Luray Community Center

Call to Order: Ashley Wickham at 7:30AM

In Attendance

Ashley Wickham, Trent Leach, Jim Cross, Jeannie Stramel, Daron Woelk, Karla Berry, Janet Funk, John Fletcher, Malinda Walker, Mike Parsons, Jon Birky (Virtual), Maggie Holloway (Virtual), Guest- Alice Hill, Guest- Sarah LaRosh

Approval of Minutes

John Fletcher moved to approve minutes from June 2022. Jeannie seconded the motion. Motion approved.

Approval of Financials

John Fletcher moved to approve financials from June 2022. Jeannie seconded the motion. Motion approved.

Russell County Loan Program

Mike reported a balance of \$52,857.82, not including July's deposits. Brant's Market paid off their loan. One application in the process of being submitted, a business startup in Lucas (The Lounge), soon to be café on Main Street.

E-Community Loan Program

Mike reported on new programs. Loan review committee will need some training. One new program is called Grow Kansas, it's a loan and grant matching program. Currently no delinquent loans and no pending applications. Sarah LaRosh discussed the new programs & local & statewide funds.

Economic Development Update – Mike Parsons

- **City Dues** – 1st presentation to the City of Russell has been given. After the City of Russell presentation, all other cities in the county got their requests with explanation of dues via mail. If the other cities would like to request an in-person presentation, Mike would be happy to do so. Full amounts were asked across the board and updates will be given as the process moves forward.
- **NRP**- All 12 townships approved the NRP. The NRP is a 50% at 5-year term, capped at \$500,000.00. Application process will be open for 3 years and should be in place at the end of the year. Next step after townships is the 4 school districts. (407,399,299,112) 3 of those 4 districts have been met with and have public hearing notices scheduled and will vote on it at the end of this month and the beginning of next month. Next Monday 399 votes, August 8th, 407 & 299 vote. We are still communicating with 112. Goal is to have public hearings completed by August and to have paperwork to the state and approved by the end of the year.
- **Intern/Apprenticeship Program**- Joined by Alice Hill. Hannah Gideon, intern for Agrilead Inc. spent a few days with Alice Hill at Step Back in Time Food Market in Luray. Harvest Ceremonies are being scheduled for intern's final reports. There is an Intern/Apprenticeship Program (through Ogallala Commons) incentive for the City of Russell as part of their \$25,000.00 in dues. Waiting to see how everything works out with dues.
- **Maker Space**- Makerspace has been writing grants and have received a few including the Community Service Tax Credits. (\$72,278.00)
- **Project Promise**- Expansion of over \$400,000.00, Russell business expanding into the County. Confidential client. Has applied for incentives through the Kansas Department of Commerce. Those applications are in the process of being reviewed by the state. Has the potential of expanding the tax base and creating employment.
- **Project 123**- New business, over \$750,000.00 investment just outside the Russell City limits. Potential of hiring about 10 employees and are looking for a building. They are set up with Small Business Development Center to start a business plan.
- **Project T-bone**- Meat Processing Business/Butcher Shop has been discussed. Searching for location and right partner.
- **Project Shellshock**- Group of individuals that would like to start a trap-league. They are looking at land. Possibly pursue some loans.
- **Play Park** – Committee plans to re-do castle park--- all accessible playground. Cost around 1.5 million.
- **The Rendezvous**- Shared workspace. Found a possible building to be used for shared office/remote space. May take time to move forward due to waiting on the building to become available.

- **Housing- Emma Estates/Fixing Up, Russell Co.** – Randy Speaker from the Kansas Department of Commerce (Housing Specialist) and Scott Sproul, Northwest Kansas Economic and Innovation Center, were in Lucas and in Russell for meetings. Good turn out at both locations. Fixing up Russell County is a housing renovation incentive program being developed. Matching Grant fund system. Emma Estates- New realtor. Discussion was had about Emma Estates. 56 acres ready for development. Split up into 10 different parcels. All infrastructure is there. \$10,000.00 per acre.
- **Childcare-** A partnership/committee to help combat childcare has formed. There is currently a community childcare survey for Russell County. Working on long term plans-short term goals. Mike has 4 clients pursuing daycare startups. Exploring tri or fourplex for daycare.
- **Programs- Trainings- Workshops** – Content Marketing 101, July 27th at noon at Fossil Creek.
- **Bunker Hill Café/Food Consortium-** Back up for sale- at a reasonable price. Could be part of the food consortium program. Discussion was had that Post Rock Limestone Coalition showed interest in the building.
- **Dorrance- Park, Streets, Events-** Still brainstorming and they are applying for grants. They want to replace park equipment and build a new public bathroom.
- **Luray - Log Cabin/P Building-** Wyatt Mullender (9yo) has been raising funds to restore the log cabin. He's made around \$5,000.00 from donations and lemonade stand. Working to get the state historical preservation office in Luray for a tour and to try to find the right partner for the work on the cabin. The P-Building- needs saved. Roof will cost around \$160,000-180,000. The inside needs to be renovated as well. Trying to raise funds through donations and grants.
- **Lucas- Succession Planning, Café-** The Lounge is almost done with submitting their paperwork. Mike is working with Rick at SBDC on a Succession Planning Workshop.

Tourism Update- Ashley Wickham

- Transient guest tax is at \$83,205.84. Waiting on June numbers from the state.
- 2 new billboards. They are up, one out by Oakley and one East of Salina.
- 8 billboards total.
- Bob Dole and Arlen Specter billboard needs to be redone.
- August 3rd Ashley will be in Abilene for a Media Event held by the state.

Funding Requests

Ad Astra Music Festival requested \$3,000.00

Discussion was had about the funding amount for Ad Astra Music Festival. During discussion Jim Cross suggested funding \$5,000.00 instead of the \$3,000.00 Ad Astra Music Festival requested, Daron Woelk was in favor of that amount. The remaining board members were in favor of the \$3,000.00 requested. John Fletcher moved to approve the event request of \$3,000.00 for Ad Astra Music Festival. Karla seconded. All in favor except Jim Cross & Daron Woelk. Motion approved.

Next Meeting

The next meeting will be Thursday August 11th, 2022 at 7:30am at Meridys

[illegible]



Russell County Economic Development and CVB Minutes

Date: 08/11/2022

Time: 7:30AM

Location: Meridy's – Russell

Call to Order: Ashley Wickham at 7:30AM

In Attendance

Ashley Wickham, Jon Quinday, Trent Leach, Jeannie Stramel, Karla Berry, Janet Funk, Malinda Walker, Mike Parsons, Maggie Holloway, Jim Cross (Virtual)

Approval of Minutes

Jim moved to approve minutes from July 2022. Malinda seconded the motion. Motion approved.

Approval of Financials

Discussion was had about financials and where the remaining budget funds end up after the fiscal year. Ashley has been in discussion with Duke Strobel about eventually raising the transient guest tax and is going to ask him about the funds. Jon moved to approve financials from July 2022. Karla seconded the motion. Motion approved.

Russell County Loan Program

Mike reported that The Lounge in Lucas received a \$12,149.00 loan. There is one delinquent loan, business is working on getting current, has started to make payments.

E-Community Loan Program

Mike reported there are no withdrawals since the last board meeting. One prospect going through a business plan with the potential of a \$45,000.00 request. This might change since we now have the Grow Kansas Loan program through Network Kansas. All loans are current with the E-Community Loan Program.

Economic Development Update – Mike Parsons

- **Housing-Projects, MIH Applications** –Potential of a couple more duplexes in Russell. Needing a developer for the project. We are looking to apply for MIH Funds for the Luray & Lucas area for the purchase and renovations of existing structures. Fixing up Russell County is an incentive plan for fixing up structures, tearing them down, newly added under the program: sprinkler systems for upper-level construction. Discussion about matching funds needs to be had then presented to the county. Program comes out of the ½ cent sales tax fund. Once the program has been narrowed down, Mike will present it to the board.
 - **Discussion-** The ½ cent sales tax fund was discussed. Mike requests money from the 280 fund to go into fund 155. Mike will request information from the clerk about how the 280 & 288 funds work.
- **Child Care-Committee Update, Project Scope** Community Committee with the City of Russell, Hospital, Pure-field, etc., out of this committee a childcare survey was done. Almost 200 responses from the survey giving the committee good data to go off. A meeting was held with current & future childcare providers in the county at Fossil Creek Hotel & Suites. Good turnout along with Child Care Aware, Hansen Foundation & EICI. Programs and services were discussed for both current and start up providers. What they need the most is a “substitute” list. The school and hospital are planning on building a daycare center. Open only to employee’s children. The committee is looking at either a duplex (two group homes) with shared back yard or a modular. Budgets are also lined out. This is a work in progress.
- **Project Toothache-** New dentist prospect. Recruiting efforts and community tour planned for later this month.
- **KDHE Applications-** Applications for two water projects; Paradise and Rural District #4. NWKPC is facilitating them.
- **Project Hammock-** The Lodge in Russell- new manager, Samuel Killian. They are interested in improvements to the hotel. Energy efficient projects.
- **Project PGCI-** PGCI looking at \$150,000-\$200,000 worth of improvements & upgrades before harvest. Directed them to the SBA Funds. We might also be able to utilize the Grow Kansas Funds as well.
- **OC Intern Update-** Completed two internships this year and held a Harvesting Ceremony. Hannah Gideon and Emerson Nichols both did a great job. Hannah focused on Food & Ag & Emerson did QR Codes for the Historical Society’s Historic Walk. Economic Development offered \$15,000.00 worth of incentives through OC interns or apprenticeships for next year’s program. This incentive comes from the ED request to the City of Russell for their city dues.
- **KDC Business Awards-** Sending applications into the state. Submitting one application for each category. Local awards to be held before the end of the year.
- **NRP Update** – USD 299, 399 & 407 all approved the NRP. USD 112 will not be included due to district re-structuring. Should go to the commissioners and state in September.

- **Other Projects**
- USD 407- Have discussed facilities tour to start a tech-school program
- Russell Co. Fair had a rodeo this year, arena needs work. We have permission from the commissioners to help them apply for funds to update lighting & audio in the facility.
- Log Cabin in Luray- Not in the historical data base. Currently working with the state so the process can be started and so funds can be utilized.
- The Lounge, now open as of today.
- Project Shellshock – Wants to open a trap league, still looking for a place
- Development Database- Bring back to date.
- **Programs- Trainings- Workshops-** Cybersecurity is the next workshop. We have moved all workshops to virtual. On training per month.

Tourism Update- Ashley Wickham

- Advertising- USA Today Hunt & Fish ad, hunting regulations are coming out, KC Chiefs Yearbook ad. Working on the Northwest Kansas Ultimate Guide, Ashley is a part of that committee. Russell County currently has a full page, but she is going to talk to other local attractions to give them guide pricing to see if they want to be a part of it.
- Promotions- Playing cards with logos on the case, koozies, golf tee's & cups
- Trade Shows – Ashley attended the KS Media Event last week in Abilene, she's going to reach out to some of the travel writers to get the interested ones to Russell Co. State Fair- We will be represented by the Northwest Travel Council booth. Registered for the Monster Buck Classic in Topeka this January. In October, TIAK is being held in Wichita, Ashley is looking into the requirements for it to be held in Russell in the next few years.
- Working with the Play Park Committee to help them find funding.
- Gorham Community Development Association would like to add a splash pad.
- There is another Air B&B in Russell and getting set up.

Funding Requests

The City of Russell requested \$3,652.00 for billboards

Russell Main Street – Brew Me \$500.00/ Bricks, Broncs, BBQ \$500.00- requested \$1000.00 total.

Discussion was had about the funding of the City of Russell's Billboards. These funds would be to pay for them for one year. Due to increasing their contribution to ED they don't have funds set aside to continue the billboards. This would be to cover the rental cost and the resurfacing of the billboards. One other community attraction has been funded in the past for a billboard. There was concern that a precedent was going to be set with the other communities in the county about wanting CVB to fund their billboards as well. Trent motioned to approve \$3,652.00 in funding for

the City of Russell's billboards. Jim Cross seconded the motion. Motion passed 4 to 2; Karla Berry & Janet Funk opposed; Jon Quinday abstained.

Brew Me & Bricks, Broncs & BBQ have been funded in the past and are in good standing. Jon Quinday motioned to fund Russell Main Street \$1000.00- \$500 to Brew Me and \$500 to Bricks, Broncs & BBQ, Jeannie Stramel seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

Community Updates

- Lucas- Recycling trailer got pulled, trying to figure out why, Adam's Apple Festival is 8/27, still wanting a tax sale, had a ribbon cutting at the new duplex.
- Luray- Friendship Day is Sept. 4th, Craftique is Oct. 15th & the "P" Building got a \$500 grant.
- Russell- Discussed expansion on Edwards Ave, the Holiday Inn Express & the sidewalk construction.

Next Meeting

The next meeting will be Thursday September 8th, 2022 at 7:30am in Gorham.

[illegible]



Russell County Economic Development and CVB Minutes

Date: 10/13/2022

Time: 7:30AM

Location: Meridy's – Russell

Call to Order: Ashley Wickham at 7:28AM

In Attendance

Ashley Wickham, Mike Parsons, Maggie Holloway, Jon Quinday, John Fletcher, Jeannie Stramel, Malinda Walker, Janet Funk, Daron Woelk and Jim Cross

Approval of Minutes

Jeannie moved to approve minutes from August 2022. Jon Quinday seconded the motion. Motion approved.

Approval of Financials

Ashley went over the CVB financials. Accounts 150 (Operating Budget) and 410 (Tourism and Convention -Transient Guest Tax) are the CVB accounts. Transient Guest Tax funds from the state gets deposited into account 410 then gets transferred to account 150. CVB has five CDs; three have \$5,000.00 each, one has \$20,000.00 and the other one has \$30,000.00. The CD interest goes to account 150. Current cash in account 150 is \$165,082.67. If needed, the budget could be amended. Current cash in account 410 (not budgeted) is \$5,600.87. Mike discussed the Eco Devo financials. Eco Devo has five accounts. 155 (Operating Budget), 280 (Salaries), 158 (RCED Loan), 210 (Capital Improvements Fund), 497- (State Micro Loan Program -NO ACCESS; funds go back to the state). Half cent sales tax and capital improvement funds get deposited into account 280. The commission budgets \$360,000.00 for account 280 for salaries, anything over \$360,000.00 gets transferred into account 210. Account 155- Operating budget is \$180,000.00. The operating budget amount gets requested and gets moved from account 280 into account 155. What doesn't get used in account 155 at the end of the year goes back into account 280. City dues get deposited into account 155 and Storefront/Signage Grant funds come out of account 155. Eco Devo has three CDs. John Fletcher moved to approve financials from August 2022. Daron seconded the motion. Motion approved.

Tourism Update- Ashley Wickham

- Fiscal year 2022 Transient Guest Tax brought in the highest amount it has been in nine years at \$98,223.75. Fiscal year 2023 is currently at \$23,974.66 (without September numbers).
- Ashley attended Kansas Regional Roundtable for Tourism in Topeka. She is one of two Northwest Travel Council Reps.
- Ashley will be in Wichita for the TIAK conferences.
- Provided 130 visitor bags in October to Bricks, Broncs & BBQ, 300 bags to The Dream Theater and 25 welcome bags to the City of Russell quarterly for new residents. Ashley has reached out to other community organizations and business to help fill the new residents' bags.
- Hosting a NWKTC meeting at Granny Mae's on Oct. 25th.
- Ashley will be going to Denver in January for the Denver Sport Show and to Omaha in February for the Omaha Sports Show.
- Working on the new guide, hoping to have it in early 2023.
- Letters of Support- Wrote letters of support for the Play Park and the 4H Building Lighting grant.
- Partnering with Encore for Plaid on the Plains. We already have the bags.
- Kansas Bass Nation has rooms at Fossil Creek & The Lodge.
- Ashley presented to the Russell Leadership Class about tourism and guest tax.
- Gov. Kelly is going to announce the TASK Grant recipients next week.
- Ashley is going to purchase the 2021 Tourism Economics Data Reports for Russell County. The report cost is \$2500.00.
- Getting ready to promote hunting season.
- Ashley will be out of the office Oct. 26th – 31st.

Funding Requests

None.

Russell County Loan Program

No report.

E-Community Loan Program

No report.

Economic Development Update – Mike Parsons

- **Strategic Plan:** Living document that Mike updates. There are five major objectives/goals. Discussion about listing metrics for success, stating the completion of the projects and adding links to the appendix document. Going to bring it back to the board for official approval.
- **NRP-** The State says it will take six to eight weeks for approval. We're at week four. Mike called to check on the status of the documents – they had not started their review yet.
- **Grant Work:** Rural Champion Grant program – Two applications were submitted county wide. Neither applicant received the grant. Seed Grant Program, applications from Luray and City of Russell. Mike wrote LOS for both of those grants. Patty Driscoll on behalf of ROAR asked the county to do a grant for the 4H Building for new lighting and fans. Maggie took lead on the grant to RCACF. Currently working with Russell Saddle Club and other organizations for a grant to update the arena lighting at the 4H arena. The Fixing Up Russell County grant was submitted to RCACF. Still waiting on word from RCACF about the two grants that were submitted. Should have word by November.
- **Housing – Incentive Program-** Applied for a \$30,000.00 grant through RCACF, plans on submitting a grant to Dane G. Hanson for \$30,000.00 with a \$15,000.00 match from the county (half cent sales tax fund). Part of the plan is to have an advisory board on a housing incentive committee to review applications. Mike is planning on having online applications for this grant program. Fixing Up Russell County has three programs - paint, revitalization and dilapidated. The structure of the program can still currently be changed. Discussion was had about who can apply – landlords, renters, homeowners, occupied, un-occupied. Match requirement – a percentage has not been set. Emma Estates – First home is coming in to sell hopefully before the end of the year.
- **Childcare-** Received the bids for both modular and duplex style homes. Idea is to raise funds for childcare buildings around the county. The renderings are approved by Dane G. Hanson.
- **Tech/Trade School-** Toured Washburn and WSU with representatives from Russell High School. Goal is to implement some of the trade programs at Russell High School.
- **KDC & Local Business Awards-** Submitted applications for state business awards- Nominated eight business. An awards ceremony is currently being planned.
- **13 Ways-** Finished the 3rd book club. The Leadership Class invited Mike to talk about it.
- **RC-RFSA-** Rural Champions Grant- Luray entity applied and didn't get it.
- **Storefront/Signage Grant Program** – Opened Oct. 1st and will close the first week in January. Matching Grant up to \$2000.00. The program awards seven grants.

- **Other Projects**

- Shared Workspace – currently exploring location and structure of entity.
- Wyatt’s Log Cabin – working with state and federal, moving along.
- Makers Space- assisting wherever possible to support their efforts.
- Paradise Grain – is looking at doing an expansion and currently exploring loan programs.
- Development Website – Mike and Maggie are working on updating the website.
- Billboard – Mike took over one of Ashley’s billboards. The plan is to do a billboard grant program with two businesses sharing a billboard. Grant program would be on two-year terms. East bound – I-70 and Toulon Exit. Switch up the Storefront/Signage program so we could put those funds towards the billboard grant. Plans on having a three-person committee for the applications.
- Ogalla Commons and YEC (Youth Entrepreneurship Challenge) – Working to develop a partnership at RHS for these programs – former partner is no longer working at USD 407.
- Marketing and Customer Engagement Workshop – Oct. 27th via zoom at 1:00pm.
- Leadership Class- Mike presented to the leadership class. They may take the lead on the 13 Ways Book Club “task force”

Community Updates

- Luray Craftique is Oct. 15th, Chicken Dinner Fundraiser and Stag are all coming up in Luray.
- School district update for Lucas.

Next Meeting

The next meeting will be Thursday, November 10th, 2022, at 7:30am at Meridy’s.

[illegible]



Russell County Economic Development and CVB Minutes

Date: 11/10/2022

Time: 7:30AM

Location: Meridy's – Russell

Call to Order: Mike Parsons at 7:30AM

In Attendance

Ashley Wickham, Mike Parsons, Maggie Holloway, Jon Quinday, John Fletcher, Jeannie Stramel, Malinda Walker, Janet Funk, Daron Woelk, Trent Leach, Karla Berry, Jon Birky and Jim Cross

Approval of Minutes

John Fletcher moved to approve minutes from October 2022. Jeannie Stramel seconded the motion. John Quinday opposed. Motion approved, 9 to 1.

Approval of Financials

Mike reviewed the Economic Development funds with a year-to-date diagram to help explain the separation of accounts. The diagram was presented to all board members in their packets. Salaries and operating expenses need to be kept separate. Jon Birky moved to approve financials from October 2022. Daron Woelk seconded the motion. Motion approved.

Russell County Loan Program

Russell County Loan Program comes out of fund 158. The account has a remaining balance of \$50,061.04. Payments from Lux Detail stopped. Due to failure to pay, the account is going to Dan Krug. The Lounge in Lucas might request some leniency for a few months, account is currently not delinquent. No loan applications in currently.

E-Community Loan Program

No delinquencies currently. There are some business plans being developed that might pursue the E-Community Loan funds and/or the Grow Kansas funds. Interest rates on the E-Community Loans are 4%-5 year and 5%-10 year.

Economic Development Update – Mike Parsons

- **Economic Updates:** Legislative Session- WKREDA is updating their platform. The legislative committee has discussed calling a meeting for legislative updates.
- **Fixing Up, Russell County Incentive Program:** The plan was to apply for \$30,000.00 from RCACF; \$30,000.00 from Hanson and match with \$15,000.00 from the county half cent sales tax for a total budget of \$75,000.00. Eco Devo did not receive the grant from RCACF. They were not in favor of the program. We will re-evaluate the program.
- **Child Care Updates-** There is confusion between the two childcare groups. One group is Russell Regional Hospital & USD 407. Their childcare program is employee based. The other group is more community focused, with the goal of opening more childcare facilities for all county residents. They are two different projects, going two different directions but going after the same funds. Discussion was had about letting one group go first so the two groups won't be battling for the same funds at the same time. An incentive program for the childcare providers has been discussed. Eco Devo and the City of Russell has asked the Chamber to partner and lead that program.
- **YEC/CYA:** YEC (youth entrepreneurship challenge- Network Kansas) CYA (commonwealth youth academy- Ogalla Commons). Mike is working with both of those programs through RHS. He has a meeting with Brad Banker today to discuss the programs, anticipating a February date for YEC and CYA date later in the year. This would be the second year for the YEC program at the high school. The Jag program was briefly discussed also.
- **Strategic Plan Review/Changes-** Pending update. Goal is to have it ready for the board next meeting.
- **Project Pivot-** Confidential client pursuing assistance.
- **Project Blank Canvas-** New client. We are reviewing the development opportunity profile and assessing the needs of the county to see what fits the client. Child Care was not an option.
- **Project Lantern-** Confidential client pursuing assistance.
- **Business Awards-** 8 Business nominated- one business (Good Karma Micro-Dairy) received a regional award; the rest received merit awards. Ceremony will be December 5th in the Commissioners Chambers.

Other Projects

- Workforce Recruitment Plan- Grant opportunity available. We need to get together with the major employers in the county and demonstrate the need in our workforce. Russell County can apply for \$60,000.00 through the Northwest Kansas EICI (Economic Innovation Center Incorporated) to use as a recruitment tool.

- Tax Abatement – Received the interlocal back from the state yesterday. Two words needed to be changed. Dan Krug changed the wording and sent it back to the state.
- Billboard Grant Program- Discussed with commissioners on Monday. Billboard by Toulon is more suited for Gorham/Russell businesses. Need to find another billboard to the East for the other side of the county. The commissioners will be the review board for the grant.
- Business Survey- The office is developing a Business Survey. The goal of this survey is to showcase the needs of the business community. Should be ready by the first of the year.
- LATCF (Local Assistance Tribal Consistency Fund) – Has funds available for cost sharing counties. \$50,000.00 this fiscal year, \$50,000.00 next fiscal year. Russell County is eligible. Working with the Treasurer's Office to apply. Must apply by January 31st, 2023.
- Economic Development policy update is in review.
- Women in Business Workshop- Planning on having a ladies night.

Tourism Update- Ashley Wickham

- Ashley hosted the Northwest Kansas Travel Council Meeting in October at Granny Mae's. About 20 people attended.
- Hunting season is in full swing—Hunting banner is up, and radio ads are playing. Karla hosted a youth hunt last weekend at her place. There are a lot of community meals being held this weekend over the county for the hunters and community members.
- Task Grants- Grassroots Art Center received one of the grants.
- New Guide- should have it sometime in the first couple months of the new year.
- New Kansas Travel Guides will be in this week or next week.
- Trade shows start in January- Denver & Omaha
- Ashley attended a tourism conference in the last month. Had about 250 people attended. Ashley received an award.
- Providing bags for Plaid on the Plains/a partnership with Encore.

Funding Requests

Russell Main Street – Requested \$250 for the Lighted Christmas Parade and Weihnachtsfest. Jim Cross motioned to give Russell Main Street \$500.00 total for their funding request. John Quinday seconded; motion passed.

Community Updates

- Russell – Projects on hold due to supply chain issues. Anticipating a large load growth with utilities so they are working to find better options. Edwards Ave. project is in progress.
- Lucas – Grassroots Art Center received the TASK Grant for a new gallery space upstairs. Hiring a new city worker. Still working on the water tower and nitrate plant. Lucas currently has no recycling.
- Luray- Stag/Stagette on Saturday, Wyatt is still working on raising funds for the log cabin. In Dec. the Madrigal Fest is planned for the 4th.
- Russell County purchased a compactor for the landfill.

Next Meeting

The next meeting will be Thursday, December 8th, 2022, at 7:30am at Meridy's.

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