



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

