



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



Thursday, October 19th, 2023 @ 7:30am @ Meridys

Meeting Minutes

In Attendance

Duke Strobel, John Fletcher, Karla Berry, Kayla Schneider, Aaron Talbott, Dustin Madden, Jon Birky, Don Varner, Jeannie Byers-Long, Lisa Sandberg, and Mike Parsons.

Call Meeting to Order

John Flecher called the meeting to order at 7:31 am.

Opening Notes:

Jon Quinday is no longer on the board – Jeannie Byers-Long was appointed as his replacement. Thank you to Jon for his years on the board.

Review and Approval of Minutes:

John Fletcher made the motion to approve, and Duke Strobel seconded with no corrections, motion carried.

Review and Discussion of Financials: The county budget provided by the clerk's office does not run by the line item – the bord requested to see where we stand YTD by line item on each budget. The 2024 budget and YTD expense and report is included in the packet.

Loan Program Updates:

The E-Community loan report is included in the packet -it shows one delinquent loan, the client did reach out to the office requesting information. After reaching out to NWKS PDC, they did receive a check. We will continue to follow this loan to make sure it stays current. Mike is still working with multiple clients, but there are no applications on his desk currently.

Projects/Clients:

Senior Housing Complex- Potential land and complex layout – working with the city, developers, and contractors. Next steps: city ED application, CBA at WSU, and agreement. The state application is due in January.

Luray Community Center / Bank Building: Purposed purposes of Community Center include kitchen, market, gym, thrift store and daycare. Applications and paperwork submitted to the state and DGH – Water and sewage infrastructure issues are holding up the project. They have \$4,600.00 of the \$10,000.00 project cost.

Dentist recruitment: Dr. Jones retires in the spring, and we don't want to lose access to dentistry in the county. We are reaching out to Jones to promote and offer help with recruitment.

Storage/Distribution Facility: A Client has reached out to Kayla at the City of Russell. They are partnering to hopefully/provide resources and options for the building on Main Street.

Current Business Plans: There are several going through the process, however, the follow through action is slow.

Programs/Events:

Storefront/Signage Grant Program + Big Kansas Road Trip- Applications are open, they close on January 5th, 2024. The total funds that are available are \$19,000.00, it is usually \$14,000.00. Applied for and received a \$5,000.00 grant to help the COL with the BKRT.

Job Fair- There were six participants and two will be reaching out for assistance on resumes.

Existing Childcare Provider Training / Becoming a Childcare Provider- It is scheduled for the Winter. 20 providers from the area to update or renew their needed training.

Banker/Investors Luncheon- Looking to schedule for this winter, bringing our bankers, investors, and relators together for a lunch to learn about office and regional partner resources.

Office Miscellaneous:

SBDC Changes- FHSU will no longer be our partner for SBDC – It will now be run out of the Innovation Center in Norton. These changes should take place around the first of the year.

½ cent sales tax- KRSL, social media and newspaper promotions have started. Spoke at a few meetings and planning to speak and present more. Kayla Schneider suggested Mike present to Rotary.

Visitor Guide – The first draft is being finalized and going to the printer ASAP. We will have them in hand by January 1st, 2024.

Promotional video/grant update: The contract with the state has been signed - adjustments need to be made, communication with the state has been started. Maggie is looking to update bids.

USD 407 Steering Committee- They have a meeting and have spoken with a new architect and engineer, hoping to present a plan soon.

Economic Development Policy Updates: Needs updating, stating the process with the commission.

CVB Funding Request:

None.

Community Updates, Additional Announcements, and Open Conversation:

Other topics were highlighted that were not included in the meeting such as Lucas Art Center elevator, Purple Heart Ceremony, Craftique, log cabin, A Step Back in Time, Dr. Jones retiring, USDA housing, job fair, and childcare training. Full Circle Floral is where Lana's used to be and is run by Holly Calvin. Fall turkey season being suspended was also discussed.

Motion to Adjourn:

Don Varner made the motion to adjourn, Jon Birky seconded, motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 8:15 a.m.