



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.

