



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



Thursday, July 20th, 2023 @ 7:30am @ Meridys

Meeting Minutes

In Attendance

Duke Strobel, Karla Berry, Malinda Walker, Jeannie Stramel, Aaron Talbott, Kayla Schneider, Dustin Madden, Maggie Holloway, and Mike Parsons.

Call Meeting to Order

Mike Parsons called the meeting to order at 7:30 am.

Opening Notes:

Welcomed Kayla Schneider to the board and introduced our new receptionist, Lisa Sandberg.

Review and Approval of Minutes:

Aaron made the motion to approve, Duke seconded with no corrections. Motion carried.

Review and Discussion of Financials:

To date, 47% of the CVB budget has been expended, leaving a remaining balance of \$48,534.20. 39% of the Economic Development budget has been expended, leaving \$150,960.96 remaining.

Loan Programs:

No applications currently. Conversation was had about delinquencies – there is currently one. The annual Network KS E-Community Agreement was discussed and signed by the board. Training for the loan review committee was also discussed.

Projects/Clients:

CDBG-CVR – With the assistance of Northwest Kansas Planning & Development Commission, the office is applying for \$150,000 of grant funds. If received, eligible for-profit Russell County businesses can apply for these funds for upgrades such as: point of sales systems or e-commerce enhancements. Applications will be reviewed by the board.

Project Sofa – Perfect Print is pursuing the CDBG - Commercial Rehabilitation program in the amount of \$250,000. The office will assist however possible in the process.

Project Whitetail – New sporting goods business in Russell.

Housing – The priority of senior patio homes was set. Partners notified of project. Meetings to be schedule soon.

LATCF I.D.E.A. Works Maker Space – Commission approved a funding request from Russell Pride in the amount of \$25,000 to support the project.

NRP Updates – The Lucas City Council approved the proposed NRP program. It will match the countywide program. Assisting the city with paperwork and public hearings. The City of Bunker Hill is next on the list.

Workforce – Planning has started to partner with Kansas Works to host a mobile job fair this fall in Russell.

Development Sites – Updates are being made to LOIS. Promotions are also being development to highlight our communities and our available sites.

Programs/Events:

OC Intern Updates - 10 Interns with our partnership with JAG at RHS. Still working with the City of Russell on their positions.

Office Miscellaneous:

Budgets – The 2024 budgets were presented to the board.

Visitor Guide – Maggie has spent time getting video footage and is in the process of amping up the visitor’s guide. Maggie just got done with the resource page and is now doing the business page. She is in the process of pricing QR codes to help use as the education of tourism in our county.

½ cent sales tax renewal – Campaign preparations are starting. The renewal will be on this fall’s ballot.

2023 Business awards – The office is nominating one business for each category. Discussions are being had about a joint business ceremony with the Chambers this year.

Welcome/Visitor Bags, Attraction Education/QR Codes, and Other Promotions – Working to partner with chambers and RMSI to promote Holiday Shopping/Shopping Local and Small Business Saturday. Waudby’s – Americas Best Restaurant promotion/filming was discussed.

CVB Funding Requests:

Ad Astra Music Festival - Duke motions for funding of \$3,000.00 Karla seconded. Motion carried.

Lucas Adam’s Apple Festival - Melinda motions to approve 3,000.00 Duke seconded. Motion Carried.

Luray Friendship Day - Jeannie motions to approve 1,000.00. Duke Seconded. Motion carried.

Community Updates, Additional Announcements, and Open Conversation:

Malinda provided an update on the log cabin project in Luray. Jeannie spoke about upcoming projects and events in Lucas, such as: the new water tower and plant. The Luray Community Foundation daycare project was discussed. They received grant funds and are moving forward. Kayla gave an update on the Holiday Inn Express, 24-7 expansion, and the main street revitalization.

Motion to Adjourn:

Aaron made the motion to adjourn, second by Duke. Meeting adjourned at 8:36 am.