



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



***Thursday, September 18th, 2025 @ 7:30am @ Russell County Economic Development & CVB
Office***

Meeting Minutes

In Attendance:

Jon Birky, Dustin Madden, Duke Strobel, Karla Berry, Jeannie Stramel, Jamie Malone, Jeannine Byers-Long (online), Malinda Walker, Aaron Talbott (online), Kayla Schneider (online), Alex Lofland, Dyelan Reed, Sarah LaRosh, Lisa Sandberg, Ryleigh Wagner, and Mike Parsons.

Call Meeting to Order:

Jon Birky called the meeting to order at 7:31 a.m.

Opening Announcements: Sarah LaRosh and Dyelan Reed with NetWorkKS are guests of the meeting today. Sarah LaRosh announced she took a new position, so we won't be seeing her as much, Dyelan Reed is taking over.

Review and Approval of Minutes: Jeannie stated Switchgrass Art Center needs to be changed to Grassroots Art center. Dustin made a motion to approve the minutes contingent on the change, Duke seconded; motion carried unanimously.

Financial Review: Mike stated the financials were not ready yet but as soon as we receive them, he will e-mail the YTD financials to the board.

Loan Program Updates:

- Russell County Loan Program – No current updates.
- E-Community Loan Program – No current updates.
- GrowKs Loan Program – No current updates.
- Other-

Community Updates/Open Conversation: Malinda stated Wyatt got the last bid for log cabin, he has enough money raised to cover it. Jamie gave an update on the childcare coalition and said they put a bid in contingent on a zoning permit. Kayla shared that a preconstruction meeting takes place on Monday for the street with the housing development.

CVB Funding Request:

Partnership Grant- Our office plans to submit a grant request to support community programs in partnership with RCACF.

Impact Reports- Ryleigh provided an update on state reports outlining county expenditures and related information about events that happen around the county.

Projects/Clients:

- **Project Jumpstart:** The proposed new owners are making progress with their plans, with construction expected to begin in the near future.
- **Project Crossroads:** Economic Development continues efforts to attract and support business growth in the county.
- **GP/LP Infrastructure:** Options are being explored to find funding for The City of Lucas to fix the road.
- **Luray Legion:** It serves as both their emergency shelter and community hub, and efforts are underway to explore state funding to help with needed improvements.
- **Eatery Recruitment/Development:** Efforts are being made to support eatery recruitment and development, strengthening local dining options and enhancing community vitality.

Programs/Events:

- **Foodpreneur Bootcamp-** Ryleigh stated as of last Friday there are 5 people that have registered to take the online course.
- **SFSG Program-** Applications will be open on 10/1, we have a list of people that already want to apply, we anticipate it will be successful.
- **Holiday Collective-** Regional partnerships are being developed to encourage local commerce and support community businesses.
- **Workforce Incentive Program-** Workforce incentive programs are being developed to support future growth and opportunities.
- **Plaid on the Plains-** The office will be partnering with Crystal Craig on the upcoming Plaid on the Plains event.

Office Miscellaneous:

- **Strategic Plan-** Mike presented a draft to the board and invited discussion on potential additions or revisions
- **State Fair-** Ryleigh reported partnering with NWKS to work a booth on Sunday and noted that, despite the rain, the event had a good turnout.
- **NRP Renewal-** The NRP renewal has been approved, with preparations underway to move the process forward.
- **Kansas Travel Guide-** Ryleigh explained their advertising approach and asked for feedback or suggestions from the group.

Open Conversation: Mike stated that next week our office will be participating in spirit days, and Ryleigh has been in contact with Kansas Bass Nation to recruit the state fishing tournament to Wilson Lake. Ryleigh was awarded her first grant in the amount of \$500.

Executive Session – Confidential Projects

Motion to Adjourn: Dustin made the motion to adjourn, Jamie seconded; motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 9:16 a.m.

Next Advisory Board Meeting: October 16th @ 7:30 am @ Russell County Economic Development & CVB Office