



Russell County Economic Development and CVB Minutes

Date: 05/12/2022

Time: 7:30AM

Call to Order: Mike Parsons at 7:32AM

In Attendance

Mike Parsons, Ashley Wickham, Jim Cross, Trent Leach, Jeannie Stramel, Malinda Walker, Daron Woelk (Virtual), Jon Quinday (Virtual), Janet Funk (Virtual), Maggie Holloway (Virtual)

Approval of Minutes

Jim motioned to approve minutes from April 2022 with a spelling correction. Jeannie seconded the motion. Motion approved.

Approval of Financials

Trent motioned to approve financials from April 2022. Jim seconded the motion. Motion approved.

Russell County Loan Program

No applications currently to review.

E-Community Loan Program

No change to fund amount. No applications currently to review. One business with a current loan has requested that they go down to interest only payments until things start picking up. This is up to the loan review committee and Network Kansas.

Economic Development Update

- **13 Ways Task Force - Book Club** – Task Force formed out of the Russell 13 Ways Book Club. Task force hosted a two-list exercise hosted in Russell. Around 20 people attended. A Community Round Table with community influencers was discussed with a monthly meeting to improve communication. Second book club has started in Lucas.
- **Training and Workshops-** Setting up workshops/trainings with SBDC at FHSU, SBA & KDR. Goal is to have one every month until the end of the year. We would like to have some in Russell and up North in Lucas/Luray areas.
- **Project T-Bone-** Butcher Shop, looking for the right facility and location. Project is moving forward.
- **Luray Water-** 8 wells they need to do something with before the end of the year. Looking for the right avenue. Waiting on more information from the State.
- **Project Toothache-** Dentist would like to operate in Russell Co. and Osborne Co. Already has Osborne Co. business. He's looking to expand to City of Russell.
- **NRP Tax Abatement-** Scheduling the public hearing (1 meeting for all townships) to approve. Then the school districts followed by the county & state. Moving forward.
- **Project Whitetail-** Moving forward. Bought the Global Building. He plans to turn it into an outdoor sportsman center.
- **2023 Budget-** No fund increase requested. ED budget sent to board via email.
- **Housing- MIH-** Developing plans and discussing options to apply for MIH later this fall. NCPC offering demolition & improvements matching grant funds.
- **Base Grant-** The state opened a program, not one Western Kansas project was funded.
- **Project Cover-** Client that came for a county tour. Looking for location close to interstate. Building looked at didn't meet their needs, but they saw the development sites and the client liked the location and the community. Communication is still open. We are still in the running.

Other Projects

- Luray "P" Building, Mike met with Luray Community Foundation. They are working on the "P" building. They need to raise funds for the roof.
- Lucas Café, working on his business plan.
- City of Dorrance- updating park and bathroom facilities. They have received a grant for their park.
- Alice Hill- Luray- Looking for grants

- Project RCA- Submitted for a SPA 504 loan last month. Moving forward.
- Vacant Lot Data Base – creating a data base with the city of Russell.

Tourism Update

- Attended the Heartland Conference in Leavenworth.
- Visitors Guide updates
- Good Karma got Social Media recognition by the state
- Blessing of the Bikes had record breaking numbers with around 500 bikes
- Bought two more billboards, one by Salina and one by Oakley.
- Will resurface billboards next year
- Hosted a blogger last year, she's still posting about Russell County
- Love Grass Festival is set for August 11th-13th

Funding Requests

None

Community Updates

- City of Russell been advocating the legislature to start funding a local tax reduction program and the county city revenue program.
- County is getting ready to work on budgets
- Lucas City can take their water advisory off due to the new water plant up and running
- Luray Alumni sent out letters for the "P" building funding out to alumni to help raise funds.

Next Meeting

The next meeting will be Thursday June 9th, 2022 at 7:30am at Meridy's.

