

## GRANT COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION ANNUAL MEETING

December 3, 2010- Meeting Minutes

Southwest WI Technical College – Fennimore, WI

### Present:

Bloomington: Rick Udelhofen, Mary Culligan  
Boscobel: Barb Bell, Jerry Linder, Sara Strang, Gary Kjos, Judy Dilley, Robert Scallon, Mike Reynolds  
Cassville: Louie Okey  
Cuba City: John Beinborn, Bob Schink, Rich Brown, Tim Nolan, Dick Kiesling  
Dickeyville: None  
Fennimore: Lavon Bollant, Gerald Bollant, Greg Fry, Kris Fry, Margaret Sprague, Dave Streif, Kim Streif, Charles Stenner, Mary Ann Stenner, John Murphy, Linda Parrish, Tom Parrish, Karla Rands, Chris Kreul, Pam Kreul, Karyl Nicholson, Bill Wood, Brenda Wood, Doug Inghram, Carol Sue Inghram, Sara Brodt  
Grant Co.: John Beinborn, John Patcle, Robert Scallon, Kyle Vesperman, Carol Beals, Carol Ann Hood for Dale Hood  
GCTC: Bob Schink  
Hazel Green: Bill Weigman, David Jegerlehner, Sonia Burkholder, Carol Stagman, Roger Dammen  
Jamestown: Allan Jansen, Faber Runde  
Lancaster: Jerry Wehrle, Judy Wehrle, Dennis Morgan, Diane Morgan, Chris Prange, Stephen Crane  
Livingston: Brad & Peggy Biddick, Lou Vosberg, Shelia Ruchti  
Montfort: Theresa Sander, Rodney Sander, Tom Arndt, Tina Arndt, Vernan Lanzendorf, Mary Ann Lenzendorf  
Muscoda: Bill Winter, Karen Ewing  
Platteville: George Krueger, Christine Storlie, Ed White, Dave Berner, Karla Egan, Dorothy Genthe, Barb Daus, Gerry O'Rourke, Carol Beals  
Potosi: None  
SWWRPC: Larry Ward  
SWTC: Dr. Karen Knox, Joan Senn, Joyce Czajkowski, Derek Dachlet, MJ Dachelet, Paul Bell, Karyl Nicholson, Lisa Whitish  
UW-Ext.: Paul Thares  
UW-Platte: Barb Daus, Carol Sue Butts, Ray Miklejohn  
GCEDC: Ron Brisbois, Becky Becker  
Special Guests: Lt. Governor Barbara Lawton; Greg & Cyndi Larsen, Potosi Brewery; Slema White & Stephan Bahl, Carr Valley Cheese; Correne Morgan, Fennimore Times; Tim Murphy, Job Center; Nicole Clapp, Scott Mitchell, Joann Mitchell, Grant Regional Health Center; Megan Graney, Scenic Rivers Energy Co-op; Cindy Lenz, Alliant Energy; Carol Weruski, Rural Development Dodgeville; David Martens, WI Dept of Commerce; Patrick Reinsma, WI Dept. of Tourism; Kim Cates, Sen. Herb Kohl's Office; Tom Jackson, Sen. Dale Schultz's Office; Matt Nickolay, Sen. Feingold's Office

### CALL TO ORDER:

President John Murphy called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m.

### MINUTES:

Louie Okey *made a motion to accept the minutes from the October 28, 2009 Board of Directors' Meeting; seconded by Chris Prange, motion carried.*

### TREASURER'S REPORT: Given by John Patcle

Balance on hand as of 12/2/09 was \$75,334.62. Total income since the last report was \$70.28; Total expenses since the last report are \$13,013.23. Expenditures to date total \$113,882.65. 92% of the year has elapsed, and 94% of budgeted funds have been expended. *A motion was made by Dorothy Genthe to approve the treasurer's report as presented, seconded by Jerry Wehrle, motion carried.*

### SPEAKER: Lt. Governor Barbara Lawton

- The value of the work that is done in Grant County and the resilience of the people is truly great to see.
- Obviously it's been a miserable beginning for the economy this year which has been the biggest thing on everyone's mind lately. Nothing about our economy is the same as it was before and it will never be the same again.
- Between September 15, 2008 until the beginning of this year when Lehman Brothers was allowed to fail, \$30 trillion disappeared from the wealth of the world.
- Once we get past this earthquake (so to speak) of hardship that we have been experiencing in the world today the economic forecast will start to look upward again and there will be new economic diversity in our world. That will mean the metaphorical equivalent of bigger and stronger buildings that have adapted new, creative styles and materials so that the next time this type of "earthquake" happens the damage will be less.
- As we, along with the State and the Nation, continue to work on stabilizing families & businesses and putting them

on the shortest path as possible to economic recovery, we realize that we need to become more strategic and more focused. In order to take this approach you have to start with a diagnosis and face reality.

- A study published last week looked at vulnerable economic status of states and six or so different ways to measure that and Wisconsin was in the top ten in fiscal peril. There are some the same warning signs as in California – consistent budget shortfalls, short term fixes, taking from one fund to pay for another (Example: Shifting transportation money into education), revenues are in decline, we're still losing jobs and a significant shortfall is expected again. As we look at this we need to realize our economy is deteriorating relative to better states and that wages, income and productivity have been deteriorating for most of the past 30 years, so we have to see that all political parties are responsible for that and not throw this on one side or the other.
- The national average wage is about \$44,600 and in WI it's only \$38,000. The average per capita income in WI puts us at a ranking right in the middle at #25 with \$37,800 and again this below the national average. What's very serious, and what's the bad news, but it's the good news about what's happening here in Grant County, is our productivity which has us at #35 in the Nation when based on per capita and #40 when looked at per job. Our productivity in WI is only 83% of the National Average. There is a lot of reason for optimism in Grant County which she will discuss later.
- We will never get out of a fiscal crisis if we don't address the economy and the terms by which we hope to grow our economy. We simply will continue to live like this. The only way to put our fiscal problems behind us is to reduce our expenses and increase our revenues and for the past 3 decades we have continued to outspend our revenues. So, we could reduce our spending and decide what's essential to us or we could increase our revenues by raising taxes or by increase incomes...and that's the business economic development professionals are in...increasing incomes and understanding that economic development is to increase the wealth of the people that increases the revenues to government so that government can invest in the infrastructure that keeps that cycle up and alive. We need a strategic plan that gets us out of an old economic development system and invest in that kind of infrastructure that leads us forward.
- Charles Darwin said, "It is not the strongest of the species that survives, nor the most intelligent that survives, it's the one that is the most adaptable to change." The changes in communities, for instance when Lands End was sold or when the paper companies who were founded by local families are bought by a company who is headquartered out of state and or later out of the country...these are things that are not going to change.....these are global citizens and it's a global economy.
- Now we come back to productivity and WI's low ranking in productivity. Remember that productivity is not a measure of the efforts that we make and how hard we work, but rather it's a measure of the value and the output....it is a measure of the knowledge that is added to the product – and that's what determines the value. The knowledge super-charges the wages at the productivity level. If we just made soybeans we'd just be selling commodities, but if we grow soybeans and we add value to them by turning them into plastics or high end food products and other things then we increase the productivity. And the value in Grant County is that we have these amazing resources like UWP and SWTC and we connect in a region with other institutes of higher learning. And there's amazing opportunities and ambition for creating a pool of knowledge in this area that will increase productivity and wages.
- So to position ourselves for economic recovery we have to think about high-growth strategies that focus on productivity, as well as on innovation and on entrepreneurship. That is our history in WI and that is our future.
- We have to create the rich matrix from which we get start up businesses and really grow our own right here. The Lt. Governor's focus on small business is natural; her family had their own business while she was growing up. While in office she has come to understand how our small businesses provide the structural framework for the state economy. Nationally, small businesses have provided 70% of net new jobs every year for the last 10 years.
- We should also remember that half of the Fortune 500 companies listed this year as Fortune 500 companies were launched during a recession.
- What do companies need and what do we need to be thinking about in terms of economic development? They need a great work force, creative and critical thinkers who can not only solve problems but also identify problems and challenges. That's the kind of people that we need to create in our education systems.
- Research shows that childcare is a great place to invest early and re-coup a lot of money. It is the strongest research-backed investment of any education strategy over the last 40 years. An immediate economic development tool that you need to have in your community in order to attract and retain the kind of bright work force and talented people that are going to help you bring new ideas in to your companies is childcare. If both parents are in the work force then they need to have high-quality child care available to them. Children in this area that are in high quality childcare from birth to age 5 will have a higher level of productivity in life. High quality childcare is a great investment by every measure.
- Our small businesses and start-ups need to have broadband access. Without adequate access we are at a

competitive disadvantage. Unfortunately WI lags significantly behind our surrounding states and the nation in adding new lines over the past 5 years. And, unlike other states, not all of our school districts and public libraries have access to broadband. In fact, 80% of our public libraries and 20% of the state's schools lack access to broadband. The PSC applied for and received funds to begin a mapping project to cover the gaps in WI which will be started this month and an application has been submitted for funding to triple our existing broadband network. Our challenge in WI is that these funding sources require that you are a "remote area" which is defined by being at least 50 miles or more from a population center of 20,000 or more and in the state of WI we have 34 cities that are that large so it's hard to get more than 50 miles away. But there still are grants available for this.

- The out-sourcing of IT jobs to India has hit sort of a stand-still because it's no longer as attractive to the investor; wages are starting to go up there and the cost of having language issues is somewhat of a problem. They are looking precisely at locating these types of IT jobs back in the USA and particularly in rural areas like the Midwest and WI.
- We all need to be very active and involved in our state and with the legislature to make sure a very smart and focused plan is developed for our future economic development growth. And we have to remember that there will be change only when we demand it!
- Why can't our State of WI Investment Board invest in job creation at a higher level here in WI? This may be something that will need to be mandated as the group operates quite independently, but in many States there's tremendous job creation with the re-investment of funds from their investment board. We should become more serious about asking these questions: How can our own Dept of Commerce become a strategic force? What kind of helpful data needs to be collected on economic performance and competitiveness that will drive good decision making? How do we best use the resources and make sure that our own Dept of Commerce is strategic and not reactive? We need to keep opportunities in the clean energy economy in every region of the state. It's a great job creation strategy.
- A million dollars invested in a coal fired plant creates 890 jobs. That same amount invested in a solar power plant creates 1,800 jobs, and in wind energy it's 3,300 jobs. But when you invest it in energy retro-fits you create 6,000 jobs. Those are huge differences! People are asking: why can't we take some of that stimulus money that's going in individual chunks to individual entities and being distributed by our state government for energy efficiency and put it into revolving loan funds in regions so that we're using that money over and over again and starting new business with it? It's a low risk loan that we know they'll be able to pay back with their savings on the energy bill and we could be continuing to create jobs and lowering our emissions and saving money for entities across the state. Grant County and this region is well positioned to be very smart during this difficult time because if we do an asset inventory we have many great things going on here besides great educational institutions we also have the planning that is happening and the possibilities that are embedded in the beginning of the Southwest Economic Development Coalition. We already have a history of working regional economic development working across rivers and big borders. We are an area of the state that knows how important it is to think regionally.
- The Lt. Governor checked the Dunn & Brad Street mapping of our area, which is a map of the creative industries in every legislative district within the State and the Nation, and in the Grant County area we have 71 Arts-related businesses employing 147 people.
- The community of Green Bay was working on an effort of re-branding which the Lt Governor was a part of and they wanted to see how they are perceived outside of the area and so they ran a check of this which is very important to look at. Research revealed that how people perceived Green Bay was not accurate by any means. People did not know that Green Bay was near the water and they assumed it didn't have an airport! This just goes to show that there's always something to be learned about who you are and how other people perceive you.
- Innovation happens in geographical clusters, not at the national level. We are ahead of the curve here in understanding the regional work that needs to be done.
- In closing, the Lt. Governor leaves us with these questions:

Have we no longer imagined a future that makes us proud and our children prosperous? Are we unwilling to engage to move legislation that both strengthens an economy and a democracy? Are we going to have the capacity left to attract good people to work in government? WI has a high baby boomer rate that's going to be retiring at an escalating pace and WI also has a birth rate that is half that of the national average and so as we move out of this economic crisis we have a workforce crisis coming at us like a steaming train. Will we be able to attract people either through elections or through hiring in the civil service? These are questions that we're obligated, as good citizens, to answer.

-The Corporation was very fortunate to have Lt. Governor Barbara Lawton as our speaker for our annual meeting in 2009 and we thank her for that. If there is a person you would like to hear from or a specific topic you would like to discuss at one of our monthly meetings, please feel free to contact Ron or Becky at our office, 822-3501 with your thoughts on this. We are happy to hear any suggestions you have!

**Approval of 2010 Budget** – Louie Okey made a motion to accept the 2010 budget as presented. Dorothy Genthe seconds the motion. Motion carried.

**Election of 2010 Officers** – Louie Okey made a motion to close the nominations. Rich Brown seconds the motion. Motion carried. Louie Okey made a motion to approve the 2010 candidates as printed. Dorothy Genthe seconds the motion. Motion carried. The 2010 Officers are as follows:

**President** – George Krueger

**President Elect** – John Beinborn

**Past President** – John Murphy

**Treasurer** – John Patcle

**Secretary** – Dorothy Genthe

**Approval of 2010 Meeting Schedule** – John Beinborn made a motion to accept the 2010 meeting schedule as presented. Dorothy Genthe seconds the motion. Motion carried. **For a copy of the 2010 meeting schedule please contact our office at 822-3501 and Becky will send one to you.**

## **ONCE AROUND – Share the Top 3 Things to Happen In Your Community in 2009**

### **Boscobel – Jerry Linder**

- Boscobel has completed the improvement project of the North end of Wisconsin Avenue and the South end will be finished in 2010.
- The community received a grant to assist with the cost of reconstructing 6 blocks of residential streets and storm sewers.
- The spec building in the city's industrial park is currently rented.

### **Cassville – Louie Okey**

- The Cassville Car Ferry received a grant with help from Senators Schultz, Kind, Feingold and Kohl's offices.
- Alliant Energy was not able to convince the Public Service Commission to allow a new power plant in Cassville this year which was a big disappointment to many in the community. One good thing that did come of this was the purchase of the Stoneman's Mill Power Plant and the fact that they are now operating on biomass.
- Porter's Bridge in the village has been replaced and is open to traffic!

### **Cuba City – Rich Brown**

- Wausaukee Composites closed its doors for a period of time, but is now back in full force operation.
- PTC Machine, which is also in the City's Industrial Park, is operating with 8 full time and 3 part time employees.
- Non Metallic Components

### **Fennimore – Linda Parrish**

- Fennimore Rayovac Plant is running at near capacity, has installed one new production line (in the process of qualifying the product from that line), have recalled all available laid off employees and are currently recruiting for 2 engineers and one supervisor.
- New Fennimore Community Promotions are Get Fit Fennimore, the Energy Fair, Backpack of Bucks, and Ladies on the Move Shopping Promotion.
- 2009 Business Changes: 12 Business Changes - New and/or under new ownership.

### **Grant County – John Beinborn**

- The Strategic Planning Committee has been working with Platteville looking at the buildings they have and what is needed. They have also studied the Hwy facilities to see what will be needed in the future.
- Porter's Bridge, as well as other bridges in the County that were under construction are now open!

### **Grant County Tourism Council – Bob Schink**

- The Grant County Tourism Council, in conjunction with the Shopping News, currently distributes about 20,000 travel planners per year. They are working on the final changes to the 2010 planners which will be ready to distribute in Jan 2010.
- The Welcome Center in Kieler closed in 2009 and the County is feeling the effects of that. Platteville has been designated the new Welcome Center, but there is no signage to direct travelers to Platteville to find information. GCTC is working with other communities such as Dickeyville to get more brochures and information available to people coming off of Hwy 151 into WI.

### **Hazel Green – Bill Weigman**

- The Village just finished up with the new city garage and are all moved in to it.
- Work continues on the new Village Hall. They are getting ready to put up the rafters and to start roofing next week. The community is very proud of everything that is going on!
- A few of the streets were done this past year.
- There will be a craft fair on Sunday, December 6<sup>th</sup> at the High School and many of the businesses in town will have specials that same day as well.

### **Jamestown – Faber Runde**

- Packer's Chemical is in full production with a new building.
- About a dozen new homes have gone up over the past year in the community. One being worth over a half million dollars on County H.

**Lancaster – Jerry Wehrle**

- The specialty foods industry continues to do well and that shows in Lancaster. Woolwich Dairy and Bemis have both hired people within the last year.
- Several businesses in town have talked about renovating their current facility or building a new facility.
- The need for regional marketing is a must in a smaller area like ours. We need to draw people to our area and this is one way to do it.

**Livingston – Sheila Ruchti**

- The village has a new website.
- A local co-op is exploring moving from downtown Livingston to a site on Hwy 80.
- The Village is researching the construction of a second well on the west side of town. A test hole has been drilled and they are waiting to hear if grant funds are available to help finance the project.
- LCIC is the community assistance fund in which the community is seeking donations for. Vouchers will be given out to those in need at the Livingston Grocery Store.

**Montfort – Theresa Sander**

- The Village completed their Smart Growth Plan over this past year.
- They are working on a sewer study and applying for grant money to help cover the cost.
- Sunday at the Fire/Rescue Building there will be pancake breakfast from 7am-noon along with a silent auction and raffles.

**Muscoda – Karen Ewing**

- The old dam that was once used to provide power to the village has been removed and the area has been cleaned up. This was finished in October and it is looking very nice.
- The community had several groups start in 2009 working together and working hard towards a common goal. This has been a very positive thing for the community this year.

**Platteville – Dave Berner**

- Platteville has experienced 3% growth within the community over the past year. The expansion of Farm & Fleet is doing very well since they made their move to their new building.
- The building project for the new police department, which will be located north of the current city hall, will be 16,000 sq ft and a \$3.3mil project. They expect to have the police dept in the new building by Sept of next year.
- The University and Grant County worked together on receiving a portion of the stimulus money to work on Markee Ave as well as Chestnut Street which is on schedule. The key to this project was cooperation with the City and County, as well as elected officials and the Dept of Transportation.

**Potosi – Greg Larsen, The Potosi Brewery**

- Mark Bodie has added new cabins at the Pine Point Lodge and Bill & Mary Uppena moved their craft store to the old grocery store and that building will now be an art gallery.
- Ed White and Ron Brisbois worked on an economic impact study for the brewery which was completed recently.

**SWWRPC – Ed White**

- The Smart Growth plan was the biggest job of the SWWRPC this past year. Working on getting them finished up by the end of 2009 for the 35 jurisdictions has been a challenge.
- They have received a grant to do a regional smart growth plan which is a new concept this year.

**UW Platteville – Carol Sue Butts**

- UWP has grown by over 46% over the last 10 years and currently has over 8,000 students with a record number of freshmen this year at 1,550 and they have over 300 veterans. UWP is the fastest growing university in the State of Wisconsin.
- Last January they opened their new engineering building and they are currently looking at plans to remodel or build an additional engineering building. Of the 8,000 students, 2,000 are engineers.
- They are looking at adding 3 new majors. One is in forensic investigation, another is nanotechnology engineering and the third is in sustainable and renewable energy systems.

**President's Message – John Murphy**

- It's been great working with the Corporation this past year. Without the financial support from our member communities this corporation would not be possible, so thank you to all of you who contribute!

**Introduction of 2010 President – George Krueger**

**Annual Review – Ron Brisbois**

- Our business prospect numbers continue to remain strong at 32 for the year.
- Packer's Chemical added a 22,000 sq ft addition and Wausaukee Composites has good plans for the future as well.
- The Brewery is an outstanding facility and a huge asset to the entire County and the surrounding areas.
- Biomass is the word right now with the power plant in Cassville operating solely on biomass and our office currently working on five different projects of only biomass.
- A new recycling business has started in Lancaster's Industrial Park called Alternative Recycling.
- GCEDC assisted Mindy Krantz with her new business Serendipity Salon and Day Spa located on Lincoln Ave in Fennimore.
- Universal Silencer in Muscoda will be paying off their loan early from the Grant County Revolving Loan Fund. This was a good investment to the County as it helped to retain many jobs for the Muscoda community. Also in Muscoda, Ron negotiated a deal on some land with the DNR to expand Scot Industries.
- Ron is on the Scenic Byways committee and had his first meeting next week.

- Greater Dubuque Development Corp recently contacted our office to ask if they could connect Grant County on the LOIS website so now anyone searching for commercial property in Dubuque will also see Grant County buildings come up on their search results. This is more opportunity for us to persuade businesses to come to Grant County!
- The Grant County Revolving Loan Fund currently has over \$200,000 available to lend and over \$1million in assets.
- Dick Leinenkugel, the Dept of Commerce Secretary will be visiting four businesses in Grant County next week.
- Dues for the Corporation will remain the same amount this year as they have since 2007. We will also be receiving funding from other businesses such as Alliant and SREC.
- For our office to do the best work for you that we can, please communicate with us and let us know what it is we assist you with! We are more than happy to help so please feel free to contact our office at 822-3501.

**ADJOURNMENT** - A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Jerry Wehrle, seconded by Dennis Morgan. President John Murphy adjourned the annual meeting at 8:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Becky Becker, Executive Assistant