

GRANT COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION MONTHLY MEETING
February 24, 2010- Meeting Minutes
The Elmo Club – Cuba City

Present:

Bloomington: None
Boscobel: Gary Kjos, Barb Bell, Jerry Linder
Cassville: None
Cuba City: John Beinborn, Rich Brown, Tim Nolan
Dickeyville: None
Fennimore: Karyl Nicholson, John Murphy
Grant Co.: John Beinborn, John Patcle, Vince Loeffelholz, Bill Biefer, Lester Jantzen, Don Splinter
GCTC: Bob Schink, Kathy Kopp
Hazel Green: Bill Wiegman, David Kuhle
Jamestown: Faber Runde, Al Jansen
Lancaster: Dennis Morgan, Jerry Wehrle, Angie Day
Livingston: None
Montfort: None
Muscodas: None
Platteville: Barb Daus, Dorothy Genthe, George Krueger, Dave Berner, Ed White, George Curry
Potosi: None
SWWRPC: Ed White
SWTC: Lisa Whitish
UW-Ext.: None
UW-Platte: Barb Daus
GCEDC: Ron Brisbois, Becky Becker
Special Guests: Phil Garthwaite, 49th Assembly; Shannon Gaherty, Greater Dubuque Development Corporation

CALL TO ORDER:

President George Krueger called the meeting to order at 6:14 p.m.

MINUTES:

John Patcle *made a motion to accept the minutes from the 1/27/10 Board of Directors' Meeting; seconded by Rich Brown, motion carried.*

TREASURER'S REPORT: Given by John Patcle

Balance on hand as of 2/23/10 was \$147,449.44. Total income since the last report was \$44,681.05; Total expenses since the last report are \$12,060.07. Expenditures to date total \$19,490.26. 13% of the year has elapsed, and 16% of budgeted funds have been expended. *A motion was made by Dennis Morgan to approve the treasurer's report as presented, seconded by Dorothy Genthe, motion carried.*

HAZEL GREEN REPORT – given by: Bill Wiegman

We believe the Point of Beginning for the ultimate small town experience is Hazel Green! Our community of 1,200 people is located in Southwest WI, "close enough, but far enough away" to regional population centers such as Dubuque, Iowa; Galena, Illinois and Platteville, WI. We are proud to support the retail and service businesses of our friends and neighbors within the community, while having convenient, close access to additional services and amenities in larger cities only minutes away.

Nestled between farm land, our beautiful Village is growing. Come grow with us! The Village has an Industrial Park, conveniently located off Hwy 80/81 and several residential lots available for you to build your dream home. Few locations will offer you the benefits of living in town, while experiencing the peaceful sights and sounds of living in the country. The Mississippi River, 9 miles west, provides excellent boating, canoeing, hunting and fishing opportunities. Come spend a winter weekend with us after hitting the slopes at one of the ski resorts located within 20 minutes of Hazel Green. The Village boasts a beautiful recreation park, as well as a recently enhanced Memorial Park. Golf courses and pools are located nearby.

Hazel Green is home to Southwestern Community School District, the largest employer in the Village. Our school boasts a low 15:1 student to teacher ratio and has been recognized as a Wisconsin Promise School. The excellent curriculum opportunities at Southwestern include the fact the school offers more math/science/foreign language classes than any school in the area. Southwestern WI Community School District received a national award for what Fortune 500 company employees are looking for when relocating! See what our wonderful school system has to offer your family.

From our beginnings as the center of the mining boom, Hazel Green has worked to preserve and recognize our rich heritage. The first permanent settlement in WI was in Hazel Green in 1825. In 1831, Lucius Lyon began surveying just south of the present day Hazel Green in southwestern WI. This is the place where all land that was to become WI would be measured. Today, every property deed in WI includes a description which is based on the Point of Beginning (POB). The Village has several Bed and Breakfasts and antique shops to offer history enthusiasts and antique shoppers. Whether you are visiting, looking for a place of history or searching for a place to call home, we are confident it won't take you long to realize that Hazel Green offers a quality of small town life you can't find anywhere else.

Speaker: Shannon Gaherty, Newcomer Relations Coordinator for Greater Dubuque Development Corporation

Topic: Newcomer Services Offered by Greater Dubuque & an overview of Dubuque Works

- Shannon first discussed IBM and the progress they have made with hiring. In June of 2009 IBM brought in their first wave of employees to Dubuque. They are required to have 1,300 positions filled by the end of 2010, in which they are already ahead of their projected schedule. The average wage is what the city expected it to be as well.
- Another question she hears a lot about IBM is "are they hiring?" The answer to that is yes, they are. They are currently working with area colleges on curriculum to make sure the graduates are ready to come to IBM when finished with school. IBM had 10,000 applicants for 1,300 jobs and they are about ½ way there right now and continuing to hire. So far they have lost only 6 employees – 3 by the choice of the employee and 3 by the choice of IBM.
- The biggest problem so far with IBM coming in has been housing...there are not enough rentals in Dubuque to go around for all of the employees coming in to IBM. Greater Dubuque does track where the employees are living at but cannot share that information with the public. Some of the IBM employees are living in Southwest WI.
- The main part of Shannon's job is to meet with all new residents coming into the city and to find out what their needs are and assisting them with meeting those needs. She assists them with many things, but the main things people want to know when they move here or anywhere are: where they are going to live, where they are going to do their banking, what doctors are available and where they are at, and finally what school and/or daycare will I send my child/children to?
- In 2008 Dubuque Works was started to take a look at workforce initiatives in the Dubuque area. They pulled together the Chamber of Commerce, Iowa Workforce Development and five other partners that have workforce related programs to take a look at the strategy they were using and the existing programs that they have to figure out who is doing what and if the money being spent on these things was being used efficiently. They had an open, honest and frank collaborative discussion on how the existing programs can work together to potentially do something better and possibly less expensive. Together they came up with the concept of Greater Dubuque to work to fill in the gaps of the existing work force problems. Between the seven organizations they had 5 strategies and 42 goals.
- Some of these groups had programs that didn't make sense for their visions and goals so those programs were given to a different group that fit them better. At times it was tense for some of these groups to let go of these visions and goals that were once theirs, but after taking a look at the grand scheme of things it all came together and made sense of what they were doing and how they were going to do it! In the first year they exceeded their own expectations and goals and had many eye opening moments along the way. From these seven organizations they've created a 10 page document of everything that went right along the way. This is a model that they believe can be replicated by other communities and/or groups and work for them just as it has for Dubuque. Their goal is to share what's working in their community and hopefully other communities, like ours, will do the same!
- At Greater Dubuque Development, their workforce initiatives all center around one piece...the opportunity pack. The opportunity pack is a welcome piece that's sent out to anyone who thinks they might be interested in moving to Dubuque and is considered a great way to sell the community. This is then followed with a postcard and then an email. The postcard points them to the access Dubuque jobs website to assist them with finding a job if needed. The Access Dubuque website averages 88,000 unique visitors per month. Approximately 1,000 opportunity packets are sent out per year and they are also available online as well.
- The other thing they did after taking a look at everything was create Shannon's position as Newcomer Relations Coordinator for Greater Dubuque Development Corp. What she does really revolves around 3 things – recruitment, relocation and retention. She does things such as put people in the car and drive them around town and give them tours, she did 85 last year and is well on schedule to beat that for this year! She's also met one-on-one with well over 400 people since this position started last February.
- They also created a newcomer program called Distinctively Dubuque, which is a six week program for new people coming to the area and helps them to get to know the area and become more familiar with their surroundings.
- The Chamber put together an internship program and 54 new internship programs were created last year! Five

businesses are currently creating new internship programs and 15 more are working with the Chamber to invest in internship programs.

- Another partner is the Dubuque Area Labor Management Council and they have the challenge of cleaning up the image of the dirty job! This used to be something they did in April before kids graduated from high school, but now they are going into middle schools and laying the ground work earlier. They are talking about construction, IT, health care jobs and some of the more technical trades they need to know about. They held a career fair for 7th and 8th graders two years ago and had 121 kids attend and thought that was great! They then held another career fair this past year and had 691 kids and are hoping for 1,200 next year. They want to plant that seed of options, whether it be a formal education or different path they choose. They do have a website called www.accessmyfuture.com which has a very cool interactive wheel that will let you pick what skills you're good at and will match you up with some careers that you could start thinking about.
- Iowa Workforce Development (IWD)'s charge was to achieve the National Career Readiness Certificate. This is a very difficult test you can take that gives you a rating at the end of gold, silver or bronze. What this does is tell the employer that you have the skills needed to come into their work place to do a certain job. Their goal was to have 600 people take the test and they had 1,287 people take it and 89% of them got a bronze rating or higher. Those who took the test were sent a survey and 287 responded – 59% said they were currently working as a result of getting their certificate, 52% said they were not working but had decided to go back to school as a result of thinking about it, 35% said the certificate played a huge part in them obtaining that job and w/o it they wouldn't have gotten it and 50% their employer told them they were very impressed it was on their resume and they took the initiative to go get it.
- Poverty is nothing new to any of our communities and we all know it exists in our communities. A program was developed called the "getting ahead program" which teaches people how to live within their means and to get out of poverty. Here is the result of this program: They held 6 classes in which they learned the skills to get out of poverty and learn the road to employment, they had 19 people in a class that were homeless and when they came out the other side of this 20 week program 14 of them were no longer homeless! If you look at the economic benefit of not paying for those 14 people from a taxpayer's standpoint its well over of \$300,000. 72 out of 91 individuals graduated from the program and 28 of them are now employed part time and only 3 of them were employed part time before they started. One person was employed full time and when they finished the class 13% had found full time employment. None of them were enrolled in an educational program and 14% of them did. None of them were in a higher education program and 8% of them came out of the class and decided they would go back to school. One woman said she had a great life, a husband, a house and 4 kids and then her husband left and she had no job and the husband was no where to be found so she lost her kids to foster care. After the program she not only found a full time job when she was done, but she also got all 4 of her kids out of foster care. You can't put numbers or a value to that, but had they not put Dubuque Works together things like this would not happen nor would there be funding for these programs to be offered. It's funded by Mystique Casino, the city and the county. All made a 2 year commitment and after the first year Shannon was going to talk to Mystique to tell them about the results....they said to her, "we read your document and we'll write you the check whenever you need it!" They were very impressed with the results of this program and were more than happy to fund it!
- If you have any questions or would like to contact Shannon Gaherty for more information you can reach her at Greater Dubuque Development Corporation - 563-557-9049.

OLD BUSINESS: 1. **WEDA Conference** – Many of those who participate in the Economic Development meetings attended the WEDA conference in Madison. There were many great speakers and a good turnout.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. **Intermediary Lending Program** – This is a USDA Rural Development program that is similar to the County's revolving loan program. Up to \$150,000 total per loan per business can be lent out and area businesses and/or municipalities can borrow it. The project at the fair grounds is a good candidate for this program. It can be used as a good ED tool to get existing businesses to expand as well as other projects.
2. **Wisconsin's ED Grade** – There was a speaker at the WEDA Conference that talked about this and WI does not grade well. There is a variety of criteria they grade the state on and WI got mainly D's and C's with occasional B's.
3. **Membership Dues** – The Corporation has received all of the dues for 2010.

ONCE AROUND – Share the Top 3 Things to Happen In Your Community

Boscobel – Jerry Linder

- Mayor Linder went to the Platteville Chamber and picked up 13 boxes of the Grant County Travel Planners and helped to distribute them around the area. He's done all of Boscobel and is going to Crawford County next.

Cuba City – John Beinborn

- The City Electric and Water Dept. is starting their own website with WPPI where customers will be able to pay bills online and use other available features on the site.
- All candidates for the spring election are running unopposed.

Fennimore – Karyl Nicholson

- Governor Doyle recently announced the City of Fennimore is one of the communities to receive 25 x25 Recovery Act Grants for Energy Independence Planning. Eleven grants totaling \$500,000 will help 24 communities develop plans to reach the governors "25 by 25" energy independence goals.
- Southwest Tech's Feb 10 Open House Successful Event – more than 800 people toured the newly completed Childcare and Auto/Ag Facilities and the campus. 130 student registrations completed during the open house!
- Fennimore Chamber will feature a training workshop with Ray Saint on Monday, March 1 at SWTC from 4 to 6 pm \$39 per person/\$99 three or more. Call Linda Parrish for reservations 608-822-3599
- Fennimore Community Events
 - Get Fit Weight Loss Competition – following second weigh-in group has lost 880 lbs
 - Feed My Starving Children Community Project (ongoing fundraising events) - Goal of \$17,000 to package 100,000 meals – Community Pack Day April 23-24
 - Fennimore Theatre Group presents play "Hide and Shriek" April 23-25

Grant County – Bill Biefer & John Patcle

- Opening bids for the Wyalusing Boat Landing will be April 1st. The new landing should be complete by July 1st.
- The Youth & Ag Building will be getting a new roof.
- The Eckstein Memorial Fund has donated money for a new exhibit building at the Fair Grounds.

Grant County Tourism Council – Kathy Kopp

- The Tri-State Tourism Council will hold a one day convention at Chestnut Mountain in Galena on March 11th.
- March 14-16 is the Governor's Conference on tourism in Madison. There are 7 members from GCTC attending the conference.
- As a member of the Gov Council on Tourism Kathy has been assigned a project with others from the Secretary's office to participate in a 2 day listening session up and down the Mississippi River. They are putting together a marketing plan to promote the west coast.

Jamestown – Allan Jansen

- Guy's Truck & Tractor just completed a new addition with 3 new bays.
- Kaiser's is putting up a new building just west of the water tower. There are 7 bays there and there are going to be 2 for truck wash and 5 for truck repair and maintenance.

Lancaster – Jerry Wehrle

- There is a question as to where the Wright Block is going to go, but there has been some conversation about it.
- Tomorrow there will be a business retention breakfast held at the City Hall Council Chambers with Dan McDonald from Greater Dubuque Development and Roberta Gassman, Secretary of Workforce Development for the State of WI as guest speakers.

Platteville – Dave Berner

- Local investors have purchased the Governor Dodge and will be starting a complete redevelopment of the site. The lot has been split into 2 and the city council has approved a re-zoning to change it from business to multi-family. Two of the buildings on that site will be converted to apartments, the pool and restaurant will be torn down and a new hotel will be built to connect to the convention center.
- Hartig Drug is expanding and will move to the corner of Pine and Chestnut Streets.
- A couple of weeks ago the City was informed by the state that a planning grant was approved for the downtown revitalization plan.
- Moving forward with the new Chestnut St/Markee Ave project.
- The new police building project is progressing well and should be finished by October.
- On May 10th at 4pm there will be a ground breaking ceremony for the new bridge at Chestnut St. All are invited to attend!

SWWRPC – Ed White

- The BEST Conference will be held in Potosi at the Holiday Gardens on May 6th so mark your calendars!

SWTC – Lisa Whitish

- The Electrical Power Distribution Program has been approved by the state board. The next step is to contact local utility partners seeking donations for utility trucks and poles. So if you have any partners in your community please let SWTC know!
- SWTC is going Green! They will have a 1 day workshop over-viewing green concepts from key environmental issues to sustainability. The next step is to participate in a green specialist program. There will be 6 one day workshops covering a variety of green concepts. If you're interested in any of these please contact Lisa at SWTC.
- The Tri County Human Resources in connection with SWTC is sponsoring a workshop titled "Lean Times, Mean Times and In Between Times" with guest speaker Rebecca Ryan on April 15th from 8am-12pm on the SWTC campus. If you're interested in this workshop please visit www.tricountyhra.com and the registration deadline is March 31st.

UW-Platteville – Barb Daus

- Two candidates that are finalists for the Chancellor's position were in this week and the remaining two will be here next week. A

decision is expected to be made by the Board of Regents committee and the President of the system. The appointment of the new Chancellor is expected to be made at the April Board of Regents meeting.

- The field house addition project is on schedule and is expected to be open for classes by next year. The basement of Boebel Hall will now be re-constructed into biology labs for the growing number of biology students that are coming to the university for healthcare majors.

Special Guests:

Phil Garthwaite, 49th District Representative

- Phil has co-sponsored 5 bills, the went thru the ag committee such as the dairy modernization tax credit and extending that as well as a tax credit for vegetable processors.
- There is another new bill – when we look at ed we look at jobs, jobs, jobs but we also need to look at demand and what this measure does is try to promote the buy local process and where it would allow our local institutions like SWTC or UWP to buy a certain amount from the local producers.
- The New Market Tax Credit is set to be voted on tomorrow in the assembly.
- The Clean Energy Jobs Bill – there is a lot of misinformation out there and Phil would like to do some sort of town hall style meetings to get more of the facts out there so people can decide for themselves.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

- We've been remaining busy with new prospects and projects. We had someone contact us looking for 200,000sf of commercial bakery space so Ron through Platteville's building out there and had George connect with him on Sunday so they could take a look at it.
- Got a proposal done and submitted for a wind turbine manufacturer. The curriculum they are looking for is offered by UWP and SWTC so we have a better than average shot at this.
- We had a cold storage warehouse project that Ron submitted several communities in Grant County for. The company has decided to stay in the community they are currently in as they were able to work together to meet the needs of the company.
- Ron's still working with Lancaster on a cold storage project and getting numbers together for that and hoping to get that finalized and taking it around to investors and business owners.
- Working on the expansion of 6 existing companies and right now if all of them come through we are looking at adding about 200 jobs into the county. Goes to show that we need to focus on retention because that's where the majority of your job creation is going to come from.
- Working with Kieler and Packer's Chemical on a plan for the wastewater treatment facility there.
- Ron's continuing to discuss developing a TIF district in both Dickeyville and Muscoda and there are projects going on in both of those communities.
- Tomorrow Ron has a meeting with the WIRED leadership initiative. They are getting towards the end of this project.
- The Regional Economic Development Cooperative formation is progressing nicely.
- Becky sent out 27 packets of information to FL for a group of travelers that will be coming to the area in June and an additional 15-20 individual travel planners out to others who have requested them. We continue to get a lot of requests for these every month. We have a focus of three main things on our website – industrial development, Dubuque and tourism.
- Ron has talked to Chuck Cornett from UWP about the possibility of going to Japan again this year.

The next Grant County Economic Development Corporation Meeting will be held Wednesday, March 24th in Boscobel.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Dave Berner, seconded by Dorothy Genthe. President George Krueger adjourned the meeting at 8:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Becky Becker, Executive Assistant