

**GRANT COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION MONTHLY MEETING**  
**March 24, 2010- Meeting Minutes**  
**Boscobel Hotel – Boscobel**

**Present:**

Bloomington: None  
Boscobel: Gary Kjos, Barb Bell, Jerry Linder, Dave Krier, Lionel Schlump, Ed Waltz, John McNamee, Arlie Harris, Sara Strang, Nick Nice, Greg Patchek, Ray Saint, Andreas & Robin Transo  
Cassville: None  
Cuba City: John Beinborn, Rich Brown, Tim Nolan  
Dickeyville: None  
Fennimore: Doug Inghram  
Grant Co.: John Beinborn, Bill Biefer  
GCTC: Lou Vosberg, Jeanie Heisz  
Hazel Green: Bill Wiegman, David Kuhle  
Jamestown: None  
Lancaster: Natalie Thares  
Livingston: Lou Vosberg  
Montfort: Theresa Sander, Rod Sander, Vernan Lenzendorf  
Muscodia: None  
Platteville: Dorothy Genthe, George Krueger  
Potosi: None  
SWWRPC: None  
SWTC: Joan Senn  
UW-Ext.: Paul Thares  
UW-Platte: None  
GCEDC: Ron Brisbois, Becky Becker  
Special Guests: Phil Garthwaite, 49<sup>th</sup> Assembly; Senator Dale Schultz; Carol Wetuski, USDA Rural Development Area Director; Paul Norris, MSA Professional Services; Patrick Reinsma, WI Department of Tourism

**CALL TO ORDER:**

President George Krueger called the meeting to order at 6:13 p.m.

**MINUTES:**

Dorothy Genthe *made a motion to accept the minutes from the 2/24/10 Board of Directors' Meeting; seconded by John Beinborn, motion carried.*

**TREASURER'S REPORT: Given by Ron Brisbois**

Balance on hand as of 3/24/10 was \$143,193.18. Total income since the last report was \$3,492.98; Total expenses since the last report are \$7,749.24. Expenditures to date total \$25,239.50. 21% of the year has elapsed, and 21% of budgeted funds have been expended. *A motion was made by Dorothy Genthe to approve the treasurer's report as presented, seconded by Doug Inghram, motion carried.*

**BOSCOBEL REPORT – given by: Ray Saint**

- Mayor Jerry Linder gave a nice welcome to the group. This will be his last meeting as mayor of Boscobel.
- The City is working on approving a bid for the 2<sup>nd</sup> phase of the downtown revitalization project.
- The industrial park is going strong with 2 of the employers hiring at this time – Great Lakes Higher Education Corp and Alcan. Alcan has also been providing quite a bit of overtime to its employees.
- The City has a spec building that's currently being rented for storage space by one of the employers in the industrial park.
- We all know how hard it is to keep a hospital running in a small community, especially during rough economic times so Boscobel Area Health Care has recently made some changes to their business. They are in the process of selling the nursing home portion of the business to a private administrator of nursing homes. Doing so will secure the nursing home be kept in the community of Boscobel for many years to come so it can be offered to area residents.

**Speaker: Carol Wetuski, USDA Rural Development Area Director**

**Topic: USDA Rural Development Programs Overview**

- USDA offers a wide variety of programs and Carol gave an overview of the 4 main programs they work with. ***For more information on any of the programs USDA has to offer please call Carol at 608-935-2791, ext. 4 or email her at [carol.wetuski@wi.usda.gov](mailto:carol.wetuski@wi.usda.gov) or visit her office at 138 S Iowa Street in Dodgeville.***

- The first program is the "**Buy Local, Buy Wisconsin**" program that promotes "know your farmer, know your food" and other local foods processing.
- The next program is the **Business & Industry Loan Guarantees Program**. These are loan guarantees of commercial loans. Loan purposes include purchase and expansion of land, equipment, buildings, working capital, aquaculture, commercial nurseries, tourist & recreation facilities, hotels, motels, community facility projects, housing development sites, apartment buildings and the purchase of stock in a cooperative where commodities are being produced by the members for processing by the cooperative. Loan funds cannot be used for lines of credit, gambling, golf courses and agricultural production over \$1million or more than 50% of a project and when not part of an integrated agriculture processing business. Loans are made to businesses which save or create jobs in rural areas (cities under 50,000). Borrowers may be an individual, partnership, cooperative, for-profit or non-profit corporation, Indian Tribe or public body. The maximum guarantee is generally 80%for loans up to \$5million, 70% for \$5-10million and 60% for \$10-25million. Terms are typically 20 years for real estate, 7 to 10 yrs for machinery & equipment (depends on useful life) and 5 to 7 yrs for working capital. The interest rate is negotiated between the lender and the borrower and may be fixed or variable. All collateral must secure the entire loan and personal and corporate guarantees are required.
- **Community Facility Direct Loans & Grants** is the third program. These loans & grants provide funding for essential community facilities, i.e. those public improvements requisite to the beneficial and orderly development of a community. Examples include village & town halls, libraries, hospitals, assisted living facilities, nursing homes, homeless shelters, police stations, fire halls, fire trucks, police & emergency vehicles, private school & colleges, museums, and airports. Applicants **MUST** be public bodies (Cities, villages, townships, counties or special districts), federally recognized Indian Tribes, or non-profit organizations. Cities & Villages must have a population of 20,000 or fewer. Grant recipients must have a median household income less than \$41,968. Applicants other than public bodies must show broad based community support. Applicants must be unable to borrow the money elsewhere at reasonable rates and terms to make the project affordable. Applicants are scored on a priority point system based upon populations, median household incomes, & if health and safety needs are being met by the proposal. Leveraging is highly recommended due to limited funds. Grant Specific: The amount of grant funds provided for a facility shall not exceed 75% of the cost of developing the facility. Grants are limited to no more than 50% of the State allocation or \$50,000, whichever is greater. Maximum loan term is 40yrs or the useful life of the security, whichever is less. Interest rate is dependant on the median household income of the borrower. The rate can be as low as 4.5% and will usually be no higher than commercial bonds. Collateral is usually a revenue bond if the loan is to a public body otherwise a note and a mortgage. Repayment is from revenue use of the facility and backed by taxed if a public body.
- **Renewable Energy For American Program – Guarantee Loan Program** is the last program Carol discussed. The purpose can be either for energy efficiency or renewable energy. With energy efficiency, this would mean the installation of energy efficient equipment and improvements to a facility, building or process, or that reduces energy consumption. With renewable energy, this means the purchase and installation of a system that produces, or produces and delivers useable energy derived from wind, solar, biomass, geothermal, or hydrogen derived from these sources. Eligibility: Agricultural Producers – Individual or entity directly involved in the production of ag products and 50%or greater of their gross income is derived from the operations. Rural – All areas other than a city with a population of greater than 50,000 and urbanized area contiguous and adjacent to such city. Small Business – A private entity including a sole proprietorship, partnership, corporation, and a cooperative, municipal, or Indian Tribe electric utility. Must meet SBA small business size standards including aggregate or affiliated and subsidiary entities; excludes other non-profit entities. Facility must be located in a rural area. Use of Grant Funds: Construction of buildings, real estate improvements, and purchase & installation of equipment that are an integral & necessary part of the renewable energy system or an energy efficiency improvement project. Energy audits, feasibility study, and business plans. Professional fees, design fees, permits, etc. Expansions or improvements to existing renewable energy systems. Loan Info: \$5,000-\$25million loan amount. 1.0% guarantee fee, ¼% annual renewal fee, 70-85% guarantee of loss, loan amount (including grant funds if applicable) cannot exceed 75%of eligible project cost. Funds availability: NOFA will announce the application cycle annually. There are also grants for this program: Renewable: \$2,500 minimum-\$500,000 maximum. Efficiency: \$1,500 min-\$250,000max. Grant cannot exceed 25% of eligible project costs.
- A few local projects USDA has helped with are the Potosi Brewery, Hazel Green Village Hall, Muscoda Cheese Plant and the wind turbines in Montfort.
- The bottom line is that USDA Rural Development offers a wide variety of programs so if you think your community might qualify for something they have please feel free to call Carol Wetuski anytime! They also travel for their customers and will come to you rather than you having to come to their offices in Dodgeville.

**OLD BUSINESS: 1. Intermediary Re-lending Program** – This is another one of USDA Rural Development's programs that Ron has been discussing with Carol ever since our annual meeting in December. Ron has also been talking to the

County Board, the Tourism & Resource Committee and the Fair Board about this as well. Ron is working on the application for the intermediary re-lending program (IRP) and whether or not the Corporation receives the loan is based on demonstrating a financial need, the poverty rate & the unemployment rate, just to name a few. With this program, up to \$150,000 total per loan per business can be lent out and area businesses and/or municipalities can borrow from it. It works similar to the RLF program in that they are low interest loans, but this is a loan from USDA Rural Development and when the funds are repaid by the borrower they stay in the County to be re-lent for other projects. These loans do not have the specific job creation criteria and they can be used directly on building construction, but it is important that this money is loaned only to companies that are rock solid as the Corporation has to guarantee them. Also, the County's Revolving Loan Fund Program is under the County's tax id # where this program (IRP) would be under GCEDC's tax id#. If you have any questions about this program or would like more information please talk to Ron.

#### **NEW BUSINESS:**

1. **WEDA Resolution** – WEDA has commissioned a study to look at what other states are doing and what WI can do to be more competitive when it comes to Economic Development. GCEDC contributed money to the study. Ray Saint made a motion to approve the WEDA resolution, Paul Thares second the motion. Motion carries.

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

**Boscobel** – Andreas Tranzo talked a little bit about a group that he's involved in that would like to start a community garden and local foods co-op in Boscobel. He's working on a grant right now to secure funding for the project and is looking in to other sources of funding as well. There is quite a large group of people interested in contributing to this project.

#### **Cuba City – John Beinborn**

- A new store opening on 4/1 called the Primitive Star which sells home décor,
- The Lion's Club has made a \$10,000 donation for renovations to the bathrooms at Splinter Park.
- The Cuba City girl's basketball team is headed to the state tournament again this year. We wish them luck!

#### **Fennimore – Doug Ingrahm**

- Things Looking Bright for Fennimore Rayovac Plant - Rayovac currently employs 275 with plans to soon increase those numbers to 285 to 290 employees. Earlier this month they had 5 Engineer positions available – two Engineers have been hired within the past week. They also have openings for skilled trades. Recent installation of an additional AAA battery line is expected to be fully operational by April 2010 which will create 12 jobs. The new line will have the capacity to produce 600 batteries a minute. Fennimore Rayovac plant will celebrate its 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary later this year. It is likely the Fennimore plant will produce a billion batteries in 2010.
- Carr Valley Cheese - Selma White is the new manager of Carr Valley Cheese. Fennimore's Carr Valley will add package wine sales to their product line by offering wine from regional wineries.
- Grand Reopening of Fennimore Doll and Toy Museum - The Fennimore Doll and Toy Museum will hold its Grand Reopening at their new location 1135 6<sup>th</sup> Street (located behind Subway) Saturday and May 1 and 2. A special feature during the weekend will be doll and toy evaluations (small fee). The Doll and Toy Museum is open daily through September from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. (closed holidays). The Fennimore Historical Railroad Museum will also offer a special opening May 1 and 2 in conjunction with the Doll and Toy Museum's reopening. Miniature train rides will be available weather permitting. The Fennimore Historical Railroad Society will begin their 2010 season Saturday, May 29. The Railroad Museum normal hours of operation are 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. seven days a week (including holidays) through Labor Day. They are open weekends only September and October. Miniature train rides are offered weekend only.
- Fennimore will host Inventors and Entrepreneurs Meeting – Wednesday, May 12 @ SWTC - Guest speaker John Wells/WebWise Design & Marketing – Topic – Choosing a Name for your Business & Creating a website for your business.

#### **Grant County – Bill Biefer**

- Bids will be opened today for the new building planned at the youth & ag building.
- The bids for the Wyalusing boat landing will be opened on April 1<sup>st</sup>. That project should be finished in time for the 4<sup>th</sup> of July holiday when the boat landing will be very busy.
- This is the last meeting for many of the County Board members as the committee will be reduced from 31 to 17 members after the April 6<sup>th</sup> election.

#### **Grant County Tourism Council – Jeannie Heisz**

- Dept of Commerce Secretary Dick Leinenkugel attended 2 days of the Governor's Conference on tourism showing the importance of Commerce and Tourism Dept's working together on this huge economic impact tourism has on WI.

#### **Hazel Green – Bill Weigman**

- The bricks will start to go on the City Hall building this week. They'll have the downspouts and gutters on and then everything will be finished on the outside of the building that needs to be done.
- There is a subdivision that 2 new owners are going to start building in.
- The Village has some sidewalks and streets that need to be repaired that will be worked on soon.
- On behalf of the Village, the Village Board and Bill they all wish Paul & Natalie Thares the best of luck on their move!

#### **Livingston – Lou Vosberg**

- Livingston received a grant for their water well. The Easter Egg Hunt will be held this Saturday, March 28<sup>th</sup>.

#### **Montfort – Theresa Sander**

- There are a few businesses in the village for sale: The Windmill Mobile gas station, an older building downtown that used to be used as an old Stagecoach & hotel, and the R & P floor building located along Hwy 18.

- Plans are under way for Montfort Big Days Celebration which will be held June 4 & 5 with the famous chicken BBQ to be held on that Sunday.
- The village is waiting to hear from the Dept of Commerce if they have received a grant for their sanitary sewer system.
- Next month's GCEDC meeting will be held in Montfort at Gowdy's so hope to see you all there!

#### **Platteville – George Krueger**

- The new police station building is coming along good and the walls are going up and everything is on schedule.
- The new broadband project in Platteville is coming along good too.
- There have been a few prospects for the industrial park and Ron has been doing a good job to help market that.
- On April 10<sup>th</sup> Platteville will hold the Taste of Barley at the Governor Dodge Convention Center.

#### **SWTC – Joan Senn**

- A thank you to USDA Rural Development for assisting with the student housing project on campus. SWTC is only 1 of 2 campuses in the technical college system that provides student housing.
- The Clinical Lab Tech program was just approved by the state board and the posting for an instructor is ready to go up tomorrow. So new programs the college will be running next fall are: electrical power distribution, clinical lab technician and physical therapist assistant. There are a couple accreditation steps yet with physical therapist asst. and the engineering technologist program is full. Enrollment numbers are up and very good, and they are looking at running a second section of some of the programs. They are not just looking at the number of students that apply, but they have to look at how placement in these programs is and choose the ones that are going to help the businesses in our area the most.
- Southwest Tech is doing a lot with green training. They're involved in 2 different consortiums where they're able to bring in green training people from Purdue University. They held a green generalist training at the campus that they were able to have 20 staff members participate in the first day and then 8 went through. They also did a dumpster dive training with simulated dumpsters and participants had to wear all of the protective gear.

#### **UW-Extension – Paul Thares**

- Paul has been working with Gary Smith from the Small Business Development Center on a project called Marketplace for Kids which will be held on May 27<sup>th</sup> on SWTC campus. There are 14 different topics kids can choose from and they are expecting 250 kids to come to this event.
- The next Clean Sweep programs will be held on 3 consecutive Saturdays in Iowa, Lafayette and Grant Counties with the first one on 9/11. This year everyone participating will have to register and pay a fee to go through. There is a fee for household, ag and commercial as there was not enough grant money this year to waive that fee.

#### **UW-Platteville – George Krueger**

- A new chancellor has been hired.
- Next Monday is the Extreme Entrepreneur Tour on campus. For more information or to register go to [www.extrememtour.org](http://www.extrememtour.org)

#### **Special Guests: Patrick Reinsma – WI Dept. of Tourism**

- Patrick covers a 17 county area of tourism in our part of WI. He attended the Governor's Conference on Tourism where there was a great turnout. Next year's conference will be held in WI Dells. At this year's conference the Dept of Tourism unveiled the new tourism initiative called Meetings Mean Business. They will be holding some events in LaCrosse. Eau Claire and Madison to encourage businesses and business owners to hold their meetings in WI. Grant County is a unique part of the state in that we have 2 scenic byways going through the county – Hwy 60 and the Great River Road.

#### **Phil Garthwaite, 49<sup>th</sup> District Representative**

- Carol mentioned local foods and Phil just wanted to mention that he has worked on a number of things with the Dept of Agriculture, Buy Local, Buy WI and also the Farm to School project.
- A Southeast WI Senator took a model from Illinois that, for example, if you look at the prison in Boscobel they have to buy their food from the lowest bidder, but this new measure would allow them to go up to 10% above the lowest bidder if they buy locally.
- Working on a measure with some winery owners in the local area and with their co-op meeting once a year.
- Keeping tabs on the Clean Energy Jobs Measure and how that's playing out.

#### **Senator Dale Schultz**

- In the last 4 years WI has lost 4.3% of its small businesses. In addition to that, our debt now on a per capital basis, adjusted for GAP accounting is substantially worse than CA. You need to be told this now!
- If the State of WI grows its revenues by 5.5% and we freeze every single appropriation we're still \$400million short. Are we really going to get 5.5% revenue growth when last year we only got 1.9%? This estimate does not include what we're going to get as a result of Obama's Health Care Plan because we will take in a part of that cost. The changes in this economy are going to be unbelievable.....but with every crisis there is an opportunity and Dale thinks we need to begin to finally make some decisions about the things that effect that 5.5% buffer. Dale goes out and talks to the small business owners and what he hears most is people are tired of government taxes, tired of regulation and tired of constantly being threatened with being sued. Dale does a lot of surveying through his newsletter and will continue to do that. Please contact him with any questions or any problems that you have.

## DIRECTOR'S REPORT

- We've had 10 prospects so far this year. One prospect is an existing business which is an agricultural manufacturer. We have many existing businesses in Grant County that are looking at expanding as well. Also, 2 leads came from the WI Dept of Commerce and Ron submitted a proposal to the prospect about a building in Boscobel since they wanted to be close to rail access. We were the only proposal from the area that Ron was aware of.
- A large wind turbine manufacturer contacted Ron and he followed up with them and was able to speak directly with the company president and give him the number of engineer the college puts out as this was something he wanted to know.
- One thing we've seen change with state proposals is a very fast turn around time as nothing is submitted in paper – it is all done electronically.
- The City of Dubuque will not be renewing the leases of many of their downtown businesses and instead will be putting condos up to rent to residents & commercial businesses. This is a great opportunity for us to show some of those existing business what we have to offer here in Grant County. A lot of the barge traffic may end up going to Prairie du Chein if these companies are not allowed to keep their businesses in the downtown area.
- We are getting many inquiries about the County's revolving loan fund and several applications have been submitted.
- Ron will be attended the biomass briefing in Richland Center on March 30<sup>th</sup>. There's been a lot of interest in biomass and we are a very strong biomass producing area so there will be good info at the meeting.
- Everything's moving forward with the regional cooperative and it will be officially kicked off at the BEST Conference on May 6<sup>th</sup> in Potosi. Commerce has a regional marketing program that we cannot access until we form a regional group, thus the purpose of this group coming together. Commerce offers a maximum grant of \$100,000 for marketing to regional entities. Ron's not saying we will be able to get the full \$100,000 because a lot of it is matching funds, but we can at least get some.
- Ron will be going to each of the County's Board Meetings, the Tourism & Resource Committee Meeting and the full County Board meeting and asking that they sign the resolution and recognize the regional co-op as the regional economic development entity. This is one thing that THRIVE has not done or other regions have not done is get "permission" to do this.
- Our website stats are still very strong with 130,000 hits per month. A lot of this is because of spending the money on advertising with Google Adwords.
- **The next Grant County Economic Development Corporation Meeting will be held Wednesday, April 28th in Montfort.**

## ADJOURNMENT

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Dorothy Genthe, seconded by Paul Thares. President George Krueger adjourned the meeting at 8:03 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Becky Becker, Executive Assistant