

GRANT COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION MONTHLY MEETING
April 28, 2010- Meeting Minutes
Gowdy's – Montfort

Present:

Bloomington: None
Boscobel: Barb Bell, Gary Kjos
Cassville: None
Cuba City: John Beinborn, Rich Brown
Dickeyville: None
Fennimore: Rob & Karla Rands
Grant Co.: John Beinborn, Bill Biefer, John Patcle, Vince Loeffelholz, Grant Loy, Lester Jantzen
GCTC: Lou Vosberg, Grant Loy
Hazel Green: David Jegerlhner
Jamestown: None
Lancaster: Jerry Wehrle, Dennis Morgan
Livingston: Lou Vosberg, Sheila Ruchti
Montfort: Theresa Sander, Rod Sander, Vernan Lenzendorf, Mary Ann Lenzendorf, Bonnie Prohaska, John Prohaska, Donita Pilling, Ryan Pilling, Brian Nodolf, Bill Biefer
Muscoda: None
Platteville: Dorothy Genthe, George Krueger, Dave Parr
Potosi: None
SWWRPC: None
SWTC: Lisa Whitish
UW-Ext.: None
UW-Platte: George Krueger
GCEDC: Ron Brisbois, Becky Becker
Special Guests: Paul Norris, MSA Professional Services; Heather McLean, Southwest Opportunities Center; Brad & Peggy Biddick, Rural Route 1 Popcorn & Biddick, Inc; David Martens, Dept. of Commerce; Dan Stelpflug, Scenic Rivers Energy Co-op

CALL TO ORDER:

President George Krueger called the meeting to order at 6:11 p.m.

MINUTES:

Dorothy Genthe *made a motion to accept the minutes from the 3/24/10 Board of Directors' Meeting; seconded by Dennis Morgan, motion carried.*

TREASURER'S REPORT: Given by John Patcle, Grant County Board Chairman

Balance on hand as of 4/26/10 was \$127,072.08. Total income since the last report was \$98.76; Total expenses since the last report are \$10,281.85. Expenditures to date total \$41,208.11. 29% of the year has elapsed, and 34% of budgeted funds have been expended. *A motion was made by John Beinborn to approve the treasurer's report as presented, seconded by Dorothy Genthe, motion carried.*

MONTFORT REPORT – given by: Theresa Sander

- Montfort Big Days will be June 4-6 with a BBQ rib contest, parade, bicycle race and the famous chicken BBQ. The local VFW and a small group of residence plan this event each year, which takes a lot of time to do!
- The village is looking into what it would take to expand their wastewater treatment facility and also into setting up a TIF district in the Village. Ron is assisting the village with both of these projects.
- The local fire department had recently applied for a grant, which to the village's dismay, they did not receive.
- In September 2009 the village submitted a grant application to the Dept of Commerce for repairs to their sewer system which were caused by the flooding. They are still waiting to hear back on that grant application.
- And the biggest news of all would be the meteor that came through recently and landed by Livingston. There have been many, many people coming here from all over the US in search of the rocks, and some local people have sold their finds to some of these meteor hunters!

In Lieu of a Speaker, the group took a very interesting tour of the Montfort Wind Mills.

OLD BUSINESS: 1. Intermediary Re-lending Program –Ron is working on the application for the intermediary re-lending program (IRP). The USDA now wants to verify the information we sent them which means we need to get a letter from the bank and an accountant. We will be working on getting this information to USDA this week. This program works similar to the RLF program in that these 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. **SWEDC Regional Co-op** – Up until recently, our area of WI had no regional ED group that is recognized by the State to market SW WI. By forming a legal regional entity, we are able to apply for marketing dollars from the Dept of Commerce to assist with promoting our region of WI, but if no legal group were to be formed those marketing dollars are then unattainable and we can not apply for them. Knowing this information, six area counties began meeting to decide what needed to be done and how they should proceed in order for our area to be eligible for this money so it could be used to promote SW WI as a whole. The six counties involved with this are: Green, Iowa, Grant, Lafayette, Crawford and Richland. At one of the regional meetings it was discussed what type of entity would need to be formed to be legally recognized and Meegan Thompson of Richland County brought up the idea of forming a co-op. After speaking with a lawyer who confirmed this could be done, the group decided to move ahead with it and now the bylaws and code of ethics have been drafted, a tax id number has been applied for and received and now the group is working with the County Board from each of the six counties to get an authorizing resolution passed so they are recognized as the regional ED group in the area. The Board of Directors for this regional group, which will be called "Prosperity Southwest Wisconsin", will consist of six members with 2 or 3 at large members. This will be funded primarily through private business owners and local utilities – no municipalities, and their primary focus will be on marketing this entire region. There will be a kick-off of Prosperity Southwest Wisconsin at the BEST Conference coming up on May 6 in Potosi.

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

Boscobel – Gary Kjos

- Phase 2 & 3 of the Wisconsin Avenue project are now in full swing, The project is broken down into 4 or 5 phases total and should be finished by the end of summer.
- The Fireman's Park will be getting a new park shelter. That building project will begin soon.
- The Boscobel public swimming pool is getting a new solar heating system and is still accepting donations if you're interested in donating funding to the project.

Cuba City – John Beinborn

- Habitat for Humanity will be building a new house in Cuba City in May for a local family. Two new houses are being built in the community. The girl's basketball team was honored at half time of the Milwaukee Buck's game recently.

Fennimore – Rob Rands

- City of Fennimore recently annexed 80.1 acres of land for SWTC's public safety facility
- U.S. Department of Commerce – Linda Parrish accompanied Sunny Kessel /International Trade Specialist April 16 with visits to businesses in the Fennimore Industrial Park to discuss export resources. Kessel is working with area economic development organizations/chambers, GCEDC and SWTC to host an export workshop at SWTC in October 2010. _
- Energy Management Consultants_ - Pete Adam reports business is picking up – he recently hired sixth new employee this year.
- Fennimore hosts Entrepreneurs and Inventors Meeting –_Wednesday, May 12 @ SWTC 6 to 8 p.m.

Guest speaker John Wells/WebWise Design & Marketing – Topic "Growing Your Business Via Your Business Website." John will share his journey as an entrepreneur from his business inception in 1995 through its growth today. Entrepreneurs and current business owners are encouraged to attend, **please help share this information**. There is no charge to attend.

Fennimore May Events - May 1 & 2 - Grand Reopening of Fennimore Doll and Toy Museum

The Fennimore Doll and Toy Museum will hold its Grand Reopening at their new location 1135 6th 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 October from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

- 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.
- May 21 – 22 – Fennimore City-Wide Garage Sales

Grant County – Bill Biefer

- The County Board has now been reduced to 17 members with each member on six different committees.
- Focus on Energy recently did an energy audit on all of the county owned buildings. They will get back to the county with their recommendations very soon.
- The Wyalusing Boat Landing project should be finished in July.

Grant County Tourism Council – Grant Loy

- Grant has been out delivering travel planners to the local area. He stopped in Kieler to deliver some to the now closed welcome center and has heard from them that they are busier now than they were before. The welcome center in Lacrosse, as well as many other places, cannot keep information on the shelf as people are coming in to request it much more than they were before!
- Heartland Festival - The UWP Center for the Arts performances begin June 7th – August 8th. Some of this season's shows are "A Prom to Die For!", "The Taffetas", "The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee", "Beauty and the Beast", "Cabaret Night", "The Jungle Book" & "School House Rock! Live Jr.!" For show times and tickets for these shows and more call 608-342-1298 or log onto www.heartlandfestival.com
- The Grant County Tourism Council is working on publishing their cookbook which will be available for sale soon.

Hazel Green – Dave Jegerlehner

- June 7 & 8 the village will move into their new village hall building.

Lancaster – Jerry Wehrle

- With money from the office of energy independence 9,000 light bulbs will be handed out to local residents by college students from Platteville.
- Plans to open a new Amish retail grocery store are under way. They will be licensed to sell meat, canned goods, bakery items and more. It will be located one block east off the square and should be open for business in the next couple of weeks.

Livingston – Brad Biddick

- The Livingston Fire Dept received a grant to cover 90% of the cost of a new fire truck.
- A local co-op hopes to break ground for a new facility on Hwy 80 within the next 2 weeks.
- The Livingston Festival will be held on Sunday, June 27th.
- The Village has been awarded a grant for \$300,000 for their new water tower.
- Brian Nodolf shared information about the meteor and where most of the debris fell – over Cty IG and Hwy 80.

Platteville – George Krueger

- The City Council has a new president, Mike Delecki.
- Industrial development has been very hard as the economy is still struggling. American Customer Care in Platteville recently lost a contract with one their clients and has notified the state of a mass layoff of all their employees. GCEDC, SWTC, Workforce Development and Platteville city officials are all working together to form a rapid response team to assist the employees with either going back to school to further their education or in looking another job. City officials have been looking for a new contract for the company in hopes of ACC remaining open.
- Blackhawk Engineering is now closed, but there is someone interested in possibly purchasing the building.
- The Stemosium is tomorrow at the Governor Dodge. Roberta Gassman from the Dept of Workforce Dev will be in attendance.

SWTC – Lisa Whitish

- Southwest Tech staff and trainers are participating in Green Specialist training this week at Southwest Tech focusing on Air Pollution and Green Chemistry. Staff will be attending another week of training in May in Madison focusing on Water and Sustainability. This training is being provided by Purdue University and is funded by a WIRED grant in partnership with Blackhawk, Madison, and Moraine Park technical colleges. It is another tool in our toolbox of services that we can provide for our communities. Go Lean...Go Green!!
- Marketing Your Business on Facebook Workshop (please refer to handout) - May 4, 8:30-11:30, Rm 493 at Southwest Tech. Participant fee is \$25/person. You may register online, contact Lisa Whitish by email for additional information - lwhitish@swtc.edu - May Graduation at Southwest Tech is May 18, 2010.

UW-Platteville – George Krueger

- Work on the field house is on-going. UWP will be losing quite a few upper staff members as 15 or so people will be retiring at the end of the school year and there are only 2 weeks left of the semester.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

- Prospect numbers remain slow for the year, as is to be expected with the economy. The number of existing businesses within the county that are looking to expand is very good though.
- Ron expects more job creation next year and also that we will be more back to a normal unemployment rate as well...somewhere around 4%.
- We have 3 applications in the middle of review right now for the County's Revolving Loan Fund. The RLF currently has a balance of \$425,000 which is the highest it's been in quite some time.
- Working with Lancaster on a cold storage facility.
- Ron was recently appointed to the Nelson Dewey Plant's Community Planning Board. The plant is currently burning 5% biomass with the ability to burn up to 20%. Costs for biomass are a lot higher than those of the conventional methods. They are currently taking old ag bags and mixing them with wood to make pellets to burn, but this has been more costly.
- Working with Dickeyville to annex some land into the village.
- As was mentioned above, Ron has been working with SWTC, Workforce Development and Platteville City officials in forming a rapid response team for the American Customer Care business. They currently have 160 employees that will be out of a job by June if another contract is not secured.
- Working with a Muscoda business that is interested in expanding. They are working on comparing utility rates to those of another state to decide if they'll remain in Muscoda.
- We will be sending out a newsletter soon which will give an update on our website statistics.

The next Grant County Economic Development Corporation Meeting will be held Wednesday, May 26th in Dickeyville at Katina's Kitchen.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Dorothy Genthe, seconded by Rich Brown. President George Krueger adjourned the meeting at 7:46 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Becky Becker, Executive Assistant

