

Minutes: August 10, 2017

Perry County Economic Development Authority

In attendance: Kevin Fitzpatrick, Marti Roberts, Dawn Lowe, Christie Young, Russ Hoover, Rich Pluta, Frank Campbell, Michelle Jones, Rog Smith, Derek Whitesel, Morgan Tressler, John Gerner, Jim Fuller

Excused: Paul Rudy, June Reisinger, Brenda Watson, Patti McLaughlin,

Unexcused:

Meeting called to order at 8:06 a.m.

Secretary's report for May. John presented minutes for consider. Dawn motioned, Kevin seconded. Motion carried.

Treasurers report. Penn State Extension paid for both PSU projects, though they'd originally offered to pay for the County Assessment. Total balance of \$11,512. Rog motioned, Christie seconded. Motion carried.

Chair report: To recap, we did not get the second round of USDA grant. During our civil rights review with Rob Lane we learned that first time applicants have a 15 point advantage, which put us at a disadvantage. Also, our inability to demonstrate matching funds likely hurt our scoring. In two years, you're considered a new applicant again. Rob also discussed other USDA grants, including the Value Added Products Grant, which might be of interest to farms here. Rob recommended Becky XXX, a grant writer who has successfully landed these grants in the past. We conferenced called with Becky and she'd like to talk to the board about more ideas she has. For example, a team approach to applying to USDA with her nonprofit, FEWSS; or teaching seminar for farmers on REAP. Becky is requesting \$500 to start researching options that might help us/local farmers. Discussion ensued about the pros/cons of this idea.

Also, should we start a 501c3? If the county doesn't support us, what are we doing? Rog wants to discuss how we move forward on extremely limited resources. Brenda officially commented that there isn't money in the budget for this year. Discussion ensued about what to do with our lack of funding and our government structure (107c1). John: do we want to go back to the commissioners? Rog recommended we go back with our request and ask for period of time for public comment. Recommendation that we talk to the Commissioners about how to get on the budget for 2018. We are doing what the County requested be done in Comprehensive Plan. This progress was made by grant dollars. Without funding, we can't address the objectives listed in chapter 7. Russ, what is going on with the EDC? We need to address what's going on with that. Frank, EDC met with Commissioners to tell them what's going on.

Discussion about if we create a 501c3, how will that look. The advantage is that we

Rog motioned that we talk to Adam about creating a rural cooperative/non-profit, allocate \$1000 to do so, and report back by end of year. Christie seconded. Discussion ensued about pros/cons. Motion was amended to clarify that we're not authorizing spending \$money yet. Christie seconded amendment. Motion carried. No opposition.

Rich motioned that Marti goes before commissioners again reminding them that the comp plan requires us and requests to be included in 2018 budget. Morgan seconded. Rog said we go to the meeting and publicly ask what the process was. Motion carried.

Farm Fest is September 23. We are working with Chamber, it's led by farm bureau. We need ads for booklet and sponsors and vendors. If you can help, please do. Friends of Mark Keller and Friends of Dis

Michelle reminded group that Nature Conservancy event is September 23. We should have someone there.

Old business: Frank reminded about rifle raffle. EDA will be represented at Chamber booth. Stop by. Thursday, 3 pm., Secretary Redding will be visiting PCLC to see hemp field. There may be other legislators there to promote hemp. Wednesday, ag progress days, Marti/Bill presenting about their test project. John, is Mr. Trite applying for a second round? Possibly applying for a research grow license, but will likely apply for second round of grow permits.

Other new business? DiSanto sponsoring bill for vouchers. Frank expressed reservation about the bill and concern about the impact of local schools. Discussion ensued. There was certainly no consensus of opinion.

Christie motioned to adjourn. Derek seconded.