

Meeting Minutes
February 14, 2019
Perry County Economic Development Authority

Attendees: Rich Pluta, Patti McLaughlin, Russ Hoover, Dawn Lowe, Kevin Fitzpatrick, John Gerner, Morgan Tressler, Marti Roberts, Michael Lawler, Frank Campbell, June Reisinger, Duane Hertzler

Absent: Jim Fuller, Greg Gordon, Emory Yoder

Excused: Paul Rudy, Shawna Weller, Derek Whitesel, Brenda Watson

Guests: none

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order by Chair Marti Roberts at 8:07 AM

Public Comment: none

Secretary's Report: John Gerner presented the minutes of the January 10, 2019 meeting which had been distributed in advance to all board members with the package of materials for this meeting. Russ Hoover made a motion to approve the minutes, Patti McLaughlin seconded the motion. The motion to approve the minutes was approved by a voice vote without dissent.

Treasurer's Report: Patti McLaughlin presented the Management Report prepared by Robert Morris & Co. for the period ending January 31, 2019. Russ Hoover proposed a motion to approve the Treasurer's Report as presented, Morgan Tressler seconded the motion. Ms. McLaughlin noted that the bank account holding the DCED funding indicates a balance in excess of the funds received from DCED since the account is an interest-bearing account, however we must return the interest earned to DCED and so it cannot be used to defray any of PCEDA's expenses. In addition, Ms. McLaughlin noted that Michelle Jones and our accountant at Robert Morris have modified the headings of the LFPP category in the Statement of Activity by Class to reflect the matching funds (Michelle's salary for the work she does under this account) that PCEDA must provide – that is why the total available in this account is shown as \$66,700. The motion was approved by a voice vote without dissent. Ms. McLaughlin noted that the bond insurance coverage is in place and that Michelle Jones is still working on getting quotes for the other insurance coverage we need.

Chair Report: Marti Roberts advised as follows:

- As presented at previous meetings, a series of ad hoc committees have been established to work on advancing the initiatives that PCEDA has received funding for. Each of these initiatives has a time limit established by the grant. In an effort to get these initiatives moving forward, Ms. Roberts has selected a chairperson from the list of volunteers for each committee and tasked them with getting the committee work underway, developing a budget for consideration and approval by the board, and providing a progress report at each future board meeting.
- **LFPP** - the current focus under the LFPP project continues to be our outreach to farmers. To date we have only received 36 survey responses while we had hoped to get back as many as

300-400 surveys. The deadline for this phase of the project is March 30th. Patti McLaughlin is advancing an effort to get FFA members in each school district to help get completed surveys. Kevin Fitzpatrick questioned how much help we are getting from the Farm Bureau members and was told that the Farm Bureau membership is split in its support/resistance to this effort. The response from the Crop Day and Smith Implement events was disappointing, but some responses may be coming in from some of the libraries. We have three dates scheduled to talk to farmers directly and volunteers are needed to help staff these events. Frank Campbell is putting together a door to door canvassing effort and encouraged board members to help solicit completed surveys. An article in Farm Bureau newsletter to encourage farmers to complete the survey has yet to be published. Each person who completes a survey will have their name entered a drawing for a \$100 gift card.

- **Branding** – there is approximately \$42K left to be spent in this effort and the committee has been working on a budget for that funding. Morgan Tressler reported that the committee has been seeking proposals for a second video to be used to promote the county to audiences outside of the county proper. The current weather does not lend itself to good video footage. Kevin Fitzpatrick said he felt that the video does not mention the significant talents in the county workforce that commutes to work outside the county. Dawn Lowe offered to provide any labor related information needed for the video. Ms. Tressler advised that Michelle Jones has put together an RFP for development of an outreach program and a person to guide the outreach effort has been sent out, but the responses have been slow to come in – only 2 so far. Kevin Fitzpatrick proposed a motion to authorize the committee to select a branding consultant for a contract amount that fits within the current budget. Russ Hoover seconded the motion. It was noted that some of the funding will be needed for website development and implementation, publications/printing, and the like. The motion was approved by a voice vote without dissent.
- **Downtown Revitalization** – Ms. Roberts advised that the grant write-up talked about developing a template or framework for each of the towns/boroughs to use in exploring ways to revitalize their community. This could be the first part of a multi-year effort to bring on additional technical assistance to work with each town/borough on a specific plan for their community. It was acknowledged that these committees can bring in outside individuals who might be interested in the work to be undertaken.
- **Tourism** – Ms. Roberts advised that she sees this committee work to focus on the goals and needs of the tourism industry in the county and how to meet those needs (i.e., what kind of tourism data would be of interest to local businesses – restaurants, cafes, etc.). Russ Hoover suggested the upcoming County Bicentennial would be a topic for discussion. Emery Yoder noted that there are many groups that come into the county to view leading edge farming operations and often have to find food and lodging outside the county. He said that some of these groups can range as high as 100 participants. Ms. Roberts suggested that these committees can and should reach out to appropriate state agencies for information on who to work with in formulating a plan of action.
- **Board and Staff Training** – Ms. Roberts suggested that it might be appropriate for the board to participate in a retreat-type event to consider options for a long-range plan for PCEDCA. While winters are often the best time for many of the board members, she did not think we should wait until next winter to have such an event.
- **Perry County Fair** – Marti Roberts said the Fair Board had an initial meeting to consider PCEDA's proposal for fair ground improvements. They have an engineering study, but no

real estimate of the cost. The concept of bringing municipal water and sewer to the fair grounds is a rather complicated issue and well beyond the means of the current budget, however the PCEDA funding can be used to pay for the engineering studies needed. It was suggested that the fair board may undertake some type of capital campaign to raise some of the money needed to complete the project.

- **Township Officials meeting** – Ms. Roberts said she will not be able to attend this meeting scheduled for February 23rd. The intent is for us to show our current branding video and talk about some of the activities we have underway. Morgan Tressler will make the presentation.
- **Future DCED funding** – Ms. Roberts said that the state budget for 2019-2020 currently being worked on could include as much as \$150K for economic development activities in the county. Patti McLaughlin made a motion to authorize the Chair to prepare a brief outline of possible uses of additional DCED funding for consideration during the development of next year's state budget. Kevin Fitzpatrick seconded the motion. The motion was approved by a voice vote without dissent. Ms. Roberts said she recently met with State Representative Keller to bring him up to date on PCEDA efforts currently underway and to talk about additional funding needs. Kevin Fitzpatrick mentioned the current state of the county infrastructure and its impact on tourism.
- Board members were reminded of the need for each to prepare a Statement of Financial Interest for submission to DCED. The completed forms should be given to Michelle Jones.

Staff Report: A written Staff Report was prepared by Michelle Jones and had been distributed in advance to all board members with the package of materials for this meeting. Ms. Roberts highlighted the following items:

- Michelle Jones had a meeting with representatives of all the county libraries to discuss their needs for improved internet access. Each library is in a different position and has differing needs regarding internet access. They will provide a more detailed proposal for PCEDA to consider.
- Previously, Ms. Jones had provided information on the cost estimates provided by four audit groups ranging from \$1500 to \$6000. An expert from her email is as follows:
 - Ryan Fortenbaugh- does Liverpool borough, watts township. Does “informal” audit. Not anything where he’s liable, doesn’t pay for that much insurance. 717.834.5889. Can file DCED report for us (due April?). Typically takes a couple weeks. Charged Liverpool \$1500-1700.
 - Audley Porter, Yellow book audit \$2500-3000. Does several clients for Robert Morris. In Florida. Reviews trial balance, grant agreements, etc. According to Rob “cheap and always comes through.”
 - Herring, Roll and Salomon, Courtney 570.286.5895. Does New Bloomfield/water authority and maybe Howe township too, Thank you for sending over the financial statements. We would like to submit a quote of \$3,000 to audit the cash basis financial statements for the year ended December 31, 2018. We understand that you would be willing to box up your information and bring it to our office for the audit to be performed here.
 - Tracy Rash, Maher Duessel, actually two audits – DCED grant audit, for entire grant for entire period. Then annual audit. Cash basis vs. accrual. We’ll use cash, “external financial statement” in prep for DCED report, now online. Rob says “they’re more

expensive, but higher quality. “Unfortunately, an audit requires a base amount of paperwork, so no matter the size of the organization or the amount of transactions, a base fee applies. Our base fee is \$6,000. If it costs us less than that to do the audit, we’d charge you less, but I can’t quote an amount lower than that. Also, being that it’s a first-year audit, I wouldn’t expect it to be less than the base fee amount the first year (with set up and auditing beginning balances).

The discussion centered on dismissing the first and fourth proposal as being unacceptable. Patti McLaughlin made a motion to authorize the Executive Committee to execute a contract for audit services based on its assessment of the two remaining proposals at a cost not to exceed \$3K. Russ Hoover seconded the motion. The motion was approved by a voice vote without dissent.

Old business: None

- **Business Software** - Rich Pluta noted that the financial plan development software used by PCEDA has helped several new businesses prepare a business plan that has been accepted by local banks. He suggested that PCEDA might consider setting up a meeting with local banks to get their feedback on the process. There also is a need to get more people trained in the use of the software – particularly retired business people - to ease the burden on staff time.
- **Opioid Roundtable** – June Reisinger asked about the results of the Opioid Roundtable and if there was a need for some type of follow-up. Morgan Tressler said that the session went very well. There was a lot of good discussion and exchange of ideas. She has gotten a lot of good feedback from the public on the event and suggested that it would be worthwhile to go back to each of the speakers to get responses to questions from the public. She also said that we should send out thank you notes to the speakers.

New Business: None

Announcements:

- Frank Campbell advised that Perry County Economic Development Corporation will be presenting the results of their dairy processing plant site study to the state on March 25th. PCEDC has also submitted a grant funding request to the Appalachian Regional Commission for the feasibility study of the processing plant itself.
- Frank Campbell brought up the long talked about Education Summit with the county’s school districts. This concept was developed a few years ago to explore what could be done to improve the educational experience of school students and to better prepare them for careers to meet county needs. More recently this effort has been focused on helping school districts meet the state mandated career options educational effort. He recently attended a meeting with school guidance counselors and a seminar at the Capital Area Intermediate Unit entitled “Going Outside School Walls”. There was some discussion of how to foster greater pride in the community to strengthen the rural education system. The need for the Education Summit has not been forgotten.
- It was noted that the Perry County Literacy Council will be offering a baby-sitting service to make it easier to parents with children to take advantage of Literacy Council services.

Adjourn – Patti McLaughlin made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Dawn Lowe seconded the motion and the motion was approved by voice vote without dissent at 9:52 AM.