**Board Meeting Minutes**

**August 13, 2020**

**Perry County Economic Development Authority**

**Perry County Business and Tourism Center**

**New Bloomfield, PA.**

**Attendees:** Russ Hoover, Rich Pluta, Patti McLaughlin, Dawn Lowe, John Gerner, Morgan Tressler, Shawna Weller, Kevin Fitzpatrick, Marti Roberts

**Staff:** Michelle Jones

**Absent:** Jim Fuller, Emery Yoder, Greg Gordon, Duane Hertzler

**Excused:** Frank Campbell, Brenda Watson, Derek Whitesel, Mike Lawler,

**Visitors:** None

**Call to Order:**

The monthly meeting of the PCEDA Board was called to order by Chair Marti Roberts at 8:07 AM. The meeting was held via a “Zoom” conference call.

**Public Comment:** None

**Secretary’s Report:**

John Gerner presented minutes of our July 9, 2020 board meeting which had been distributed to all board members on August 10th. Dawn Lowe made a motion to accept the minutes as presented, Shawna Weller seconded the motion. The motion was approved by voice vote without dissent.

**Treasurer’s Report:**

Patti McLaughlin presented the Financial Report for the period ending June 30, 2020 prepared by Robert Morris & Co., which was distributed to all board members on August 10th. Ms. McLaughlin advised that the report reflects normal monthly expenses and payroll costs. Michelle Jones reported that USDA’s reimbursement for the last invoice payment for the LFPP project as well as the second and final installment of the County’s contribution to the PCEDA have been received this last week and will be reported in next month’s report. Russ Hoover made a motion to approve the Treasurer’s Report as presented, Shawna Weller seconded the motion. The motion was approved by a voice vote without dissent.

Ms. McLaughlin presented the 2019 Independent Audit Report, which was distributed to all Board members on August 10th. The report disclosed no issues regarding the financial standing of PCEDA. The auditors continue to report that the use of a “cash” accounting methodology is not consistent with accepted standards for an organization like PCEDA. Nevertheless, the report goes on to say that this does not affect their finding that the financial statements prepared and maintained by PCEDA accurately reflect the agency’s financial position for the period ending December 31, 2019. Marti Roberts noted the auditor’s word choice of “donation” for the funding provided by the County and wondered if this would have any future implications. Michelle Jones said she would discuss this matter further with Robert Morris staff. Kevin Fitzpatrick proposed a motion to accept the audit report as presented, and John Gerner seconded the motion. Rich Pluta noted that interest collected on our bank accounts is shown as operating income of $2006, with some of this having to be repaid to DCED. He suggested that those funds having to be paid back to DCED should be listed as a liability. Michelle Jones will discuss with Rob Morris to see that it is indicated as a liability. She said she would also check with the auditor about lack of a management discussion noted in the last paragraph of the auditor’s letter. The motion to accept the audit report was approved by a voice vote without dissent. Patti McLaughlin made a motion to pay the $3000 invoice submitted by the audit firm, Morgan Tressler seconded the motion. The motion was approved by a voice vote without dissent.

**Chair Report:**

Marti Roberts reported as follows:

* Marti Roberts reported on her work with Jasmine Colbert at the Perry County Council of the Arts on an Our Town grant application to the National Council of the Arts. These funds would be used to add a community art installations to the Downtown Revitalization project we are currently working on. The grant application is due August 18, 2020 and we need six letters of support to add to the four letters we already have. Approaching groups within the boroughs or the boroughs themselves to ask them to author a short letter of support was discussed. Michelle Jones said she has already contacted the lead individuals within each borough and has offer a sample letter for their consideration.
* Ms. Roberts reported on recent discussions with Tripp Muldrow and his PCEV team about next steps in our Downtown Revitalization project. Mr. Muldrow noted that they have yet to present their first set of recommendations for Duncannon and New Bloomfield. This could be done with an in-person presentation as a test of our ability to get public input into the process. Michelle Jones noted that Duncannon has decided to conduct all its official meetings virtually and may not be willing allow any public session in borough facilities. Kevin Fitzpatrick said that New Bloomfield would be willing to host an in-person session to discuss the result of the PCEV’s work and would even be willing to host Duncannon residents in their own session. Penn Township and Duncannon EMS facilities were also suggested for a Duncannon session. Michelle Jones said she would discuss options further with Duncannon representatives. Beginning work with Blain and Loysville at the Mennonite Center was also suggested as a means of keep the process going.

**Staff Report:**

Michelle Jones reported on the following:

* As previously noted, the second half of the County’s contribution to PCEDA for 2020 and USDA’s reimbursement for the last invoice for the LFPP project have been received.
* Michelle Jones reported on a call from a campground in Horse Valley regarding their need for vastly improved broadband service to meet campground customer needs. Nittany Media had a contract with CEDA-COG to provide a test facility in Horse Valley but following the recent sale of a portions of Nittany Media to another firm has brought the prospect of this project advancing into question.

**Old Business/Announcements:**

* In an email message, Frank Campbell advised that the Fair Board, the engineer, and the water authority have been working together on the project to bring public water to the fairgrounds. The Fair Board recently purchase a parcel of land across the road from the fairgrounds that will improve the authority’s ability to bring the new water lines to the fair property. The engineering firm is working with DEP and the water authority to develop an acceptable plan for the project.
* Marti Roberts reported that the last discussion with Harrisburg University regarding a satellite campus in Perry County was back in March and since then the pandemic has put things on hold. We now have the drone aerial photographs and topo maps of the various parcels they have expressed interest in. We are now trying to set up time to make a presentation, but that has been complicated by the challenges with the fall semester starting.

**New Business:**

* Kevin Fitzpatrick reported the borough’s tax collector moved out of borough and can no longer serve in that capacity. The borough is looking for someone to replace her. Rich Pluta suggested that the Chamber of Commerce website could be used to post an announcement.
* Mr. Fitzpatrick also advised that the Jewish New Year is September 18-20. The Talmudic University is expecting many families will be in town and the University is interested knowing if some borough residents would rent out homes to support families for the weekend. Morgan Tressler noted that there are a decent number of Airbnb’s now. Kevin said that the University’s long-range plan for their campus includes the construction of a hotel that would be open to all. Marti Roberts observed that we have money budgeted for a hotel study and we should probably proceed with that.
* John Gerner observed that the meeting agenda noted the next meeting would be held in the PCEDA office. Marti Roberts said that probably was an oversight and that we will wait to make judgement closer to the scheduled date.
* Dawn Lowe said she reviewed the branding videos and they look great. Marti Roberts said she is hearing incredibly positive comments about how the county is being portrayed.

**Adjourn:**  Marti Roberts observed that we no longer had a quorum and declared an end to the meeting at 9:03 AM