

**Minutes of Annual Board Meeting  
January 12, 2023  
Perry County Economic Development Authority  
Perry County Business and Tourism Center  
New Bloomfield, PA.**

**Attendees:** Russ Hoover, Rich Pluta, John Gerner, Marti Roberts, Duane Hertzler, Frank Campbell, Patti McLaughlin, Brenda Watson, Dee Anderson

**Staff:** Michelle Jones, Kyleigh Spidle

**Absent:** Kevin Fitzpatrick, David Misner

**Excused:** None

**Visitors:** Jason Finnerty

**Call to Order:**

The Annual Meeting of the PCEDA Board was called to order by Chair Marti Roberts at 8:33 AM.

**Reappointment of Board Members**

Patti McLaughlin proposed a motion to reappoint the following to five-year terms on the PCEDA Board:

Dee Anderson

Rich Pluta

John Gerner

Duane Hertzler

Russ Hoover seconded the motion. The motion was approved by a voice vote without dissent.

**Election of Officers:**

Russ Hoover proposed a motion to nominate the slate of officers as follows:

Proposed Slate of Officers:

Martha Roberts, Chair

Frank Campbell, Vice-Chair

John Gerner, Secretary

Patti McLaughlin, Treasurer

Russ Hoover, Assistant Secretary Treasurer

Rich Pluta, At Large Representative to Executive Board

One At Large Representative to Executive Board vacant

Duane Hertzler seconded the motion. The motion was approved by a voice vote without dissent.

Chairperson Marti Roberts adjourned the Annual Meeting.

**Call to Order:**

The January meeting of the PCEDA Board was called to order by Chair Marti Roberts at 8:38 AM.

**Public Comment:**

Jason Finnerty, the Perry County Planner, provided an update on the status of Picture Perry, the update to the Perry County Comprehensive Plan. He advised that the required notifications regarding the availability of the final draft copy of the plan update have been sent to all the local municipalities and interested parties. A 45-day comment period is underway and will expire on February 26<sup>th</sup>. Public comments are being collected and arrangements for a public hearing are being made. Following the hearing, proposed resolution of comments received will be discussed with the appropriate local officials and responses developed. Brenda Watson asked if it is ever too late for a municipality to change their mind and participate/adopt the new plan? Mr. Finnerty advised that there is a provision in the plan for local governments to adopt it later or to add projects to the plan. Still eight municipalities have declined to sign onto the plan. Those entities include Penn Township, Wheatfield Township, Rye Township, Juniata Township, Liverpool Township, Tybone Township, Carroll Township, and Northeast Madison. The document is available for review on Perry County's website and Mr. Finnerty is working on the development of an Executive Summary.

Mr. Finnerty reported that six land development plans have been submitted for county review already, but that this is one less than last year at this time. The plans entailed no major projects. It is anticipated that the warehouse preliminary land development plan in Watts Township will be submitted for review in the coming week. Discussions with PennDOT have resolved most of the access issues. The developer hopes to break ground for the project in the near future and complete the first phase by 2025. John Gerner advised that Yingst Homes has informed Penn Township that it plans to begin construction of Phases 2 & 3 of the Stone Mill Estates development just north of Duncannon. The development is projected to include a total of about 130 homes and the next phase will primarily be the multi-family units.

Mr. Finnerty said that he and others are working on language governing the installation and use of concentrated solar energy projects (solar energy focused onto one location) with experts at Penn State University.

A scoping meeting is planned with PennDOT for a project in Watts township regarding its highway occupancy permit— this project has not been publicized yet.

Picture Perry, the comprehensive plan update, continues with focus on finding common goals between the municipalities.

**Secretary's Report:**

John Gerner presented the minutes of the December 8, 2022, board meeting which had been distributed to all board members in advance of today's meeting. Russ Hoover proposed a motion to accept the minutes as presented, Frank Campbell 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 December 31, 2022, prepared by Robert Morris & Co., which was distributed to all board members in advance of today's meeting. Ms. McLaughlin advised that the report reflects normal monthly expenses and payroll costs. John Gerner proposed a motion to approve the Treasurer's Report as presented, Duane Hertzler seconded the motion. The motion was approved by a voice vote without dissent.

Michelle Jones advised that she has received a letter of engagement to perform the required audit of our 2022 fiscal records from the audit firm we have used in the past. The \$3K fee is the same as that paid for our 2021 audit. This firm is currently working on the audit of the \$250K grant from the state that expired at the end of 2022. Ms. Jones noted that the original instructions provided by the state at the time the grant was first received required us to keep the interest earned on the grant funds prior to them being spent to kept in a separate account and refunded to the state at the end of the grant period, however the audit instructions say that the audit report should only detail how that earned interest was spent. We are seeking clarification of the grant requirements in this area. The interest amount is in the \$2.5K range and could be applied to accounts/uses where we incurred costs above the original program amounts. Patti McLaughlin proposed a motion to approve the engagement of the audit firm as proposed, Russ Hoover seconded the motion, and it was approved by a voice vote without dissent.

#### **Chair Report:**

Marti Roberts reported as follows:

- PCEDA has received a letter from DCED advising of their approval of our Perry Hometowns program into the PA Keystone Communities program. A press release has been developed by DCED and they are currently planning a press conference to announce the approval of this groundbreaking project on Thursday, January 26 (10:30 AM target time) in Duncannon or Marysville. We will send out details as they become available.
- Kyleigh Spidle is doing a great job using each monthly borough committee meeting to provide education information and materials on the Mainstreet program to ensure the committee members understand how their work fits into the overall goals of the program. Brenda Watson said she is amazed at the level of enthusiasm seen in social media postings on the work of the group in Landisburg. Reportedly, the number one request is for continuation of the cleanup days project. It provides visible signs of progress toward improving their communities and a vision for the future. Ms. Spidle said that the group in New Buffalo is also shaping up to be a strong community. There is so much pent-up demand for community spirit.

#### **Staff Report:**

Michelle Jones provided a written reported (copy attached) and highlighted the following items:

- The VeryPerryHolidays is being viewed as a big success for us, while members of Chamber – our partner in this project – view it slightly less enthusiastically. The project did not attempt to measure increased traffic or sales and there is concern around the mechanism for the logging of votes for the best display. Plus, some businesses do not subscribe to social media. This is an area to be worked on for the next go-around.

- Ms. Jones announced that the first three grant applications for the Façade Improvement program have been approved. All the projects are in Newport and include Buffalo Brew coffee shop, Deimler Chiropractic, and Tranquil Touch Day Spa. John Gerner suggested we take people to Mechanicsburg to provide examples to prospective business owners who need help envisioning what can be done to improve the looks of their business. Ms. Jones suggested that in addition to promoting the program to businesses, we could provide information to contractors as a way for them to grow their business by providing ideas to prospective customers.
- Ms. Jones suggested that PCEDA might want to ask Iris, the summer student who has done such great work expanding our social media outreach, to stay on as a part time contract worker for social media even after she finds a full-time job.
- Ms. Roberts advised of the joint meeting last week with the Chamber of Commerce's Executive Committee. They pointed out that the Chamber's purpose is to serve their members and grow their membership to do so, while our purpose is enhancing the county's economic vitality regardless of affiliation. They would like a regular update about what we are doing. Also, there was some discussion about the need for welcome kits for each borough and for distribution at AirBnB and VRBO sites for tourists.
- Ms. Jones reported on a discussion she had with Tripp Muldrow on the Wayfinding project. The final report is nearing completion, but an issue came up with signing in the Duncannon area. While most signs are within borough limits, there are a few in surrounding townships that will need to be approved with those townships.
- Jason Finnerty reported that the intersection between PA 274 and S. Main Street at the western end of Duncannon is being included in the US322 corridor study currently being conducted by Gannett Fleming for HATS. One of the options for improved operations once a safety barrier on US 322 alters traffic patterns in that area is a roundabout.
- Ms. Jones reported on efforts underway to put on a Career/College Day for students in all four school districts on April 19<sup>th</sup> at the Family Life Center in Newport. The morning session would be for students in grades 10 & 11 and would provide information on career information and summer job opportunities. The afternoon session would be aimed at seniors and would also provide information on area colleges and certificate programs. They are currently looking for businesses who would be willing to come in and talk about careers and summer jobs. Rich Pluta suggested inviting parents to the career day program to provide them with information they may need to help guide their students as they progress beyond high school.
- The Cumberland/Perry Vocational Technical School has put together a \$23.5M expansion program to address overcrowding and the ever-changing career landscape. This project will require substantial increases in funding from all participating school districts. So far, 2 of the 4 school districts who have not signed onto the project are located in Perry County. Reportedly, our local school districts are considering adding alternative certificate programs offered by other institutions/organizations to supplement the Votech offerings.
- In light of the "ground breaking" nature of the Perry Hometowns project, Tripp Muldrow asked Ms. Jones whether or not PCEDA would be interested in partnering with Muldrow and Associates in putting on a presentation of the project at the upcoming Keystone Communities

Annual Convention and the possible event the national Mainstreet Annual Convention. In light of the newness of our program and the lack of experience at this early stage, reluctance to be a part of such presentation was expressed by some board members.

- Ms. Jones noted that finding volunteers to work on the various borough committees and the workgroups that eventually will be formed as their project get underway is a known challenge. Ms. Jones and Spidle have been talking about developing a short video to highlight successes of these programs, the benefits to the community realized, and the satisfaction volunteers can experience. The video would be used to encourage new participants.

Kyleigh Spidle provided a written report (copy attached).

**Old Business:** None

**New Business/Announcements:**

- Frank Campbell reported on a discussion he had recently with Ryan Ulrich from CREDC. He asked Mr. Ulrich what Perry County has not been getting government action alerts related inquiries into new business opportunities. Mr. Ulrich said he would like to come up to review the KOZ project site and see what we are doing in the area.

**Adjourn:**

Rick Pluta proposed a motion to adjourn the meeting and John Gerner seconded the motion. The motion to adjourn was approved by a voice vote without dissent at 10:10 AM.

## Staff Report December 2022

VeryPerryHolidays was a success from our perspective. We had great coverage for our brand and our Main Street Committee exposure. Blain: Volunteer had to reposition the santa everyday (wind and learning curve). Had so many people stop to say “I Love these decorations—it reminds me of back in the day what town used to look like!”

### In progress:

- Career day event with all four school districts.
- Finalizing wayfinding plan with Tripp. Need to discuss signage in Duncannon.
- Scheduling engage calls for this contract period. Intend to complete all by end of February.
- Admin for grants, trying to close out first of DCED grants and work our reimbursement for RCDI and Keystone communities.
- Working on Façade grants
- Press release for fair ground arena project
- Approved audit letter of engagement, will be working two of the three audits for the year.
- Beginning outreach to populate CareerReadyPeCo.
- Finalizing design/branding materials.

Organization Name

DECEMBER STAFF REPORT

Date of meeting

Title Main Street Coordinator

Name Kyleigh Spidle

### **Progression**

- All nine boroughs have officially established committees
- Corresponding to PDC and DCED regarding the official Keystone Designation
- Attending mandatory PDC managers meeting
- Invited two committee members to attending mandatory Leadership Training through PDC
- Promoted Very Perry Holidays
- Reviewed all volunteer surveys conducted and collected the data from those
- Created a yearly planner for committees based on results from volunteer surveys
- Created a yearly planner for main street coordinator goals to accomplish
- Worked on video promotion for volunteers – collaborating with Iris to conduct interviews within the community
- Furthered research on Maestro
- Researched apps for Perry Hometowns
- Created first topic of Education Series – Reporting
- Prepared yearly planner of education series topics
- Worked on January agendas for committees
- Working on gaining new connections/ new leads for expanding our committee members
- Working closely with PDC on reporting/ scheduling visits