**Minutes of Board Meeting**

**July 13, 2023**

**Perry County Economic Development Authority**

**Perry County Business and Tourism Center**

**New Bloomfield, PA.**

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

**Virtual participants:** None

**Staff:** Michelle Jones, Kyleigh Spidle

**Absent:** None

**Excused:** John Gerner, David Misner

**Visitors:** Jason Finnerty

**Call to Order:**

The March 2023 PCEDA Board Meeting was called to order by Chair Marti Roberts at 8:31 AM.

**Public Comment:**

Jason Finnerty, the County Planner, reported as follows:

* Six land development plans were received for review last month, for a total of forty-five plans so far this year, which is six ahead of last year at this time. However, the plans represent sixty fewer lots/dwellings being proposed for development than at this point last year due to the large number of lots included in the Rockville Estates plans up for approval last year.
* These plans include a residential development proposed in Loysville – a 6-unit apartment complex that will tie into sewer. Another poultry operation totaling 50K square feet of buildings on the Burkholder property in the Liverpool area is proposed.
* Four proposed zoning amendments are under review. The Howe Township sign ordinance is being revamped. A proposal to change the zoning of an area in the Lakeside development in New Bloomfield from R1 to R3 is being proposed. A change in the zoning designation of a property on Richwine Road near the Dollar Store in Carol Township from R2 to Commercial is being proposed. Finally, Rye Township is working on a general overhaul/update of its zoning ordinance.
* A general consistency determination for a bridge replacement project on Pine Hill Road has been requested. The project will be funded with multi-modal funds.
* A company is looking for a time and place in the county to make a Grid Solar presentation.

**Secretary’s Report:**

The minutes of the PCEDA’s meeting on May 11, 2023, which had been distributed to all board members in advance of today’s meeting were presented for review and approval. Russ Hoover proposed a motion to accept the minutes as presented, Patti McLaughlin seconded the motion, and the motion was approved by a voice vote without dissent.

**Treasurer’s Report:**

Patti McLaughlin presented the Financial Report for the period ending June 30, 2023, 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 and included receipt of the second $35K installment of the County’s $70K contribution to PCEDA’s program. Frank Campbell proposed a motion to accept the Treasurer’s Report as presented, Duane Hertzler seconded the motion, and it was approved by a voice vote without dissent. Michelle Jones advised that the May 31st Treasurer’s Report showed the bonus payments to the PCEDA staff were charged against the County funded account. This was adjusted in the June report to show these funds being charged against the RCDI account.

**Chair Report:**

Marti Roberts reported as follows:

* Fair Board members met recently with Rich Pluta, Patti MacLaughlin, and Marti to discuss PCEDA’s $50k allocation (DCED3/4) of planning funds for an enhanced events building on the fairgrounds. The Fair Board members provided their assessment of needs for the whole fairground’s property and articulated their desire to seek help in scoping projects to address this larger list of needs rather than just a new event building. It was agreed that PCEDA would send out an RFP/RFQ to get estimates on getting professional help for their wish list. It is recognized that addressing deferred maintenance will be a costly undertaking. The Fair Board did vote to move forward with this overall plan and the results of that vote will be documented in their minutes.
* Marti Roberts and Michelle Jones had a phone conference with DCED staff connected with the Appalachian Regional Commission and its funding programs. The original purpose of the meeting was to seek funds for the sidewalk/crosswalk/trail infrastructure projects outlines in the Keystone Communities program in each of the nine boroughs. The state staffers advised that the ARC does not fund multi-jurisdictional projects of the type we proposed but said we would have to choose one borough at a time. As an alternative, Ms. Roberts brought up the recent discussion with the Fair Board and their desire to make improvements to the fairgrounds’ facilities. The potential for a project of this type to be an economic driver for the county as a whole really seemed to intrigue the state staff.
* Ms. Roberts advised that PCEDA has received another allocation of $150K in Keystone Communities funding. Mss. Roberts and Jones have begun work on developing a proposal for submission to DCED outlining our proposed use of these funds. Ms. Jones will provide more detail on those plans in her report. As in the past, we will need a resolution from each borough council expressing their support for the intended use of these funds. Board members are encouraged to attend their designated borough council meeting to support this resolution. Ms. Jones will get dates out to make sure board members get to their borough’s meeting.

**Staff Reports:**

Michelle Jones prepared a written report of her activities during the past month and a copy is attached to these minutes. Ms. Jones provided highlights as follows:

* The proposed uses of the new Keystone Communities funding are as follows:
  + $25K for downtown beautification projects developed in conjunction with student run competitions. Students in each of the four school districts would develop flower bed/planter plans to enhance each of the nine borough downtown areas. It is not intended that these projects would include any major construction/reconstruction, but simply beautify the areas with plants and flowers. It was suggested that local merchants could be solicited to help with the cost or by providing plant materials.
  + $15K for web-based marketing and advertising programs for each of the nine boroughs. Web pages would be developed for each borough group to use to announce and promote events. The sites would be hosted on the PCEDA website.
  + $30K to promote pop-up events in the boroughs. Groups could apply for these funds to help with costs to promote and host events in their community to attract attendance. The events could be new or existing events.
  + $15K for façade improvements to the front of the building that houses PCEDA, and the Chamber as previously discussed and presented to the Board.
  + $50K for additional funding for the Wayfinding project.
  + $15K for PCEDA administration and overhead costs.

Patti McLaughlin proposed a motion to accept the broad funding outline as discussed by Ms. Jones for further development and submission to DCED. Russ Hoover seconded the motion, and it was approved by a voice vote without dissent.

* Requests for ENGAGE and PREP funding have been submitted and those funds should be received shortly.
* The final summary and audit of the DCED1 account was submitted to DCED recently. As required, interest earned on those funds was returned by check. Based on preliminary discussions with DCED staff, the closure of this account should move forward without much problem. Discussion of DCED funding issues due to budget impasse. Discussed projects and potential funding streams. Reimbursement for façade project funding – reimbursement for costs incurred by building/business owners for improvements to their storefronts – has been extremely slow. The reimbursement documentation was submitted in February, and we only recently heard back that additional supporting information is needed. Currently we have over $68K in façade improvement projects in the works and the ongoing state budget impasse may relay future reimbursements.
* Arrangements for the PCEDA booth at the county fair are being finalized and we need board members to sign up to help staff at the booth. We will be having items for sale to the public. Also, we are sharing our table with Tri-County Friday and Saturday night for their effort to gain public input to the “Active Transportation Plan” for the tri-county region (hiking, biking, kayaking, etc.).
* Jason Finnerty, Frank Campbell, and Michelle Jones recently met with the CETA-COG staff to brief them on potential Perry County projects. Seven projects were discussed, and their funding needs outlined.
* PCEDA’s business mentoring work continues, and we have noticed an increase in people looking to buy existing businesses. They seem to be having problems finding financing for purchase of businesses that may be on the margin of profitability.
* The 250th Anniversary of the founding of the United States is coming up quickly and there are groups looking for “legacy” ways to mark that event. Tree plantings, street lighting, flags, and plantings have been suggested. Submissions are due in a week or so.
* Michelle Jones and Marti Roberts met with the county’s engineer regarding the pedestrian safety projects in the boroughs that we are looking for multi-modal funding for. They asked him for a cost estimate to assemble a package for the grant application and ultimate bidding.
* Michelle Jones attended a kick-off meeting for the Army Corps of Engineers flood plain update project. The whole effort is an attempt to reduce the impact of recurring floods.

Kyleigh Spidle provided a written report on her activities during the past month and a copy is attached to these minutes. Ms. Spidle provided highlights as follows.

* The June meetings with each of the Main Street committee groups were focused on providing community feedback to each of the artists selected to design and implement the community art installation.
* Most community groups have come to a consensus on the next round of projects in their community, except for Liverpool and New Bloomfield. Proposed activities are as follows:
  + Blain - promotional brochure
  + Liverpool – commercial space inventory and new business potential
  + Landisburg – “Gran Day?”
  + New Buffalo – “Bi(son) Centennial”
  + Newport – art exhibit coordination
  + Duncannon – bring new park to fruition as part of art installation.
  + Marysville – wind chimes?
  + Millerstown - ?
  + New Bloomfield – needs help finding a community focus.
* Fall Clean-Up Days being scheduled.
* The pickleball tournament in September is getting organized. We might need a line of credit to cover initial costs that ultimately will be covered by proceeds. Not expected to need more than $500 outlaid. Also looking for business sponsors.
* Reminded Board members of Chamber networking event in August.

**Old business:**

* Marti Roberts noted that in the coming months PCEDA could be losing a number of its current board members. We need a concerted effort to find and interview potential new board members. She urged every board member to identify good candidates and bring their names to the next board meeting.
* Frank, Perry County Holstein conference held at Cindy Comp.

**New Business/Announcements:**

* Frank Campbell provided a brief update on the proposed sports complex. Adam is working on the creation of 501c3 organization to facilitate its development. Several properties remain under consideration as possible sites for the complex. Bob Folk is working on the development of conceptual plans. Penn Strategies, the county’s grant writer, is looking for funding streams. Jason Finnerty advised that the project has been included in the Picture Perry comprehensive plan.
* Jason Finnerty advised that Marysville is the 21st municipality to sign onto Picture Perry. Liverpool is the only borough not yet signing onto the plan.
* Brenda Watson noted that the Conservation District has multiple programs supporting farmers and agri-business. She described one such effort designed to ensure farms are disposing of diseased and dead animals properly.

**Adjourn:**

* Rich Pluta urgently moved to adjourn the meeting. Patti McLaughlin seconded the motion, and the meeting was adjourned by acclamation at 10:25 AM

Staff report July

Worked with Jason to submit priority projects to SEDA Cog

ARC grant discussion Neil Fowler and ARC seminar

Managing façade projects, 3 audits, grant closeout, business mentoring, etc

<https://d.docs.live.net/ab754f68f3367580/Documents/PCEDA/Staff%20Report-%20June%202023.pdf>