**Mount Pulaski Economic Development and Planning Board**

**Meeting Minutes**

*The mission of the Mount Pulaski Economic Development and Planning Board is to improve the quality of life and create a shared prosperity in our community by retaining, sustaining, and enhancing existing businesses and community organizations, attracting, and developing new businesses and improving and upgrading infrastructure.*

**Date: March 2, 2022**

**Location: 124 S Washington St, Mt Pulaski IL 62548**

**Meeting Type: Business**

1. Call to Order.

Andrew Meister called to order the regular meeting of the Mt Pulaski EDPB at 6:05

1. Deanna Howard conducted Roll call. The following persons were Present: Andrew Meister, Corey Leonard, Doug Johnson, Erin Wyss, Tracy Pulliam and administrator Deanna Howard
2. Introduction of guests: Tom Martin, Tim Vieweg with Cole-new Stahl’s building real estate company.
3. Approved February 9, 2022, and February 23, 2022 Minutes. Motion to approve the meeting minutes by Corey. Seconded by Tracey. All in favor. Motion passed.
4. Treasurer’s Report
   1. Bank Statements
      1. Business District Account: $255,100.39
      2. Community Fund Account: $238,584.37
      3. CD
   2. Bill payment approval-

Dairy Bar $2059.37-reimbursement for receipts for previously approved grant

Deanna Howard $126.87-reimbursement for receipts for printer ink and office supplies

Mount Pulaski Township Historic Society$6,000.00-reissue check to replace lost check written for grant

Farmers Bank $6,000-Erin motioned that EPDB pay $6000 to Farmer’s bank for 2022 rent. It was seconded by Doug. Roll Call by Deanna: Erin-yea, Tracy-yea, Doug-yea, Andy-yea, Corey-not present.

**Old Business**

1. Desired Outcomes Project Updates:
   1. Town square revitalization-Tom Martin reports that movement is still slow from architecture office and that the sale of the Farmer’s Bank will not affect their part of the project plans. Still waiting on finale plans to submit for bids
   2. Daycare-administrator sent email to previous steering committee members with only a response from the Y. Will try reaching out again-will include board members as cc to try to get a summer program together.
   3. 501c3-Erin and Corey updated the board regarding the phone appointment with the lawyer’s office.

There are federal IRS procedures to obtain the status and some state forms to be filled out. They asked if the same board could advise on the city funds as well and they can, but they must have separate minutes and a separation of time in the meeting. Typically, the board of a 501c3 needs directors and officers. Directors see to the day to day of operations and officers act as advisors. They hold annual elections and file yearly taxes. When giving grants or donations they could not give to anything connected to the city or a board member. As a 501c3 you need a charitable purpose to define where money can be given. If they are handling income over $50,000 must do a form 1023-$600 plus average of 100 hours. He could not give an estimated price or timeline but thinks it would be less than 6 months. His boss suggested a $3000 retainer to move forward, and they bill in 10th hour increments. Corey’s overall fear would be keeping up with the paperwork and taxes and the cost of retaining an accountant or attorney to do so. Erin said they offered their services for this. Corey-to do it right there would be an initial expense plus an ongoing expense that would need to be budgeted yearly. Doug wondered if we could talk to others and see what their experience has been.

1. Retain, sustain, and enhance our existing businesses and community organizations
   1. Market on the Hill-Corey reviewed the current outstanding bills on the proposal totaling $15,454.00, including $4320.92 to MB heating/cooling, $10,000 debt to a board member and $1,134.69 owed to board member Isabel Vidal. The budget analysis for January 2022 showing a net operating income of -$2,353.69 and anticipated 2022 operating deficit of $36,000-$48,000 due to projected monthly shortfalls of $3,000-$4,000. Corey wondered what timeline you give it to work until it is no longer a value to the community. Andy would rather not commit to monthly funds. Erin pointed out that the commitment requested was for the remainder of 2022 and for all of 2023. Corey asked that if the board committed to subsidize a monthly amount how much would that become a monthly habit that they couldn’t break away from. Erin reminded that overall, they have only been given $15,000-$20,000 prior to the February emergency donation. Andy does not think that the board needs to agree to a set amount monthly and Corey thinks it would be easier to say how much can be committed with a new working budget and wondered what grant funds it should come from. Andy suggested that the funds could be split from the business district tax funds and EPDB funds. Erin thinks that if we commit monthly funds it should come from EPDB funds through the end of EPDB fiscal year, May 31, 2022. Tracy agrees and states that it would give time to budget a commitment. Erin reviewed the use of February’s $20,000 emergency donation from the EPDB. $10,000 paid off Farmer’s Bank Loan. $5,000 to pay off current overdue bills and $5,000 was set aside to pay for annual expenses such as taxes, licenses, utilities etc… Andy explained that the timing of when bills are due has been one issue for the Market. Doug stressed that the urgency is to get fires put out to keep products available. Andy says that if the board does approve another emergency donation it would give the Market time to get ahead. Tracy says that more data would be useful to make decisions on a commitment. She wondered if there was a way to track what marketing is working for them. Corey explained that marketing is hard to track. Andy agrees it would be very time consuming. Bonnie used to keep their board up to date with monthly sales total. Doug says you can’t predict sales. You can run a sale on a product and not sell much and then have a run on that product after the sale ends. He asked if it would be possible for them to sell more stock and what they have done to cut expenses. Andy thinks they can sell more stock and they can’t cut payroll any further because they would have to cut the deli and it generates business. Doug is in favor of supporting the Market on the Hill and Corey reviewed their current debt again. Erin suggested that instead of committing to the debt and then a monthly payment to cover shortfalls to just give them $30,000 to cover the outstanding debt and to subsidize them until the end of EPDB’s fiscal year. Andy asked the board if we stipulate what is goes to pay? Tracy doesn’t feel we can make a monthly commitment with out the budget for the next fiscal year. Erin did remind the board that the Market on the Hill would like to hire a consultant and Andy stated that the $20,000 February donation was given this year, but it was covering debts from previous years. Doug says we need more information to commit to a monthly amount. Erin asked if we could request monthly reports from the Market so we can see what their needs are. Administrator reminded the board members that Market on the HILL wanted to renew their $5,000 marketing grant and would also like to apply for a grant to cover the expense of the consultant. Tom Martin will ask the consultant Farm-Fed has hired if they do this type of work or if they know someone that does. Doug says they could spend these funds how they want and not pay off debt and then ask for more but then realized EPDB could always deny more funds if they have that much flexibility with debt owed to their board members. Erin stated that $30,000 would give them 3-month cushion after they have paid the debt. Andy asked if the $30,000 should be split between the business district and EPDB funds and Corey reminded the city funds would need to go through the grant process and be approved by the city. Erin was concerned with the extra time it would take to go through that process and if the city denied the grant it would come from EPDB funds anyway. Tracy agrees and let’s look at the Marketing grant proposal as something that can come from city funds. Corey motioned to give the Market on the HILL an additional $30,000 emergency donation and Erin seconded the motion with a request for monthly updates. Roll Call Doug-yea, Corey-yea, Erin-yea, Tracy-yea, and Andy-yea. Motion is passed.
      1. New grants-Tom Martin presented grant application for printer to copy historical documents from The Mount Pulaski Township Historical Society.
2. Attract and develop new businesses
   1. Daycare-working on summer program but also need to address the before/after school program for next year. Next step to reach out to Y directly to see what part the EPDB would have in daily operations and see what can be done to get local residents involved.
   2. Farm Fed Co-Op had purchased the old Johnson’s hardware store from Doug but are afraid they will outgrow the space quickly. With new realtors representing Lewis Stahl they are hoping there will be opportunity to lease space in the Stahl’s buildings. They would like to lease $10,000 sq feet of the warehouse space and possibly an additional 5,000 sq feet of showroom space. They have 2 potential buyers for the old Johnson’s hardware building that they purchased from Doug. May 1st is Farm Fed’s deadline to move forward and must decide on space they will use by then. Mt. Pulaski has become the lead of Local Food Local Places movement. Tom says he loves it but at times it would be better to have someone to follow. Erin asked how the food hub will tie into the Market on the Hill. Tom explained that the space will have a kitchen that entrepreneurs can develop their products for sale at the Market on the Hill as well as other places. They can choose to develop product to market themselves or to develop products that will be marketed by Farm Fed. Farm Fed’s goal is to develop product for Market on the Hill. Erin says that locally grown products at Market on the Hill are products that are talked about most and Andy wondered if it could be required to sell to Market on the Hill.
   3. Tim Vieweg-new realtor for Stahl’s buildings-Tom Martin introduced Tim and Cole as the new relators for the Stahl’s building. They offer Residential and Commercial real estate and have represented ADM and Mueller in deals. Tim also owns property. He recently worked with Ameren for furnace upgrades on a 50-unit apartment building and Ameren covered 90% of the cost. He has 5 houses going up in Mt Zion with his construction company. He has been working with Kids Castle (who’s biggest competitor is the Y) to help them acquire more buildings for day care use and has gained a lot of knowledge of day care facilities during this.

Tim has advised Lewis Stahl to be open to options of lease and sale and to be open to the option of leasing parts of the building to different entities. Tom states there have been many parties interested in leasing just part of the building and this could lead to an investor purchasing the building so this is a step in the right direction. Daycare was looking at 10,000 sq feet and ENL is interested in leasing 4,000 sq feet with an unnamed entity needing 5,000 sq feet of space. Leasing rate would be $ .25 a sq foot.

Cole spoke of their huge presence on multiple sites for marketing commercial real estate and their goals of marketing the building as well as the community. Andy commented that there aren’t too many people looking to invest in commercial property, especially in a location such as ours but Cole said they have seen an increase in interest for commercial properties. Tom reminded that EPDB mission is to promote new business development so there may be multiple opportunities to help.

Tim commented that he loves small business owners, and they deserve a lot more than they get. They face a constant battle every day. Erin told him that every person sitting at the table is a small business owner. Cole told the board that they are excited to work with a community that is willing to give back. Andy was happy to have them at the meeting because they will be the face of the community to potential investors.

* 1. Marketing Committee-this was on the sample agenda that Bill presented to the board, but the current board members do not have knowledge of a marketing committee. Discussion was tabled.

**New Business**

9) Future Projects-none discussed

10) Executive Session-none

11) Next meeting April 6, 2022, 6:00 PM

12) Doug motioned to adjourn meeting. Motion was seconded by Erin and all agreed. Andy called the meeting adjourned at 7:52 pm