EDPB December 1, 2021 Meeting Minutes

**Mt. Pulaski Economic Development and Planning Board**

The mission of the Mt. 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**: December 1, 2021

**Meeting Location**: 124 South Washington Street, Mt. Pulaski, IL 62548

**Meeting type**: Business meeting

**Meeting Minutes**

1. Call to order. Jim Birge called to order the regular meeting of the Mt. Pulaski Economic Development and Planning Board at 6:00 P.M.
2. Jim Birge conducted a roll call. The following persons were present: Jim Birge, Erin Wyss, Doug Johnson, Corey Leonard (via phone), and Tracy Pulliam.
3. Introduction of guests: Cindy Jackson, Matt Bobell, Jean Davis
4. Approval of November 3, 2021 minutes. Meeting minutes from the November 3, 2021 meeting were presented and reviewed. Motion to approve the meeting minutes by Erin Wyss. Second by Doug Johnson. Motion passed.
5. Treasurer’s Report – Move Market on Hill $5,000 to Community Fund. Motion to approve statement amendments – Doug Johnson; 2nd Erin Wyss. All agreed
6. **Old Business**

Project Updates

Improve and upgrade infrastructure. Tom Martin provided a written report with updates

-Town Square Revitalization Project – (Tom Martin) Dave Leonatti along with his structural engineer met via Zoom with the cities engineers, Farnsworth Group to review Dave’s plans. In the process now of working on the plans for updating water service off of Cooke Street and working on a few more details and final cost estimate. Rebuild Downtown grant application due Jan 30th.

Retain, sustain, and enhance our existing businesses and community organizations

**Attract and Develop new businesses**

**NEW GRANT REQUEST. Jean Davis- Dairy Bar** –Jean Davis was present. New owner of the Dairy Bar. Grant request includes renovations to the patio area for safety as well as privacy fence for highway noise and aesthetics. Purchasing new lighting and sunshades for outdoor dining. Goal is to return the business to a “town hangout” as it used to be. Matching funds are their own funds. Goal is to be open March – October with extended evening hours of operation to accommodate post baseball games, etc. Utilizing local businesses for as much of their construction as they can. Grant will be further reviewed and vote will be cast in January meeting.

**Approved** **Grants**-Debra Gellman previously submitted a business District grant application for the demolition of a portion of the building at 104 S. Washington due to failing structure. She shared that the building was built in the 1930’s and west wall is deteriorating, impacting neighboring businesses. Completion of the project will add value and safety to the building and neighboring businesses. Potential of a new business to open in that space to support the community. Estimated cost of the project is $85,000. The committee requested an estimated breakdown of all costs prior to January. An engineer previously provided an estimate, although more details are required in relation to updated cost of the project by the individual who will do the work. Factor to take into account – building is in process of being condemned by the city. Notice had not yet been sent at time of this meeting. The grant will be reviewed at the January EDPB meeting if all requested information is obtained. UPDATE: Matt Bobell shared with the group that it was his understanding a letter condemning the mentioned property was sent. Upon receipt, the owner has 21 days to respond to the letter. He will confirm the date the letter was sent.

**Farm Fed Co-Op** – Cindy Jackson was in attendance. She was hired Oct 11, 2021 as the General Manager. The co-op was awarded a USDA Foods Promotion Grant – applied for $192,000 – they hope to learn the value of that grant within the next two weeks. NOVEMBER UPDATE: Cindy Jackson was present and shared that the Farm Fed Co-Op grant was received. They are working with a consultant Food Works Group (Wendy Stewart, Emily and Natalie). The consultant will provide guidance on food systems creation, working with the food systems infrastructure, completing a feasibility study of viable producers and buyers, prepare surveys, provide individual consultation and provide tangi le document outlining what people in the area want. Consultants will help lay out facility, communicate with architect and develop sustainability model to fit facility goals. Cost of consultant approximately $96,000. $25,000 from EDP grant funds. $25,000 from donor drive. $236,000 coming directly into Mt. Pulaski for development of the Fresh Food Processing Facility and Co-Op.

Farm Fed Co-Op report from Tom Martin: FarmFed has elected their new board and three persons from Mt Pulaski will be on the board. Kyle Reed, Lorah Hoe and Tom Martin. Their first meeting will be on December 7th. We were also a recipient of a USDA Local Food Promotion Grant of $ 189000.00. These monies can be used to help pay for labor and the hiring off a professional food systems analyst to help us plan and move FarmFed forward. This award required $ 50000.00 in matching funds. $ 25000.00 from our own monies and $25000.00 pledged by EDPB. Match verification letter from EDPB will be emailed to all board members. The FarmFed Co-op would like to request payment of these matching ffnds at the December 1st EDPB meeting if possible. (Check written to Farm Fed Co-op by Erin Wyss provided to Jim Birge at the Dec 1 meetings)

**Market on the Hill** –Marketing plan update (Matt Bobell reported). Business Grant application for $5,000.00 for marketing provided. Currently at the city level. Kim Marten developed a very detailed marketing plan, which was distributed to City Council Members at November meeting. Check written to Market on the Hill by Erin Wyss provided to Jim Birge at the Dec 1 meeting)

**Lincoln YMCA Before and After School Program** – program has not opened due to lack of need. Committee questioned timing, noting most families/parents had to make arrangements for their children prior to the start of the school year. Interest and enrollment might increase when school is out and there is a need for summer programming. Will need a push in advertising for summer programming opportunities.

**EDPB Administrative Position** – Jim Birge posted the position with updated job description. Application deadline extended to December 31st. Motion initiated by Erin Wyss for payment of the $125 advertising fee in the Herald Review. 2nd by Tracy Pulliam. All approved. Motion carried. Jim will look into placing the application documents on the FB page. Paula did an email blast. Doug suggested also placing information in the Salt Creek Journal – he will contact. Interviews will be scheduled in January.

1. **New Business**

* Committee related. One vacant position on the EDPB.
* Training needed for new members, Doug Johnson, Corey Leonard and Tracy Pulliam. Open Meeting Act Training on Illinois Attorney General Website. That website has been down; therefore, training has not been available. Jim will seek other resources for that link. Tom Martin - Jesse Puckett of ENEL was in town on Tuesday, November 30th. We had the opportunity to have him meet and talk with several people who he would like to create new collaborative programs with. Fred Lamkey, MPHS School Superintendent, Terri Rae Miller, Logan County Extension Coordinator and the new FarmFed Executive Director Cindy Jackson.
* Tom Martin - We also had the opportunity to tour the vacant Stahl’s Furniture Building as a potential site for a training site for new wind farm, solar farm technicians for not only ENEL but for the industry who are locating here in Illinois. Many pieces that need to fall into place but Jesse would like something up and running by Fall of 2022.
* 501c3 application progress: Jordan Kline will help draft the application. Make sure there are no conflicts with the City for him.
* Committee discussed proper way to handle existing or perceived conflicts of interest for committee members who are both on the committee and receive grant funding for their particular business. In those cases, those individuals will not be able to vote. Further discussion will follow as needed.

Jim made motion to adjourn. First Tracy. Seconded by Doug.

1. **No Executive Session**
2. **Next Meeting January 5th, 2021 at 6:00**