**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: January 11th, 2020**

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

**Meeting type: Business meeting**

**Meeting Minutes**

**1) Call to order**

Deron Powell called to order the regular meeting of the Mt. Pulaski Economic Development and Planning Board at 9:01am on January 11th, 2019 at the Courthouse Foundation Office.

**2) Roll call**

Lorah Hoe conducted roll call. The following persons were present: Deron Powell, Tyler White, Andrew Meister, and Erin Wyss. Tim Emrick (city council representative). Lorah Hoe (Administrative Aide).

Guests: Marla Blair, Ashlee Sang, and Scott Schaffenacker

Absent: Tom Martin, Jim Birge, and Hillary Cherry

**3) Introduction of guests**

Marla Blair was present to give a report on a new newspaper that she is creating for the region of Southern Logan County. Ashlee Sang was present to give the board an update on the projects that she had worked on over the last year. Scott Schaffenacker was present to discuss the Logan County courthouse and plans for helping to fund the building’s renovation.

**4) Approval of December 14th Minutes**

Minutes of the December 14th meeting were presented by Lorah Hoe. **Tyler White motioned to approve minutes, seconded by Andrew Meister, all in favor, and motion passed.**

**5) Treasurer’s Report**

The treasurer’s report was presented by Lorah Hoe. **Deron Powell motioned to approve the treasurer’s report, seconded by Erin Wyss, all in favor, and motion passed.**

Bills were presented to the board for payment. The first bill was for the Masonic Temple for $1,600.00 to be paid out of the Business District Fund. The last two bills were from Melotte Morse Leonatti Parker, Ltd. equaling the sum of $1,600 to be paid from the Community Fund and the Business District Fund. **Deron Powell motioned to approve the bills as presented, seconded by Erin Wyss, all in favor, and motion passed.**

**Old Business**

**6) Desired Outcomes**

Project Updates

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

* Community Grant Update; Andrew Meister walked the board through the new grant program and application. The new grant program helps to better define goals for the applicants during the application process. The board will have an easier time deciding if an application matches the goals of the program based on the score sheet and conversation with the applicant. Applicants will have a chance to come and talk in person to the board about the application and the board will have a chance to ask the applicant questions. **Andrew Meister made a motion to approve the Community Grant Update and all supporting documents, seconded by Tyler White, all approved and the motion passed.**

We now can accept grant applications with the new Community Grant Program approved. Next meeting the board will approve the Business Grant Program and supporting documentation.

* Shopping Center Update; Doug provided a handout for his update on the purchase of the Shopping Center. Bids for contractual work came in higher than he hoped for and he is looking for bids that are closer to his estimate for renovations. Doug and Patty Johnson are still waiting for him to put an offer on the property.

Attract, and develop new business

* Community Grocery Store; Andrew Meister gave an update on the progress of Market On The Hill. Bids have been submitted for work on the plaster wall repair and electrical. The application for general manager have been shared on social media. The building committee is meeting with Sean Park of the Institute for Rural Affairs once a week to help the store get ready to open. They meet every Wednesday at 2:00pm. There is another Open Meeting on January 25th. The new board will have to vote on if memberships can be given stock as Common C for their purchase of a $100.00 membership. The annual stockholders meeting is scheduled for Saturday, February 29th at 2:00pm. At this meeting the new board will be voted on and there will be carry over from old board members to help the new board members acclimate to their new roles on the board.

Improve and upgrade infrastructure

* Town Square Revitalization; At the Open Meeting on January 8th, there was no community intput. The application has been turned into CEDS and we are waiting for them to respond to our application. Once the funding is set for this project, the Town Square Steering Committee will have another community meeting to inform the public of our next steps.
* Building Demolition Report; No Update at this time.

**Guest: Scott Schaffenacker** came to discuss the Logan County Courthouse. The decision of funding for the courthouse renovation will be voted on in the next election. The board discussed funding options for the renovation of the building. Scott advised contacting Sally Turner to help keep the levy amounts for our districts low. The board asked Scott how he has been reaching out to the community and Scott has been attending meetings and visiting businesses to discuss the issue. The budget for the Logan County Courthouse Renovation is 7.5 to 8 Million. The building is over 100 years old and has never had a complete renovation. They are looking for infrastructure funds to help cover the cost of the project and also working with Tim Butler. Bill Walter is their architect and they have discussed expanding the basement and possibly selling auxiliary buildings. The Election is the 17th of March. The board recommended getting signs out and better inform the public about the poor condition of the building. The cost to build a new courthouse is about twice the amount it would take to renovate the current building. Scott asked the board to consider where they can give funds from and when the best time to give funds would be. Sally Turner would be able to guide the City of Mt. Pulaski in helping to find funds to cover the cost.

**New Business**

**7) Discussion on Summary of Projects 2019- Ashlee Sang**

Ashlee provided a handout for the breakdown of projects she worked on over the last year. She highlighted her work on 2nd Fridays on the Square, Market On The Hill, and the Town Square Revitalization project. For 2nd Fridays on the Square Ashlee assisted with Facebook management with the goal of getting more out of town guests. For Market On The Hill, Ashlee helped with branding, establishing the our message externally, outreach documents, emails, creating a website, and Facebook management. Ashlee is still working with Market On The Hill with PR support, training the board and GM on how to use the website, and continuing Facebook management.

Future projects that the Economic Development Planning Board may need are to continue to help with Facebook management for the Town Square Revitalization project as well as helping to promote the City of Mt. Pulaski.

**8) Newspaper for Southern Logan County- Marla Blair**

Marla is planning to fill the newspaper void in the Southern Logan County region and is hoping to have an office somewhere in town to use as a physical presence for her business. Marla has experience with writing and publication in magazines. She hopes to use places like Casey’s for distribution. She has a budget in place and plans to start small and have a weekly paper which could include upcoming events as well as sales and promotions for local businesses. She hopes to gain income from advertising local businesses. Subscriptions will be a way to know how many people are using her service. She would like to begin as soon as possible, be convenient and friendly as possible while servicing this part of Logan County.

**9) Leadership Ladder Structure- Deron Powell**

The leadership ladder will create a one-year term for each officer position and also create a rotation between the four officer positions. In order for this structure to come into effect the board must write them into their bylaws. The city’s attorney will help incorporate the Leadership Ladder Structure into the bylaws. Lorah will bring copies of the bylaws to the next board meeting for reference.

**10) Day Care for Mt. Pulaski; Rent and utilities at Foundation Office- Tom Martin**

The board discussed if the Christian Church Living Center might be a good option for a location of a new daycare facility in town. There are high costs that would be associated with making this facility suitable for a daycare such as insurance. We could ask if the Christian Church would be willing to lease the space out. Using the space as a daycare would put limitations on events that they hold such as funeral dinners. If the Christian Church approved of leasing out the space to a daycare business DCFS and the State of Illinois would have to approve the building for the use of a daycare. There are five community members that are interested in being a part of the Steering Committee; Cory Leonard, Michelle Hagenbuch, Debby Aylesworth, Bobby Taylor, and Becky Volle. Deron has volunteered to meet with Tom the following week to begin a day care steering committee.

The board then discussed rent for the use of the Courthouse Foundation Office. At this time, the board is unsure at what the cost of rent and utilities would be but the board was willing to split the cost with the Courthouse Foundation. The board will follow up with the Courthouse Foundation to discuss the cost.

**11) Next Meeting March 14th**

**Adjournment**

**Andrew Meister made a motion to adjourn at 10:08am, seconded by Tyler White, all in favor and motion passed.**