MEETING MINUTES

# Mt. Pulaski Economic Advisory Board

## February 24, 2018 at 1:00 – 3:00 pm

## Meeting location: American Legion, Mt. Pulaski, IL 62548 Meeting type: Community meeting

PRESENT: Hillary Cherry, Renee Martin, Tom Martin, Shaun Tyson, Tim Emrick and City of Mt. Pulaski Representative, Matt Bobell

ABSENT: none

GUESTS: public/community members, media (WAND TV and New Herald News)

Tom Martin called the meeting to order at 1:00 pm. Roll call was taken with six (6) present.

Tom Martin provided a brief overview of the Mt. Pulaski Economic Advisory Board.

Individual board members briefly introduced themselves and stated why they had expressed an interest in being a part of the Economic Advisory Board.

Committees were introduced starting with Renee Martin (Community Grants) who discussed the purpose of the grant application process and briefly discussed the grant application that was being developed. Next Shaun Tyson and Tim Emrick (Business Development) spoke about the efforts made in contacting potential grocery store entities and a feasibility study currently in process by Niemann Foods, Inc. that owns and operates over 100 supermarkets, convenience, pet and hardware stores under the County Market, Save-A-Lot and several other banners in Illinois, Indiana, Iowa and Missouri. Hillary Cherry (Communications) then spoke about communications plans. The plans include social media, brochures, and an updated online presence that encompasses one consistent image for the community. One of the main initiatives is a new website developed for the City of Mt. Pulaski. The website will serve as the central hub for all community events, organizations, economic development as well as the day-to-day functions of the City of Mt. Pulaski. Tom Martin (Community Infrastructure) then discussed beautification of the square and improvements within the square business district. Specific initiatives discussed included potential street improvements, updating lighting and retaining wall repair.

The floor was opened for public comments. The following questions were asked by the public/community members:

* How is money appropriated?
* Can the city take the money from the business district sales tax and use it for things not suggested by the Economic Advisory Board?
* Can we use a percentage based model to determine how funds are allocated?
* Is the grant application a one time application?
* Are the funds available for new construction or rehab of a new grocery store?
* Has the Economic Advisory Board considered an IGA?
* Community Pride received a grant for a message board. Where did that money go and can it be used for economic development and promotion of our community events?
* Can we utilize the email list used by the City for emergencies to get a better turnout at community meetings?
* What is being done with the old cob plant facility? Can the Economic Advisory Board use that area to bring in new businesses for our community?
* Doug Martin noted that we can utilize the school email list for future community meetings.
* Could we develop a City of Mt. Pulaski app?
* Does the City still provide a package to new residents?
* Some ideas for the City package included: free meals at the restaurants and coupons to local businesses
* A suggestion by Doug Martin was made to utilize testimonials on the website. For example, Geezus Oliver gave an excellent testimonial on Senior Night at MPHS.
* Superintendent Hamm said that a billboard showcasing the $350,000 – 500,000 in scholarships that the graduating classes have received would be a great idea.
* It was suggested that we have a joint meeting bi-annually with the school board, business association and the Economic Advisory Board.
* It was suggested that the Economic Advisory Board work with the Business Association to promote new businesses coming into town. For example, the Lucky Lager will be opening soon.
* Phyllis Beccue requested that we hold community meetings every three months instead of every six months to better update the community on progress.
* When asked how the public heard about the event, they stated: Economic Advisory Board members told them about it, read it in the Lincoln Daily News, heard from the Business Association, and saw it on Facebook.

Next meeting scheduled for February 26, 2018, at 6:30 pm.

A motion was made by Tom Martin to adjourn the meeting. Second by Hillary Cherry. Meeting adjourned at 3:10 pm.

Respectfully submitted by Hillary Cherry, Secretary