

MINUTES: Board of Directors Meeting

March 24, 2016

The Eagles- Mt. Carmel, IL

Attendance:

Present:	Absent:
Terry McCoy	Bill Gray
Connie Calvert	Bill Brian
Rodney Ranes	Jerry Donoho
Charlotte St. Ledger	David Campbell
Toni Earleywine	Steve McMahel
Randy Hallam	Gary Sloan
Larry Miller	Gerald Edgren
Don Price	
Roger Pethtel	
Jim Pfeister	
Joe Judge	
Steve Hartsock	
Scott Merkle	
Mike Knight	
Rob Dean	
Leo Ledeker	
Roy Kissel	
Rob Annis	
Kim Carlson	

Guests Present: Keith Simpson, Flo Simpson, Susan Odum, Abby Bacon, Paula Dozier, Dennis Turpin, J. Roy Dee, Ryan Masterson, Courtney Yockey, Gareld Bilyew, Tristan Dillard

Call to Order & Pledge of Allegiance

The meeting was called to order by Charlotte St. Ledger, Board Chairman. The Pledge of Allegiance was said. Charlotte welcomed new board members Rob Annis and Kim Carlson.

Special Guest-

J. Roy Dee and Tristan Dillard presented the program on the Mt. Carmel CEO program (Creating Entrepreneurial Opportunities).

Approval of Minutes

Charlotte St. Ledger, Board Chairman, asked for approval of February 10, 2016 meeting minutes.

A motion was made by Scott Merkle to approve the minutes. A second came from Steve Hartsock and the motion passed unanimously.

Approval of January and February Financial Report

Charlotte St. Ledger, Board Chairman, asked for approval of the January and February Financial Report. A motion was made by Steve Hartsock to approve the Financial Report as presented. A second came from Jim Pfeister and the motion passed unanimously.

Nominating Committee- Randy Hallam presented the slate of officers as the same as last year: Charlotte St. Ledger, Chair; Jim Pfeister, Vice- Chair; Scott Merkle, Secretary; and Steve Hartsock, Treasurer. Nominations were requested from the floor. None being heard, a motion to close nominations from the floor came from Larry Miller with a second from Joe Judge. Motion carried. A motion was made to approve the slate of officers from Randy Hallam and a 2nd came from Roy Kissel. Motion carried.

Old Business- A motion was made from Scott Merkle to approve the 2014-2015 Audit as mailed out. A second came from Rodney Raney. Motion carried.

Executive Director's Report

Thank you all again for being here tonight and helping to provide support to the Planning Commission's efforts to make our region a better place to live. If you look at your annual report, you will see that GWRPC has brought \$844,000 in grants to the region this year. Although this number is significantly less than normal, you can't ignore the fact that nearly \$1 million in grants was awarded to our seven county region!

One of the highlights of the past year has been the USDA Stronger Economies Together program which we refer to as SET. SET has been a huge success in bringing our region together to find solutions to some of our biggest issues. The group has met 5 times. There was a Civic Forum last fall and since that forum we have had 4 meetings. The main goals being formed are around the three issues of Employability, Business Support and Tourism.

The first committee is centering their efforts around employability. How many of you know a person that is looking for a job or a business who can't find enough employees. We have found that there is a disconnect between the region's employable adults and the businesses community. The employability group is working on solutions to the issues that local businesses are facing in regards to the region's workforce. The group has identified the following concerns: employees lacking soft skills which includes attendance/ responsibility/ punctuality, attitude, initiative, and dependability, basic skills such as reading and writing comprehension, and a general lack of knowledge of what jobs are available in the region. The main goal of this group is to increase the career and job readiness of the region's youth. We envision a region where all high school graduates will know what businesses are available in the region and how to prepare for those jobs. This vision cannot be accomplished without the support and help of the business community as well as K-12 education and the community colleges. We are very excited about this initiative and you will be hearing more about it in the near future.

The next group, Business Support, is working on developing strategies to address the recent loss of the Small Business Development Center that previously serviced the region. They are also working on creating resources for new business owners. We need to support the creation of businesses but also "Life after the ribbon cutting".

Our final group, Tourism has centered their focus on analyzing current tourism opportunities. They are reviewing how current opportunities can be enhanced to increase the value of tourism efforts in the region.

This is just a very brief summary of what the SET committees have accomplished so far. You will be hearing more about these efforts in the months to come. I would strongly encourage you to attend the next SET meeting which is April 5th in Robinson. The more people involved, the more likely we are to accomplish our goals.

At this time, I want to thank the board members who have attended one or more of the SET meetings this year: Jim Pfeister, Charlotte St. Ledger, Scott Merkle, Roger Pethel, Rodney Ranes, Randy Hallam and Joe Judge, Jay Edgren, and Steve McMahel. These board members have offered their time and expertise in addressing the regional issues identified through the SET process.

I want to thank Mr. Dee and the student for volunteering their time to help support the CEO program in Wabash County and for sharing their story. The CEO program is one example of a great resource in the region that enhances both employability and entrepreneurship.

Adjournment

The next meeting date will June 23, 2016 at 6:30 at the GWRPC office.

A motion was made by Scott Merkle to adjourn the meeting and Larry Miller seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned.