

Van Buren County Economic Development Corporation

November 7, 2022 | 1 p.m.

Location: Board of Commissioners Chambers

Meeting Minutes

Roll Call

Member	Term Expires	Present/Absent
Tom Stanek, Chair	2/13/2027	P
Rodney Dragicevich, Vice Chair	2/13/2026	P
Carrie Troyer, Treasurer	3/13/2024	P
Zachary Morris, Secretary	2/13/2024	P
Daywi Cook, Board Member	2/13/2024	P
Randall Peat, Board of Commissioners Representative	BOC Appointed	P
Paul Schincariol, Board of Commissioners Representative	BOC Appointed	P
Mike Toth, Board Member	2/13/2028	P

Others in attendance:

- Julia Wall, Economic Development Coordinator at Market Van Buren

Call to Order

Tom Stanek, Chair of the Board, called the meeting to order at 1 p.m.

Approval of Meeting Agenda

Mr. Stanek asked for Zach Morris to give updates on the PACE program and Stephanie Timmer's appointment to the EDC Board and to add these updates to the November 7, 2022 agenda. Rodney Dragicevich moved to approve the new updates to the November 7, 2022 agenda. Randy Peat supported the motion, and the motion carried unanimously.

Approval of Meeting Minutes

Randy Peat moved to approve the October 10, 2022 meeting minutes. Rodney Dragicevich supported the motion, and the motion carried unanimously.

Open Issues

Palisades, Broadband Update

Zach Morris gave an update about the decommissioning process for Palisades. Market Van Buren is looking to schedule another PCAP meeting possibly. This meeting will be somewhat dependent on the outcome of the general election and likelihood of the plant reopening. The final report on the Palisades Economic Impact from EGI has been delayed due to data access. Market Van Buren is hoping to have an update regarding the data from EGI by the end of the month.

Mr. Morris gave an update regarding broadband. DCS Technologies is following up with local municipalities to discuss how to fill their internet gap areas. Municipalities, ISP's, and

the County will have to then coordinate as ROBIN (Realizing Opportunities in Broadband Infrastructure Networks) funding will need to be pursued to fill in these gap areas. Cass County is pursuing a grant to fund development of an internet mapping process and would like to have Chris Scharrer from DCS Technologies to assist with the mapping process. This would make for a unified, regional internet map between Berrien, Cass, and Van Buren Counties if completed.

Financial Update

Mr. Morris gave a brief update regarding the Revolving Loan Fund and the County Strategic Fund.

a. *Revolving Loan Fund*

Mr. Morris mentioned that a new applicant is looking at the Revolving Loan Fund program. She currently operates a variety of businesses but may be applying for her at-home healthcare company. This would be around \$70k, which would require the creation of two jobs.

Ms. Sarah Snoeyink is working to develop shared balance sheets with the County. Once this process is complete, the County will be able to send the balance sheets for the current month on the 15th of every month. This will allow Ms. Snoeyink to send certified letters the second of the week of the month to delinquent businesses.

b. *County Strategic Fund*

Mr. Morris said that Ms. Snoeyink is working on submitting for reimbursement, which is an ongoing process. She is anticipating around \$1,500 to be added to the County Strategic Fund.

Mr. Morris concluded the discussion by an idea to start setting up a small loan plan for small businesses in Van Buren County. Mr. Stanek said that the EDC Board will need to lay out parameters and a set of steps, so future funding is approved if we roll out this new program.

Community Grant Development Update

Mr. Morris gave an update regarding community grant developments. \$1.6M in requests are still pending from the RAP Grant. There are \$200K in requests for slum and blight eliminations. Market Van Buren has received positive interest and Ms. Snoeyink has been involved in several meetings to vet these projects. The most likely applicants could include the City of Bangor, Covert, and Decatur. There should be another round of requests for funding in the spring. Mr. Morris concluded the discussion about grants to discuss the DNR Spark Grants which are applied to public recreation. There will be a total of \$75M available in three rounds (December 2022, Spring of 2023, and the Summer of 2023).

Van Buren County Economic Development Review

Mr. Morris said there are no recent updates for this month, but there will be exciting updates by the December meeting.

PACE Program Update

Market Van Buren has been working with the County to make sure the proper legal steps are being taken. The next steps regarding the PACE Program in Van Buren County will be considered by the Van Buren County Commissioners at their meeting tomorrow.

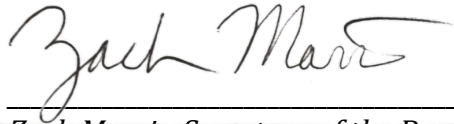
New Board Appointments

Mr. Morris said that Ms. Stephanie Timmer should be approved by the Van Buren County Commissioners at their meeting tomorrow. Discussion followed regarding Commissioner Kurt Doroh having an interest in joining the Van Buren County EDC Board. Mr. Peat moved to recommend Commissioner Kurt Doroh to the Van Buren County EDC Board. Daywi Cook supported the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

Adjournment

Mike Toth moved to adjourn the meeting at 1:50 p.m. Zach Morris supported the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

The next meeting is scheduled for December 5, 2022 at 1 p.m.



Zach Morris, Secretary of the Board

1-11-2023

Date