

DRIVE, An Economic Development Council of Governments

Meeting Minutes for the January 6, 2016 Meeting

Attending: Board members Greg Cole, John DeFinnis, Trevor Finn, Harold Hurst, Teri MacBride, Susan McGarry, Al Neuner, Matt Prosseda, David Soltz, Chris Young and Executive Director Jessie Runkle

Members not in attendance: Lance Diehl.

The meeting was called to order by Chairman John DeFinnis at 8:10 AM. The chair welcomed everyone to the new office space, noting this was the inaugural meeting in the new conference room. Several guests were in attendance and recognized: Fred Gaffney, Ken Holdren, Bob Snyder and guest speaker Lauren Bryson. Members introduced themselves.

Minutes:

The minutes of December 2, 2015 were approved without correction by motion of Trevor and seconded Dave.

Treasurer's Report:

A Treasurer's report through November 30th was distributed by Matt. The report shows receipts and expenditures with an available balance of \$104,242.46. Additional income will be reflected in the year end (as of December 31st) report from Montour County.

The Treasurer's report was properly approved by the board, by motion of Dave and a second by Susan.

Executive Director's Report:

Jess stated that it was her third day on the job. She has met with the President and Secretary, and accomplished administrative tasks. The direction provided to her from the executive committee will guide her for a few initial weeks but she looks forward to setting specific goals that will grow from the board undertaking strategic planning. She'll be busy getting the office computers, files and phones set up, business cards and supplies. She's drafting a News Release about DRIVE hiring staff. The board welcomed her and encouraged her to be in touch with them individually and collectively.

Old Business:

Contract for Montour County services Update – John reported that Montour County Attorney Marks and Karen Hackman are working on the agreement and they need pricing on the triple net lease from Montour County officials. The board agrees the goal is to settle this by the next (February) DRIVE meeting.

Budget Update – Matt asked for a budget committee and Harold, Lance, Jessie and Matt will meet. New bank signature cards will be needed for 2016.

New Business:

Focus Central PA Update – Lauren Bryson, executive director

Lauren distributed information packets and presented background on the organization's structure and mission. As a 7-county regional marketing initiative targeting site location consultants and companies doing direct location searches, Focus helps make connections with economic development organizations in member counties and these unique leads. Much business expansion is organic to Pennsylvania so there is an internal marketing component to Focus. Focus has developed a social media following and attends site selection conferences and conducts familiarization outreach meetings to build awareness and develop these unique leads. The new website www.focuscentralpa.org has been refreshed to be more mobile friendly. It offers considerable information about available properties and data that expanding businesses want to know. It is based on a platform that is proprietary and uniquely customized to present information about doing business in the seven Central Pennsylvania counties. The Focus leads are accessible to members on a web-based relationship management tool (SalesForce.com).

In response to questions, Lauren explained there is a strong interest to collaborate to keep graduated students in the region and elaborated on her experience working with companies searching for new business locations. She stated that the success of Focus is based on the partnerships of the members and with other Pennsylvania economic development organizations (PA Partners). This is an extremely competitive business but cooperation among similar partners makes for a strong alliance.

There was discussion about the \$7500 per county annual membership fee, and board appointments. There was consensus that Jess should hold one of the four board seats, one be an at large member from the DRIVE board and the remaining two be split by recommendation from the Columbia Alliance and Greater Danville Area Industrial Development Corporation.

A motion to execute a letter of commitment with Focus Central Pennsylvania and pay \$15,000 was made by Teri and seconded by Chris. Motion carried.

Executive Session:

At 9:18 AM, the chair called for an executive session to discuss personnel matters, specifically the benefits and compensation of the executive director. He announced there would likely be further business conducted following the executive session. Guests were excused. The executive session was terminated at 9:28 AM and the public meeting resumed.

A motion to reimburse Jess for one month of out of pocket expenses health (COBRA) was made by motion of Matt and seconded by Al. Motion carried.

A motion for the solicitor to prepare a term sheet to clarify DRIVE employee benefit exceptions to the standard Montour County employee benefits was made by motion of Matt and seconded by Al. Motion carried.

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, February 3rd at 8am, at the same location.

The meeting adjourned at 9:40 AM.

Submitted by Teri MacBride, secretary