



**DRIVE Board Meeting Minutes**  
May 5<sup>th</sup>, 2021

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Greg Cole, Lance Diehl, Trevor Finn, Dean Girton, Joe Kantz, Dan Knorr, Susan McGarry, Al Neuner, Dave Park, Jeff Reber, Jeb Stotter, Leslie Temple, Chris Young, Jennifer Wakeman (Executive Director)

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Sam Schiccatano

**GUESTS PRESENT:** Harold Hurst, Tim Hippensteel (Project Manager), Betsy Reichenbach (Business Outreach Manager), Aidan McDonald (Facilities Manager).

The meeting was called to order at 8:30 am. Jeb Stotter announced that an information session was held prior to the meeting regarding a potential real estate transaction. No actions or votes were taken.

**MINUTES:**

- April 7<sup>th</sup> 2021 Board Meeting Motion by Dean Girton to accept the March 3<sup>rd</sup> and March 15<sup>th</sup> minutes, Dave Park seconded the motion; carried unanimously.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

Jeb Stotter asked if there was any public comment on agenda items. Hearing none, the board proceeded with its business.

**TREASURER'S REPORT**

Dan Knorr presented the Treasurer's Report.

He noted the board packet included all the usual financial reports. Dan reminded the board that last month DRIVE had received the final multimodal grant reimbursement of \$117,000, and per the finance committee's plan, those funds were moved into the investment account. The current assets of the investment account on the balance sheet reflect those funds. On the P & L year to date, he also noted \$50,000 in income under "Property Sales" represented a good faith deposit for Project Underground, which would be returned if the sale didn't proceed.

Motion to approve the Treasurer's Report made by Leslie Temple, seconded by Jeff Reber; carried unanimously.

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT:**

Jennifer Wakeman reported that several projects wrapped up in the end of April and early May, including the sale of a portion of the former Sunbury Textile property to Fresh Roasted Coffee. We completed the subdivision of the property in late April. Jennifer Wakeman said she attended the zoning hearing meeting with Andy Oakes of Fresh Roasted Coffee. It went to County planning and city council for approval and the subdivision was recorded. Closing completed April 30<sup>th</sup>. Andy Oakes has already begun extensive renovations at the building including painting, and plans for an HVAC replacement and other major improvements including updating exterior façade. It is likely will arrange for ribbon cutting or similar event later in the year. Fresh Roasted Coffee is already expanding its payroll accommodate growth in the new space.

Expansion of DRIVE offices nearly complete. The staff has moved into their new offices, and much of the furniture has been delivered, with additional items expected later in the week.

We have finally filled the Bookkeeper/ Administrative Assistant position. Amanda Schell from Bloomsburg will be working 30 hours per week starting may 10<sup>th</sup>.

The board received an invitation for a ribbon cutting for Tuscarora Grain, a new business moving in to Columbia County at lime ridge. The project was brought to DRIVE by the North Shore Railroad marketing team. DRIVE worked closely with North Shore and the Joint Rail Authority to complete the project.

Jennifer Wakeman is participating in the US chamber Foundation talent pipeline management academy along with Jeff Emanuel from the Columbia Montour Chamber Foundation. TPM brings together workforce, education, and business leaders in a unique supply chain that helps create a pipeline of talent to support local employers. We are looking forward to sharing how DRIVE, the Chamber Foundation, and other public partners can implement the TPM approach in the region to work through some of the workforce issues we hear about from our employers.

The upcoming Focus Industrial Development Forum is promising to be an exciting event. The board was sent the information to register for the interactive, virtual event on June. 22<sup>nd</sup>. Mark Burke of MYNDDSET Event Services (on of DRIVE's tenants) has been engaged by focus to help run the event to make it an engaging and interactive virtual experience. Michael Marr of Shell Petrochemicals is one of the keynote speakers.

### **Business Retention and Expansion Report**

Betsy Reichenbach reported an updated report of all visits was included in the board packet. Additionally, she asked the board members to let her know if they had any particular companies they'd like her to contact. She has three meetings set up already for the rest of the month.

Jennifer Wakeman added she has been working hard to get in front of companies, working through the PREP and ENGAGE programs, and doing the legwork related to the KIZ, Betsy has brought one new KIZ company in and is working on adding a second.

## **Broadband Committee**

Tim Hippensteel reported that Skypacket has been very busy doing installations around the counties as things are coming online. Additional sites are coming on line by end of this week.

Tim reported we had a meeting with Skypacket April 21<sup>st</sup> to discuss marketing the network. Skypacket has reported they already have quite a backlog they are working through, but plan to send direct mailers to targeted zip codes to get the word out about the network. Tim and Jennifer Wakeman discussed putting drive logo on the mailer as well to avoid confusion and make it clear Skypacket operates on the DRIVE network.

Jennifer Wakeman reported that DRIVE worked with Columbia, Montour, and Northumberland GIS to get address data, and obtained the Snyder and Union data online from a study they submitted it for online. The company that has done our coverage propagation mapping overlaid the GIS on our coverage map so we could identify the number of addresses the network would serve with broadband coverage, defined by the FCC as 25Mbps download. Of 132,000 addresses total in the five counties, the network will reach 96,622 address or 73 percent of all address in five counties. The counties contributed \$3.2 million to the project, at a cost of only \$33.12 per address.

Lance Diehl asked if we knew the percentage of addresses in the five counties that were unserved before the project so we could better understand the impact of the DRIVE broadband network. Jenifer said she would try to get that information.

Trevor Finn added it's not just those who are unserved, but those who are underserved. He said he was pleasantly surprised by the percentage of coverage the network has achieved.

Jeff Reber said he expected a significant number of the served addresses were underserved before because the counties directed the funds to target underserved areas. Jennnifer Wakeman added the network avoids attempting to cover well covered population centers like Bloomsburg.

Joe Kantz added that in Snyder County, the vast majority of individuals are underserved, with many still getting dial-up internet.

## **Old Business**

Jeb Stotter asked if there was any old business for the board. Hearing none, the board proceeded to new business.

## **New Business**

Jennifer Wakeman reported the executive committee decided at their meeting last week to return to in person meetings beginning with the June meeting. For now, we will utilize the larger

training room in the DRIVE building for board meetings.

Jeb Stotter then addressed communications between DRIVE board member related to DRIVE matters, asking them to keep the distribution list on emails contained to DRIVE board and staff. He also said going forward, minutes will be taken at all committee meetings so we have an accurate record of what was said at committee meetings. Jeb said he believed that would be a positive improvement for DRIVE.

At 8:55 am, Jeb Stotter made a motion to adjourn.

**NEXT MEETING:** The DRIVE Board meets again on June 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2021 at 8:30 a.m. at the DRIVE Office, 418 Railroad Street, Danville, PA 17821.

Respectfully Submitted,

Dean Girton, Secretary