



Allegan County Economic Development
3255 122nd Avenue, Suite 101
Allegan, MI 49010
Phone: (269) 686-5311 • Fax: (269) 686-5214
E-mail: aced@allegancounty.org
www.allegancountyedc.org

February 27, 2019
Gun Lake Tribe Offices
2872 Mission Drive, Shelbyville, MI

Board Meeting Minutes
Allegan County Economic Development Commission – DRAFT

Meeting was called to order at 2:04 PM by Jenifer Garcia.

WELCOME HOST – John Shagonaby, CEO of Gun Lake Tribe Gaming Authority provided a brief overview of the Gun Lake Tribe and introduced Kurt Trevan, CEO of Gun Lake Investments who gave a brief overview of Gun Lake Investments, a separate economic development corporation for the Gun Lake Tribe and shared their progress and goals.

Roll Call showed the following members:

PRESENT:

- Julie DeCook
- Jenifer Garcia
- Kerry O'Donohue
- Patrick Moran
- Steve Ramus
- Commissioner Jim Storey
- Nora Balgoyen-Williams
- Commissioner Rick Cain

ABSENT:

- Cheri Schulz
- Linda Blankenship
- Mike VanDenBerg
- Jacob Maas
- Alexandra Gillett

OTHERS:

- Kelsey Sivertson, Lakeshore Advantage
- Beth Blanton, Lakeshore Advantage
- Amanda Murray, Lakeshore Advantage
- Greg King, Lakeshore Advantage
- John Shagonaby, Gun Lake Tribe
- Michelle Krctaovich (for Jacob Maas), West Michigan Works!
- Aaron Mayes, Gun Lake Tribe
- Kurt Trevan, Gun Lake Investments
- Peter Dickow, Senator Gary Peters Office

ADDITIONS/DELETIONS TO MINUTES –A motion was made by Kerry O-Donohue to accept the minutes seconded by Nora Balgoyen-Williams. The motion carried.

ADDITIONS/DELETIONS TO AGENDA – None. A motion was made by Jim Storey to accept the agenda as is, seconded by Steve Ramus. The motion carried.

INDUSTRY SECTOR UPDATES –

- Steve Ramus: Steve spoke to updates at Perrigo, noted that Perrigo hired a new CEO, Murray Kessler, and said that the new CEO is very community-minded, and Steve is cautiously optimistic. Perrigo continues to slowly expand in Dublin and in Allegan. A couple months ago, the policy was shed of hiring through manpower and instead, hiring direct. From a corporate giving standpoint, most employees live in Allegan, and last year 40% of the foundation's funds were given locally to Allegan County to things like the Perrigo splash pad and the Allegan Library expansion. Looking to double the number of mentees/mentors of the Allegan Advantage program.
- Julie DeCook: Looking ahead, there is a lot of summer program series being announced, such as the summer concert series at Felt Mansion and Virtue Cider is bringing in local farmers to educate the public about the local farms. Saugatuck Center of the Arts announced their summer educational programming for both children and adults.
- Rick Cain: Looking forward to serving on the EDC board. He stated he has a vested interest in economic development for Allegan County and out of the many committees he has been appointed to, Allegan County EDC board was one he personally sought out.
- Patrick Moran: Utility was having a great year and then the polar vortex occurred. It's tax preparation season, United Way is offering tax preparation assistance through My Free Taxes once again. In general, a thing of importance in the non-profit world is the need for collaboration because of disappearing funding. United Way hosted a celebration for milestones achieved and awarded many community awards, including the Community Hero Award to which Gun Lake Casino was the recipient. The new ALICE report rollout is underway with Patrick now serving as the new chair.
- Kerry O'Donohue: The Haworth site update in Douglas is the main thing happening in the downtowns and the developer is projecting this project to be a 20-year project. Jim and Michelle Liggett continue to heavily invest in downtown Allegan through commercial property purchases. Recently Saugatuck Township opted in on Medical Marijuana, while Douglas has already opted in.
- Jenifer Garcia: The county just wrapped up their Community Health Improvement Planning (CHIP) planning and noted how great it was to see the collaboration around the table. On January 4, Allegan General Hospital signed a letter of intent with Ascension Michigan and Allegan General Hospital is excited about the impending partnership. Allegan General Hospital is working through the due diligence processing with Ascension Michigan. The projected timeline for a definitive agreement to be signed is roughly June 30, 2019. In 2018 the hospital saw a \$4 million-dollar turnaround compared to 2017. Losses for 2017 were roughly \$7 million, compared to a \$2.7 million-dollar loss in 2018. The majority of expense reductions came from salaries (\$3M) and supply/inventory reductions (\$1M).
- Peter Dickow: Thanked Lakeshore Advantage for the roundtable event. There has been discussion with Dan Wedge regarding the Rock-Tenn River Project and Dan is going to present progress to Senator Peters staff in Washington. Peter also shared information about rural broadband grants that are available; Peter will send direct information regarding these grants to the ACEDC board for review.
- Nora Balgoyen-Williams: The wind storm took down a line causing some outage. Overall, the number of outages has been reduced since the investment in ITC. ITC recently had a 5 year look ahead as far as projects and another area manager will be added due to the number of projects in the pipeline. Charitable giving was highlighted, as ITC recently gave to a Wayland veteran assisting in retro-fitting a house for him.
- Michelle Krcatovich: Michelle presented the HotJobs list which helps recommend good jobs. This publication is provided by West Michigan Works! And is distributed to area schools.
- Jim Storey: Jim spoke to the hiring of a chief public defender and spoke to the Michigan indigent defense program which will provide good legal representation to those unable to afford it. The City of Holland is reviewing a \$58-million-dollar housing project which would cater to senior housing homes, condos, and a strip mall. The downside is adding to an already busy highway area. The county commissioners are currently narrowing down a list of projects they hope to help with.

- Cheri Schulz: Cheri was unable to attend the meeting in person. The following written report was provided: Residential data for Allegan County – 322 current listings, median list price \$320k, median days on market (DOM) 120 days. 150 pending, median DOM 31 days, median list price \$200k Past six months – 741 homes sold, median sales price \$190k, media DOM 27. Commercial data for Allegan County – 59 active listings, median DOM 158 days, median list price \$300k. 6 pending, DOM 273, median list price \$192k. 87 sold in the past 6 months, median DOM 175 days, median sold \$159k. All data from this information is posted on Multiple Listing Service. Most for ‘sale by owners’ or unlisted properties not included. Sold data is for the past 6 months.

NEW BUSINESS:

A. Fundraising/Campaign Update for Allegan County

- a. Beth Blanton, Vice President of Engagement, provided an update on the funds raised to date.
- b. Amanda Murray, Vice President of Business Solutions, expounded upon the need to establish relationships in Allegan and how to do that through telling the Lakeshore Advantage story and showing the value of Lakeshore Advantage.
- c. Greg King, Manager of Business Solutions, took the board through the cities and townships and who has decided to invest and who has not.
- d. The seven townships that Greg needs help to be connected with are:
 - i. Wayland Township
 - ii. Cheshire Township
 - iii. Martin Township
 - iv. Martin Township
 - v. Heath Township
 - vi. City of Saugatuck
 - vii. Clyde Township
 - viii. Lee Township
 - ix. Valley Township

B. Lakeshore Advantage Quarterly Update

- a. Amanda Murray gave a quarterly update of Lakeshore Advantage’s partnership with Allegan County.
- b. Nora suggested understanding what the development outreach is in the rest of the county would prove beneficial.
- c. Greg shared his community engagement, noting the Visionary Award winner being from Allegan County, Opportunity Zone highlights, as well as the Mayor’s Roundtable with manufactures from Allegan County represented.

C. Brownfield Redevelopment

- a. Jenifer Garcia provided the following update on behalf of Dan Wedge:
 - 1. The press release for the approved cleanup of the Rock Tenn power house was provided in the meeting packet. The government shut-down has slowed the approval process. In speaking to EPA, this is still on track for spring start and completion by June.
 - 2. Allegan County did submit the EPA Brownfield Multi-purpose Grant 1/31/2019. We expect to know the outcome of the grant in June of this year. The potential developer has verbally agreed to sign a letter of intent to the purchase of the Rock Tenn property in place of a sales agreement. There many unknowns at the time that would impact the sale and the EPA grant requires the applicant (County) to be the owner. This would hold the sale until after the June grant award at a minimum. The Developer would still like to move forward with the development on the Brownfield plan. This would enable both parties to move forward with current projects and complete a sales agreement later in the year once both parties know the outcome of the EPA power house clean-up, new EPA grant and other pending outcomes.

3. Kalamazoo River Greenway Planning Grant – The Outdoor Discovery Center is excited to say the master plan was approved by the MDEQ and a draft reviewed with the MI Sea Grant. They were quite impressed with the plan and level of details provided. The plan is now available to the public on the ODC Network [Kalamazoo River Greenway site](#). An email is being drafted to the KRG advisory group to update them as well and providing them the link. You just happened to be the first to be notified since Dan Wedge reached out asking for an update. Dan Callam, Dave Nyitray and Tracey Nally are meeting on 2/12/19 to review next steps and will be in touch soon with details and plans. Thank you again for your involvement and interest. The Outdoor Discovery Center looks forward to working with you in the near future.
4. The City of Village of Douglas Brownfield Authority – It was shared by Suzanne Dixon that the City of Douglas is in the process of creating their own local Brownfield Authority/District. The City is working with Haworth to purchase the former Haworth plant in Douglas with plans to develop the property. Creating their own Brownfield District will aid the process.

D. Team Charter & Bylaws

- a. Jenifer Garcia gave a review of the Team Charter and Bylaws. Regarding the team charter, Jenifer posted the question of revitalizing certain aspects of the Charter.
- b. Steve Ramus asked about the strategic plan and asked if the board inherited Lakeshore Advantage strategic plan. Amanda Murray spoke to this and explained the specifics behind the contract for services. Steve commented on the need for measurable, quantifiable objectives for the EDC board.
- c. Nora agreed with Steve and wondered at keeping the charter or rather, purposing to establish sub-committees.
- d. Jenifer asked if the board would support a separate brainstorm session. The board agreed. Jim Storey suggested inviting the chamber of commerce professionals to these brainstorming sessions.

E. Upcoming Lakeshore Advantage Presentation to the Board of Commissioners

- a. Greg gave some detail regarding this presentation occurring on March 28 at 1:00pm at the Allegan County Board of Commissioners meeting stating that he and Jennifer Owens would be present at this meeting to give an update. Jenifer asked the commissioners present what they would be looking to hear about in the presentation. Commissioner Storey suggested talking about the Sebright expansion and giving tangible “wins”. Steve suggested handing the commissioners the quarterly update.

F. Recreation and Tourism Sector Vacancy

- a. The Byron Bell resignation was discussed, as was a potential candidate(s) for recruitment. Michelle Krctaovich suggested Michelle Liggett. Amanda suggested Molly with Ropes Courses. John Shagonoby said he would ruminate on who he could recommend as well from Gun Lake Casino or the Gun Lake Tribe.

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS:

NEXT MEETING - 2:00 PM @ May 22 at MRCC Union Hall and Apprentice Training Center in Wayland. A tour will be provided prior to the meeting at 1:00 PM – if you wish to attend the tour, please be there by 12:45 PM

ADJOURNMENT – With no further business to discuss, a motion was made to adjourn the meeting by Steve Ramus supported by Patrick Moran at 4:01pm. The motion carried.

Submitted by: Kelsey Sivertson