

Lewis County Development Corporation

Meeting Minutes – October 28, 2020

Board Members present: Larry Dolhof, Glen Gagnier, Tim Petersen, Tyler McDonald, Donn Bassette, Terry Thisse, Christie Nakano, Mick Lehman, Eric Sunderhaft, Jim Durkish and Eric Virkler.

Others present: Thomas Haynes, Brittany Davis, Cheyenne Steria

Meeting called to order at 8:03 AM.

Approval of July 22, 2020 Minutes: A motion to approve the July 22, 2020 minutes with no corrections necessary was made by Terry Thisse, seconded by Tim Petersen and carried unanimously.

Approval of Budget: Cheyenne Steria provided a brief overview of the 2021 annual budget. There was discussion about potential county funding, available funds for the future and meeting organization basic expenses.

A motion was made by Glen Gagnier to approve the 2021 budget, seconded by Donn Bassette and carried unanimously.

Treasurer's report: Glen Gagnier summarized the written report as of October 28, 2020 reflecting the current bank balances, bills paid, and bills remaining due. Glen and Eric provided information on the intercompany loans for \$75,000, \$20,000 and \$93,404. Information from our auditors is that the first two items are definitely not official debts on the books of the organization, and these could be "forgiven". Eric will ask if the \$93,404 item is the same. We will follow up and have a future board action regarding all three of these items. Also, Thomas Haynes provided background on the \$3,572 that the Village of Lyons Falls owes the LCDC for the mill project.

A motion by Mick Lehman to accept the Treasurer's report for October 28, 2020 and to pay the bills as identified in the report seconded by Tim Petersen and carried unanimously.
A motion to pay bills prior to audit and those currently due was made by Christie Nakano, seconded by Donn Bassette and carried unanimously.

Old Business:

Lyons Falls Mill Redevelopment

- Thomas Haynes gave a summary of the activity at the mill this year. The contractor RPCI did minimal work given the uncertainty of the state SAM funding. Larry, Eric, Thomas and Mayor Anne Huntress met earlier this week to discuss next steps on the SAM funding. We expect the state funds will be received but timing of receipt is unknown.
- Brittany Davis made the suggestion we should coordinate media and publicity to celebrate the completion of the demolition/clean up effort, create a new sign for the property and come up with a new name for the next phase. All agreed.
- Larry Dolhof provided background on the Kruger land option. The company has requested an extension of that agreement, with one minor change in that Kruger has transferred its property into a new corporate name.

Motion to renew the option with Kruger / KE Data made by Terry Thisse, seconded by Mick Lehman and carried unanimously.

- Ad Hoc committee: Brittany and Eric proposed an ad hoc committee to focus on next steps for redevelopment of the mill property. The committee could include LCDC board members and advisors and community members. All agreed and a brief discussion will occur immediately following this meeting to get this Ad Hoc committee organized.

Black River Valley Natural

- Cheyenne Steria updated the board on payment status for BRVN's lease payments. They did make a lump sum payment about one month ago and are currently a little behind in their monthly payments.

Lewis County Economic and Community Development Fund

- Brittany and Larry gave an update on determining what entity could be the host for energy PILOT agreements for an economic fund. Larry noted he did not believe the County would be interested in serving as the host and thus LCDC is the best option. Brittany noted there are multiple wind and solar projects that are moving forward in PILOT development steps. The Board is in agreement that LCDC would be a logical host community for these agreements and it fits in our mission. Also discussed next steps and how we handle the legal activities.
- **Motion by Glen Gagnier, second by Mick Lehman for the LCDC to accept the role of host community for energy projects and an economic and community development fund and to move ahead. All board members agreed and voted in favor.**

New Business

High Falls Building

- Board had a discussion on future ownership of the High Falls building. Black River Valley Natural is interested in possibly purchasing the building or a rent to own agreement. Board members shared their thoughts on future LCDC role. Terry Thisse noted whether we sell or rent to own, we want to ensure we receive a fair value. Larry commented that a stream of income is important for LCDC but if this can be accomplished through a rent to own that could work. Brittany will contact James Munn to discuss the company's thoughts.
- Cheyenne and Eric updated the board on the mortgage held by the IDA as part of the original purchase of the mill property. Right now LCDC pays annual interest only for that mortgage and that term expires in 2021. We would either need to renegotiate with LCIDA or start to pay principal.
- Larry mentioned a couple of building maintenance items. The exterior lights will be replaced soon and the overhead door needs servicing.
- **Motion by Glen Gagnier to authorize payment to replace the exterior lights, seconded by Eric Virkler and carried unanimously.**
- **Motion by Eric Virkler, seconded by Christie Nakano to authorize payment to service the overhead door with cost expected to be shared with BRVN, carried unanimously.**

Legal Services

- Eric Virkler noted that we have often discussed developing another relationship for legal counsel with a local firm for basic contract work, etc. We have been in contact with James Coffman and Lydia Young. Mr. Coffman has provided a letter of introduction and qualifications. We have not received anything yet from the Young Law Firm. The board

discussed this topic. There was agreement we would continue to maintain a relationship with BS&K and Ray Meier, and we will also potentially need other guidance for situations such as the economic and community development fund. The board agreed to have Larry, Glen and Eric discuss the issue further and move forward to establish a new relationship.

Pratt Northam Grant

- Given recent discussions between Naturally Lewis and Chamber of Commerce, an idea was generated to have a grant fund for winter tourism businesses to creatively strengthen their businesses over the next six months. Brittany Davis noted that she has submitted an application to Pratt Northam for grant funds with the LCDC as the applicant. The funds will be used to provide grants to small businesses for winter design enhancements to their business. The requested grant amount is \$10,000. Larry noted there will be a request to the Board of Legislators next week for an additional \$10,000 of funding for this program. Brittany outlined basics on how the grant program would work and if we are successful with both funding sources, \$20,000 would be very beneficial for winter tourism businesses.
- Glen noted the USDA funds that have been repaid by Tug Hill Vineyard could possibly be used to supplement this program. Brittany stated we are trying to get confirmation from USDA on how these funds can be used.
- Brittany will coordinate a committee to administer this program and review and approve the grants. Each business would be awarded a maximum of \$1,000 for their project.

Motion by Glen Gagnier, seconded by Christie Nakano to authorize the LCDC to move ahead as the sponsor of this grant program and accept Pratt Northam and County funds if awarded and also to use the USDA funds if allowed and needed. All voted in favor.

2021 Meeting Schedule

- Planned meeting dates for 2021 will be March 25, June 24, August 26, October 28.
- A meeting will be called before March if needed.

Adjournment: Motion to adjourn was introduced by Terry Thisse and seconded by Donn Bassette and passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 9:55 AM.

Respectfully submitted,



Eric Virkler
Secretary