



**Committee Members Present:** Tom Kalamas, Rachel Garito, Tim Petersen, Rich Andrews

**Others Present:** Jenna Lauraine, Kristen Aucter

I. Review Building Business Fund Applications

a. Jenna Lauraine, Programs and Partnerships Director, introduced the Building Business Fund to the committee. She stated the premise of the program, which is to matching funds to businesses looking to scale-up their business operations through various "tools". Funds can be used for literal tools (equipment/machinery) or figurative tools (business services/professional services) to assist business growth. Businesses must demonstrate how the "tools" will contribute to a thriving economy and positively impact the local community. We have \$100,000 allocated towards the program in 2024. We received 5 applications for various projects that demonstrate expanding or diversifying their business. The committee and reviewed and discussed all applications:

- i. **Snow Ridge Resort, LLC** is requesting \$30,000 towards Wax House upgrades to make it an event venue for 4 seasons including upgrades to the ceiling, walls, fixtures, and HVAC. The committee discussed that Snow Ridge has received CEDP funds through the Vacant Property Revitalization Program. The benefits of the project include year-round job opportunities and addressing the seasonality of the business will help with operations. The committee also discussed the option of funding the HVAC system specifically (\$30,000) to avoid the general construction of the project.
- ii. **Preferred Roofing LLC** is requesting \$20,000 towards the purchase of a boom lift to be able to expand into higher and more commercial projects. The committee discussed that the application did not provide a lot of background information on the company in reference to their current capacity and current employment numbers. Their application said that the expanded services and additional contracts will "likely bring job creation."
- iii. **GreenAcres Processing LLC** is requesting \$50,000 towards the purchase of a multi-tier sickle bar to enable enhanced hemp harvesting operations by improving crop-cutting quality, improved



efficiency and serve as a long-lasting asset to the business. The committee discussed the large investment with concerns of if the supply chain is in place to sell the end product. The committee felt that the project may not be ready yet. However, GreenAcres was the only business that submitted a business plan with their application, and they do identify additional investors in the project.

- iv. **S&S Spray Foam Insulation** is requesting \$50,000 towards the purchase of a new spray foam system and to incorporate two machines in an enclosed trailer allowing for quicker turn around time. By adding the additional machine, the business will need 1-2 new hires. The committee discussed the benefits of the projects being added employment and they also offer an environmentally friendly product that reduces energy costs of an average home by 40-50%.
- v. **JLK Lawncare, LLC** is requesting \$20,000 towards the purchase of a tractor, snowblower and bucket attachments to expand their services into the winter season. The committee discussed that the expansion would positively impact the business owner, but do not see a larger impact for the community.

b. After reviewing the applications, the committee agreed that the following three applications rose to the top:

- i. S&S Spray Foam Insulation – Overall the committee saw great growth potential with the addition of the new system, with job creation and offering an energy efficient product being the topic of discussion.
- ii. Snow Ridge Resort, LLC – The committee felt that the funding would be impactful to get Snow Ridge into a four-season business with the opportunity for job retention and creation.
- iii. GreenAcres Processing LLC – The committee was hesitant to fully fund this project, but felt that supporting the project would be a great foundation to get their business off the ground.

After a lengthy discussion, the committee all came to a consensus on the applications to fund:

- **\$45,000 toward S&S Spray Foam Insulation towards the purchase of a new spray foam system.**



- **\$30,000 toward Snow Ridge Resorts project, specifically to fund the HVAC system, with their equity in construction.**
- **\$25,000 toward GreeneAcres Processing LLC the purchase of a multi-tier sickle bar.**

II. Review Small Things Big Impacts Fund Applications

- a. Jenna Lauraine introduced the Small Things, Big Impacts Fund, noting that we received six applications, with \$7,674.52 left in the STBI fund. The committee discussed each application and voted:
- i. Squishy's BBQ & Catering: A local food truck business that is applying to brand a second food trailer with a vinyl wrap; Yes – 4, No – 0
  - ii. Harrisville Food Pantry: A local food pantry applying for two interchangeable signs to better promote their events and programs; Yes – 4, No – 0
  - iii. Steeple & Hearth Marketing Collective: A local marketing company applying for a new brand to represent their growing business; Yes – 4, No – 0
  - iv. North Country Property Maintenance: A local property maintenance company that is applying for yard signs, banners, promotional materials and website development to increase his visibility in the community; Yes – 4, No – 0
  - v. Bossed And Boujee: An AI generated application from a business in Memphis; Yes – 0, No – 4
  - vi. Old Croghan Engine House LLC: A building owner in Croghan applying for 4 exterior signs that will impact 3 commercial tenants; Yes – 4, No – 0

**The committee moved forward and approved full funding asks for the following projects:**

- **Squishy's BBQ & Catering - \$1,000**
- **Harrisville Food Pantry - \$450**
- **Steeple & Hearth Marketing Collective - \$250**
- **North Country Property Maintenance - \$1,000**
- **Old Croghan Engine House LLC - \$900**

III. Review 2025 Community Economic Development Fund Plan



- a. Jenna Lauraine presented the 2025 Community Economic Development Fund Plan, noting a few changes to our 2025 programs:
  - i. Rolling applications: Staff is proposing that we launch all programs (Small Things Big Impacts Fund, Building Business Fund, Community Connections Fund, Vacant Property Revitalization Fund) on January 15, 2025 with rolling quarterly application deadlines until the funds are dispersed.
  - ii. Small Things Big Impacts Fund revisions:
    1. Staff is proposing adding an additional \$20,000, from the Hirschey Donation to the Chamber of Commerce, to the STBI Fund to be earmarked for the Events and Festivals initiatives. This would allow applicants to apply for sustainable asset development (brand development, website development, content creation) to grow their event or festival in Lewis County.
    2. Staff is also proposing expanding the Small Things Big Impacts scope to include funding of \$500 - \$2,500 for increased visibility, professional or workforce development initiatives, or small equipment purchases that would help businesses and organizations to grow and expand in Lewis County.
  - iii. Building Business Fund currently has no changes.
  - iv. Community Connections Fund revisions:
    1. Staff is proposing that the Community Connections fund be revised to accept applications from non-profits, municipalities or schools for projects \$5,000 - \$15,000 to include either capacity building initiatives or execution of a project plan.
  - v. Vacant Property Revitalization Fund currently has no changes.
  - vi. Staff is also proposing allocation of left-over Small Things Big Impacts Funding from 2023 toward the Student Pitch Competition Program. This will support awards of \$500 - \$1000 for students that submit exceptional business plans to the competition.

**The committee recommends these changes to the full board for approval.**