

**Juneau County Economic Development Corporation  
Community Partners Meeting Minutes  
Wednesday, August 12, 2020, at 5:30pm  
Lyndon Station Village Hall, Lyndon Station WI**



In Attendance:

Bonnie Peterson  
Tamaya Loewe

Gary Robison  
Rita Hall

Veronica Meyer  
Natty Kranz

Terry Whipple

JCEDC President Bonnie Peterson opened the meeting at 5:44pm and welcomed everyone.

**Motion to approve the last Community Meeting Minutes by Meyer/Robison was carried.**

Gary Robison gave the Treasurer's report for June 2020. Balance brought forward \$46,576.43; Deposits \$27.83, Debits \$15,134.58; Resulting Balance \$31,469.68. Copies of report were made available.

**Motion to approve the Treasurer's Report by Meyer/Hall was carried.**

Rita Hall, Lyndon Station Representative, presented an update:

- Alliant Energy is burying lines underground.
- Dollar General Store wants to come into the building next to the Memorial. Public hearing tomorrow about rezoning that lot from residential to commercial. Some concern about the competition to Miller's General Store.
- Village water supply was just switched over Monday to the newly drilled well. DNR required it, Village funded it and is awaiting for some grant dollars to come through and partially reimburse.
- Lumber yard went out of business.
- Cindy Gill passed away a year ago and her husband has torn down their house and is building a new one.
- Tourism started slowly this spring due to COVID restrictions, but as soon as the bars and campgrounds opened they were packed full.

Terry Whipple presented update on Juneau County area:

- Lots of city people are looking to relocate to more rural areas because of COVID. Especially to areas like ours with good broadband connectivity and around the lakes.
- Tamaya Loewe has done an excellent job in getting COVID related information out to our business community and beyond very quickly as the crisis began and continues.
- The Paycheck Protection Program federal grant for COVID impacted businesses had some recipients in Juneau County: 317 disbursements were awarded for \$16M - \$28M, which will maintain wages for over 2000 jobs. In Lyndon Station specifically, 30 awards were disseminated for approximately \$1M each, another award for \$2M - \$5M and one for \$5M - \$10M were also disbursed here. These helped fund 233 jobs in Lyndon Station.
- So many businesses in Juneau County that are involved in hospitality and outdoor recreation are actually having a better year than prior years – even breaking revenue records.

- JC has improved significantly over the past decade and has been ranked 6<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> out of the 48 rural WI counties for wages. JC pays more on average for manufacturing jobs than does the LaCrosse area... with fewer amenities in our rural area this makes jobs more attractive.
- JC Retail Sales Tax Revenue was projected to be down \$250K the first half of 2020 due to COVID, but it actually generated 6.1% more for the same period of time last year.
- JC saw several new businesses start up during the COVID pandemic so far. Crisis often creates opportunity.
- Tomorrow is the Distinguished Visitor's Day at Volk Field ANGB's Northern Lightning Exercises. Full exercises last 2 weeks.
- Woodside Sports Complex, NNWR, State & County Parks, and Volk Field are the biggest attractors of visitors into JC.
- 14<sup>th</sup> Annual Government Opportunities Business Conference (GOBC) has been modified this year due to COVID. Day 1 occurred in June as a virtual day of webinars and training sessions, and Day 2 is scheduled to be in person on October 15<sup>th</sup> at Volk Field ANGB.
- Annual I&E Meeting and Cook-Out was the last Thursday in July – about 15 people attended in person. The August meeting will feature Kelliann Blazer, the Director of the new WI Office of Rural Prosperity.
- There's a microbrewery opening in Mauston soon.

#### Further Reports & Discussion:

- (Peterson) With the pandemic this year, people are reflecting on what they really value. This can be a huge opportunity for Juneau County, as we are well positioned with outdoor recreation, community living, interstate corridor proximity, and internet connectivity.
- (Kranz) Is housing still an issue in Juneau County? (Whipple) Yes – many builders left the profession during the 2008 recession and did not return when the economy improved. The builders we do have in the area are focused on lake homes with larger profit margins. Even though we have a shortage of mid-range housing at this time, keep in mind the Baby Boomers will soon be moving out and that will free up a lot of these homes for younger families to buy.
- (Robison) Waterfest "Diluted" Event was a big success. Boat parade and park activities were cancelled, but fireworks display was shot off a barge on the lake to encourage more social distancing (people watching from boats instead of crowded on shore). Some points on shore had compromised viewing of the show, but many were very happy with it and the boaters on the water loved it.

#### President's Comments:

- Thank you all for coming.

**Motion to adjourn by Meyer/Peterson was carried at 6:41pm.**

Respectfully submitted,

*TJO Loewe*

Tamaya Jo Loewe, Acting Secretary