

Grow Licking County CIC

Board of Directors Meeting
March 11, 2024

Location: Heath Municipal Offices, Heath, OH

Present: Corey Alton, Jennifer Ellis-Brunn (arrived at 12:05pm), Tim Bubb, Mike Compton, Amy Dell, Brandon Hess, Mark Johns, Lauren Massie, Mark Mauter, Jennifer McDonald, Robert Montagnese, Jim Roberts, Robert O'Neill, Joseph Robertson, and GROW staff Alexis Fitzsimmons, Hayley Feightner and Reagan Willison

Excused: Erin Grigsby

The meeting was called to order at 12:02 PM by Chair Jennifer McDonald.

Mr. Alton called the roll. Mr. Hess motioned; seconded by Mr. Mauter to excuse absent directors. The motion passed.

Mrs. McDonald welcomed Amy Dell, the new Board of Director appointed by the Licking County Commissioners.

Mayor Mark Johns provided the welcome on behalf of the City of Heath. Mr. Johns shared recent upgrades to the Council chambers meeting room, who has allowed the City to better utilize the space.

Chair McDonald welcomed guests, which included: Jared Lane, City of Heath, Mike Jacoby, Bricker & Graydon, Dalton Brown, City of Heath, and John Geller, City of Heath.

The minutes from the January 8, 2024 meeting were reviewed. Mr. Bubb motioned; seconded by Mr. Montagnese. The motion passed.

Chair's Report

Ms. McDonald stated that Mrs. Fitzsimmons plans to present organizational goals for 2024, which includes 24 BRE visits and virtual site visit tours with site selectors. Mrs. McDonald stated that the current organizational strategy for GROW Licking County was completed in 2018 with an outlook to 2025. A Board Planning session to review the current strategy and discuss revisions will be planned for this year.

Mrs. McDonald requested to move the Roundtable discussion to the end of the meeting if time allows. Mrs. McDonald also pointed out the handbook update discussions for a parental leave policy addition (see handout).

Committee Reports

Finance and Strategy – Mr. Robertson presented the financial report (see handout), which includes 4 months of financials from November 2023 to February 2024. Mrs. Fitzsimmons stated that the reports could not be provided at the time of the January meeting.

The Board of Directors had a robust discussion on the financial reports and had several questions and items of clarification. Clarification was requested on Budget vs. Actuals values and formatting and details on the write-offs line item.

The Board of Directors directed staff and GROW Treasurer to schedule a meeting with Integrity Bookkeeping to address questions, then to schedule a Special Meeting of the Board of Directors to approve past financials.

Mr. Robertson recommended tabling approval of financials until Integrity Bookkeeping can respond to questions and format of the reports.

Marketing and LCWorks – Chair McDonald reported on Marketing efforts which included the finalization of the Annual Report and collaborative marketing efforts of the Chamber, GROW, and Explore Licking County. Chair McDonald stated that additional details on Marketing efforts will be presented during Reaghan Willison's report.

Infrastructure – Mr. Roberts provided an update on the committee's work. He stated that discussions and collaboration with LCATS and the Licking County TID are continued. Mr. Roberts stated that the committee is growing and representative of a wide variety of stakeholders that are infrastructure-related.

Mr. Roberts stated that Water Improvement District (WID) discussions are ongoing and could be a multi-year effort. He stated that Representative Claggett is currently pursuing legislation that would allow for the creation of WIDs in Ohio. Mr. Roberts stated that Licking County is part of a 15-county study for water and sewer providers in an attempt to promote collaboration among providers.

Mr. Johns asked if the Amercian Structurepoint study is related to this multi-county study? Mr. Roberts responded that the new study is intended to expand on this.

Staff Reports

Mrs. Fitzsimmons provided an update on GROW's economic development efforts (see slideshow). Mrs. Fitzsimmons presented three proposed organizational goals for 2024. One goal included virtual site visits. She highlighted a tool that is currently being explored, including a drone survey of top industrial sites in Licking County.

Mrs. Fitzsimmons provided an overview of the 4th Quarter Board Retreat goal, which includes organizational strategic planning and recalibration post Intel announcement. The purpose of the retreat is to assess the current organizational strategy which is set to expire in 2025.

Mrs. Fitzsimmons also recommended discussing funding mechanisms for the organization that does not rely solely on investors.

Mrs. Massie asked how other CICs are funded and if any research has been done exploring other funding streams. Mayor Johns recommended that staff research and provide options on potential funding streams that could be discussed at the retreat.

Ms. Feightner provided an update on lead activity and business retention and expansion efforts. Updates also included a presentation on an in-house Childcare Needs Assessment survey (see slideshow).

Ms. Willison provided an update on social media efforts (see slideshow). Ms. Willison also shared recent marketing efforts including 2023 Annual report, Digital advertising, Expansion Solutions sponsored content, and the March blog and investor update.

Comments from Citizens

None.

Items for Action

Wilson, Shannon, Snow Engagement Letter – Annual Financial statements and Hinkle reporting
Mr. Johns motioned; seconded by Mr. Compton. The motion passed.

Etna Investor Contract

Mrs. Fitzsimmons explained that the revised Etna Township was changed to include an automatic renewal. No other changes were made to the contract.

Mr. Compton motioned; seconded by Mr. Johns. The motion passed.

Handbook Update – Paid Parental Leave Policy

Mr. Montagnese motioned; seconded by Mr. Hess. The motion passed.

Mr. Compton motioned; seconded by Mr. Johns to adjourn the meeting at 1:40 PM.

Next Meeting: Special Meeting TBD

Next Regular Board of Directors Meeting: May 13, 2024 at 12:00 PM – Monroe Township

Respectfully submitted, Corey Alton, Secretary