

Grow Licking County CIC

Board of Directors Meeting
September 11, 2023

Location: Central Ohio Technical College, 1179 University Drive, Newark, OH

Present: Corey Alton, Tim Bubb, Mike Compton, Jennifer Ellis-Brunn, Erin Grigsby, Mark Johns, Jim Layton, Lauren Massie, Mark Mauter, Jennifer McDonald, Robert O'Neill, Jim Roberts, Joseph Robertson, and GROW staff Alexis Fitzsimmons, Hayley Feightner and Reaghan Willison

Excused: Robert Montagnese and Brandon Hess

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

Mrs. Massie called the roll. Mr. Robertson motioned; seconded by Mr. Compton to excuse absent directors. The motion passed.

Dr. Berry, President, provided the welcome on behalf of Central Ohio Technical College. He shared that fall enrollment is up 5% and enrollment in engineering is up 38%. He shared new program offerings including: CDL (thanks to Mayor Compton for community connection), Semiconductor Engineering Technology, Supply Chain Management, Respiratory Therapy, as well as a new bachelor's degree in Nursing (BSN) coming in January 2024. The Board discussed faculty recruitment, marketing and student recruitment with Dr. Berry.

Chair McDonald welcomed guests, which included: Dr. John Berry, COTC; Brittany Misner, Village of Hebron; Kristy Hawthorne, Licking County Soil and Water Conservation District; Atrina Good, Licking County Chamber of Commerce; Nita Hanson, Etna Township.

The minutes from the July 2023 meeting were reviewed. Mr. Mauter motioned; seconded by Ms. Grigsby. Mr. Johns abstained. The motion passed.

Chair's Report

Ms. McDonald congratulated Mr. Roberts on his new role as Executive Director for Southwest Licking Community Water and Sewer District. She also congratulated Ms. Massie on her new role as Dean of Technical Studies, COTC, and guest Brittany Misner on her new role as Community and Economic Development Director for the Village of Hebron.

Ms. McDonald shared the upcoming investor meeting schedule and asked the Board of Directors to check calendars and sign up to participate where applicable. Ms. McDonald emphasized the importance of completing these meetings in order to inform the 2023 Budget.

Committee Reports

Finance and Strategy – Ms. Grigsby provided an update on the financial statements. Ms. Grigsby pointed out an error in the July 2023 financial statement which was unable to be corrected prior to today’s Board meeting. Ms. Fitzsimmons recommended that approval of the July 2023 statement be tabled until the error is corrected.

Mr. Johns motioned; seconded by Mr. O’Neill to approve the August 2023 financial reports as presented. The motion passed.

The Board of Directors discussed the current A/R Aging Summary regarding Investor payments to-date.

Marketing and LCWorks – Ms. McDonald provided an update on the committee’s meeting in August, including: a new Career Pathways banner that is being used at local events to market the Licking County Works Career Pathways toolkit for in-demand industries; social media paid ad marketing of career pathway videos; updates to printed Career Pathway Toolkit that is being distributed to schools and other career expos.

Infrastructure – Mr. Roberts provided an update on the committee’s work. Mr. Roberts reported that \$90 million dollars was recently announced from the state for transportation improvements, some of which is dedicated to Licking County. Mr. Roberts also stated that the Framework study is completed, and the Water and Sewer study will be made available soon. Mr. Roberts reported that there are no major updates on the potential Revolving Loan Fund.

Mr. Johns reported that the City of Heath applied for a RAISE grant for Thornwood Drive, and although they were not awarded the grant, the application received merit status and Heath received feedback on the application. Mr. Johns stated that the City has a good direction on improving the application for next year. Mr. Johns thanked the Board of Directors for their support.

Nomination Committee - Chair McDonald asked for volunteers for committee chair. Bylaws state that Officer roles are one-year term limited. She asked for discussion on term limits for, at minimum, the Chair and Vice Chair roles. Mr. Johns stated that he’s in favor of a two-year term for consistency; Mr. Robertson, Mr. Compton, and Mr. Mauter agreed. Mr. Bubb suggested an optional second year. Mr. Bubb suggested bringing bylaw recommendations to the November meeting for input and voting. Mr. Mauter and Mr. Bubb will serve as co-chairs of the nomination committee.

Mr. O’Neill asked for an update on board openings currently serving unlimited terms per the bylaws. At the moment, there are not any openings.

Staff Reports

Mrs. Fitzsimmons provided an update on GROW’s economic development efforts (see slideshow). She shared that Ms. Feightner was nominated as a finalist for the Ohio Economic Development Association’s “Rookie of the Year” recognition. Ms. Fitzsimmons also updated the Board on staff’s involvement with the Smart Columbus Broadband Committee through MORPC, the Etna Township NCA, and Ohio Economic Development Summit.

Ms. Feightner provided an update on lead activity and business retention and expansion efforts (see slideshow). Mr. Johns suggested that GROW staff include any inquiries locally in addition to those received in coordination with JobsOhio/OneColumbus.

Ms. Willison provided an update on social media efforts (see slideshow).

Comments from Citizens

Ms. Hawthorne expressed interest in participating in the Infrastructure committee. She shared current work on a Flood Study that will look at models and strategies. She shared work on the “Buckeye Lake Causeway” and the Racoon Creek area in order to be proactive on monitoring the water quality. The goal is to secure benchmark data.

Executive Session – Economic Development Project Review

Under ORC 121.22 under Section G-(1), Mr. Layton made a motion to enter into Executive Session to review the appointment, employment, dismissal, discipline, promotion, demotion or compensation of a public employee or official, or the investigation of charges or complaints against a public employee, official, licensee, or regulated individual associated with GROW Licking County. Mr. Compton seconded. Ms. Massie called roll. All present voted yes. The motion passed.

The Board of Directors entered Executive Session at 1:27 PM.

Mr. Roberts and Mr. Robertson exited the meeting at 1:58 PM.

Mr. Robertson re-joined the meeting at 2:03 PM.

Jim Roberts re-joined the meeting at 2:08 PM.

Mr. O'Neill exited the meeting at 2:17 PM.

Ms. Jennifer Ellis-Brunn exited the meeting at 2:18 PM.

Mr. Johns motioned; seconded by Mr. Layton to resume public session. All present voted yes. The motion passed. The public meeting resumed at 2:19 PM.

Items for Action

None.

Mr. Johns motioned; seconded by Mr. Compton to adjourn the meeting at 2:19 PM.

Next Meeting: Monday, November 13, 2023 at 12:00 PM – City of Pataskala Police Training Room

Respectfully submitted, Lauren Massie, Secretary