

GROW Licking County Community Improvement Corporation

Regular Board Meeting Minutes - 12:00 PM 11/18/2024

City of Pataskala - Training Room, Pataskala Police Department

623 Broad St. SW, Pataskala, OH, 43062

Minutes recorded by Corey Alton, Board Secretary

1. Call to Order and Roll Call - Chair McDonald

Call to order and roll call by Board Chair Jennifer McDonald at 12:00 PM, 11/18/2024

Board members present:

Board Chair: Jennifer McDonald - P

Board Vice Chair: Joseph Robertson - P

Board Treasurer: Erin Grigsby - P

Board Secretary: Corey Alton - P

Lauren Massie - P

Amy Dell - P

Robert O'Neill - P

Mike Compton - P

Jennifer Ellis-Brunn - P

Brandon Hess - P

Jim Roberts - E

Mark Mauter - P

Tim Bubb - E

Mark Johns - P

Robert Montagnese - E

Mark Johns moved to excuse absent members, and was seconded by Mike Compton. The absent board members were excused unanimously

Staff present:

Executive Director: Alexis Fitzsimmons - P

Marketing and Communications Manager: Reagan Willison - P

Economic Development Manager: Gabriel Kelvin - P

Members of the Public Present:

Britney Misner - Economic and Community Development Director - the Village of Hebron

Atrina Good - Director of Operations - Licking County Chamber of Commerce

2. Welcome - Mayor of Pataskala Mike Compton

Mayor of Pataskala and board member Michael Compton greeted the members of the board and welcomed them to the city. Board Chair Jennifer McDonald conferred the board's thanks for offering to host the meeting at Pataskala and for providing lunch.

3. Introduction of Guests - Chair McDonald

Brittany Misner - Economic and Community Development Director - the Village of Hebron

Atrina Good - Director of Operations - Licking County Chamber of Commerce

4. Approval of Minutes - Chair McDonald

Robert O'Neill identified minor spelling edits to be corrected in the minutes.

Robert O'Neill moved to approve meeting minutes for the 9/9/2024 board meeting with spelling corrections only, and was seconded by Board Treasurer Erin Grigsby. The September board meeting minutes were approved with corrections unanimously.

5. Chair Report

GROW Licking County Community Improvement Corporation Board Chair Jennifer McDonald reported that Board Officers were to be elected at this meeting, and reaffirmed the existing agreement that current Board Vice Chair Joseph Roberston would move to chair, current Board Secretary Corey Alton over to vice chair, and that a secretary was needed. She called for nominations from the floor. Executive Director Alexis Fitzsimmons reaffirmed the secretarial duties of the position would have staff assistance, which current Board Secretary Alton affirmed.

Brandon Hess nominated Amy Dell, and Joseph Robertson seconded the nomination. Amy Dell was approved as a candidate for the slate unanimously.

6. Reports

6.1 Committee reports

6.1.1 Finance and Strategy Committee - Committee Chair Erin Grigsby

Board Treasurer and Committee Chair Erin Grigsby reported the audit process for GROW Licking County Community Improvement Corporation was ongoing and proceeding as planned. She also reported on the Corporation's yearly IRS Form 990, which was reviewed by the board.

The board had a discussion to review the year to date statement of financial position and clarify line items to ensure continuity.

Robert O'Neill moved to approve the Corporation's July-October financial statements as presented, and was seconded by Board Treasurer Erin Grigsby. The statements were approved unanimously.

Jennifer Ellis-Brunn moved to approve the Corporation's Form 990, and was seconded by Joseph Robertson. The Form 990 was approved unanimously.

6.2.1 Marketing & Licking County Works Committee - Committee Chair Jennifer McDonald

Board and Committee Chair Jennifer McDonald reported that the Marketing and Licking County Works Committee had carefully reviewed and discussed the applications from vendors for its website redesign and submitted their choices for approval later in the meeting.

6.3.1 Infrastructure Committee - Executive Director Alexis Fitzsimmons

Executive Director Alexis Fitzsimmons, in place of Board Member and Committee Chair Jim Roberts, who was unable to attend this meeting, reported that the Infrastructure Committee's 10/18 meeting discussed many items, including discussing the updates from Southwest Licking County Water and Sewer districts about their new wells in the Kirkersville area improving capacity to meet local needs, and discussing the Licking County Board of Commissioners acceptance of its commissioned water and sewer report. She voiced the committee will be discussing how it will prioritize coming projects with its community partners in 2025 to advise the board of commissioners.

Additionally, she updated that several staff and committee members attended One Columbus' Securing our Future Energy Forum hosted at the Ohio Chamber of Commerce the week previous, where they heard updates from PJM Interconnection about energy distribution and transmission challenges and opportunities in the state and regional level.

Finally, Executive Director Fitzsimmons noted that the Infrastructure Committee will be setting goals for 2025 in its December meeting.

6.2 Staff Reports

6.2.1 Executive Director Report

GROW Licking County Community Improvement Corporation Executive Director Alexis Fitzsimmons reported that project lead activity has increased recently, with three new leads over the past few weeks, but has slowed in October, likely due to the time of year and elections. She presented an analysis of the leads based on industry and utility needs. She further voiced that a project is going to December to the tax credit authority board.

Executive Director Fitzsimmons further updated that staff and board members had attended or scheduled to attend numerous events and groups since the previous meeting, including: the Ohio Economists and Political Scientists – Denison University; the Ohio Statewide Development Corporation; the Pataskala Economic Development Committee Meeting; the Granville Area Chamber Economic Development Committee; the Newark Area Financial Planning Group; the New Albany Company; the Manufacturing Day Celebration; the Central Ohio Manufacturing Partnership; the Junior Achievement; the Licking County Foundation Training; the Granville Community Improvement Corporation; the Women's Leadership Network; the Heath-Newark-Licking County Port Authority Lunch and Learn; United Way Community Conversations – Housing the Homeless; the OEDA President David Zak; Licking County Soil and Water; the Securing Our Future Energy Forum; the Licking County Transport Advisory Group; the Licking County Foundation Celebration of Giving; and Women United.

Executive Director Fitzsimmons shared that the Corporation's staff would be meeting that week on 11/20 with staff from Warren County to provide input into their plans to form their own Community Improvement Corporation, joined by Board Chair Jennifer McDonald and Immediate Past Board Chair Mark Johns. This meeting would be to discuss best practices and inform on program design.

Furthermore, Executive Director Fitzsimmons updated on future events, including meeting with the Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission that week as part of their CEDS review process (11/21), a panel presentation to Licking Valley High School students (11/25), an Industry Insights event with Armstrong Steel Ceilings (11/26), the Ohio Future-Ready Workforce Summit (12/3), the Mid-America Development Council Conference (12/4-12/5) and One Columbus' Economic Development 411 (12/6). She closed by reminding of the Board Retreat the following week and the committee meetings in December.

6.2.2 Marketing and Communications Manager Report

GROW Licking County Community Improvement Corporation Marketing and Communications Manager Reagan Willison reported the social media analytics since last meeting 4339 impressions on LinkedIn and 230 for the Corporation's website. She additionally showed websites that had been designed by Market Works, with whom the Marketing and Licking County Works Committee had selected to propose to the Board for the Corporation's website redesign. Among those showcased were Ohio Means Jobs and the Ohio Department of Development.

Manager Willison additionally shared the recently-completed Licking County Works career pathways video for distribution and warehousing careers, noting the business services and IT careers video would be filming the following day. She closed by noting that the contracted provider for the videos, the Makery, had significantly delayed productions after a period of six months of no contact with no explanation, yet they have recently resumed contact and production after the intervention of Executive Director Alexis Fitzsimmons.

6.2.3 Economic Development Manager Report

GROW Licking County Economic Development Manager Gabriel Kelvin reported that the Corporation's Business Retention and Expansion Program had met with 13 businesses to date and was either scheduled or in the process of scheduling to meet with an additional seven, putting it close to meeting its goal of 24 BRE meetings, despite the three month gap with the departure of former Associate Director Hayley Amick (previously Hayley Feightner).

Manager Kelvin additionally shared he was settling into his role, having started four weeks previously, and voiced that "nothing gets [him] more excited than data," expressing interest in providing data analytics and insight into Licking County's economic development concerns.

7. Comments from Citizens

GROW Licking County Community Improvement Corporation Board Chair Jennifer McDonald asked the citizens in attendance if they would like to make comments. No citizens present wished to provide comments.

8. Items of Action

8.1 2025 Meeting Schedule

GROW Licking County Community Improvement Corporation Executive Director Alexis Fitzsimmons presented the board with the following 2025 regular board meeting schedule:

Monday, 1/13/2025, 12 PM - Heath-Newark-Licking County Port Authority, 851 Irving Wick Dr W, Heath, OH 43056

Monday, 3/10/2025, 12 PM - City of Heath - 1287 Hebron Rd, Heath, OH 43056

Monday, 5/12/2025, 12 PM - Monroe Township - 4 E Main St, Tipp City, OH 45371

Monday, 7/14/2025, 12 PM - Licking Memorial Hospital - 1320 W Main St, Newark, OH 43055

Monday, 9/8/2025, 12 PM - Central Ohio Technical College - 1179 University Dr. Newark, OH 43055

Monday, 11/10/2025, 12 PM - City of Pataskala - 623 Broad St. SW, Pataskala, OH, 43062

Park National Bank was proposed by Board Secretary Corey Alton as a possible back-up location. The board further expressed interest in hosting a meeting at Illuminate USA's site and had a robust discussion about their operations and growth.

The Executive Committee, which meets at 12 PM in the GROW Licking County Community Improvement Corporation Offices at 20 S 2nd St, Newark, OH 43055, was proposed to meet on the following dates: 1/6/2025, 2/3/2025, 3/3/2025, 4/7/2025, 5/5/2025, 6/2/2025, 7/7/2025, 10/6/2025, 11/3/2025, 12/1/2025

The Infrastructure Committee, which meets at 1:00 PM in the Licking county Administration Building's Commissioners Meeting Room at 20 S 2nd St, Newark, OH 43055, was proposed to meet on the following dates: 2/18/2025, 5/15/2025, 6/17/2025, 8/19/2025, 10/21/2025, 12/16/2025

The Marketing and Licking Works Committee, which meets at 11:30 AM in the Licking county Administration Building's Commissioners Meeting Room at 20 S 2nd St, Newark, OH 43055, was proposed to meet on the following dates: 2/19/2025, 4/16/2025, 6/18/2025, 8/20/2025, 12/17/2025

Amy Dell moved to approve the meeting schedule as presented, and was seconded by Mark Johns. The schedule was approved as proposed unanimously.

8.2 Officer Elections

Brandon Hess nominated the following slate of candidates to be elected as board officers, for terms starting 1/1/2025, and the nomination was seconded by Mark Johns.

Board Chair: Joseph Robertson, term ending 12/31/2025

Board Vice Chair: Corey Alton, 12/31/2025

Board Treasurer: Erin Grisby (reappointed), term ending 12/31/2025

Board Secretary: - Amy Dell, term ending 12/31/2025

The slate was elected unanimously.

8.3 2025 Budget Approval

Executive Director Alexis Fitzsimmons proposed the 2025 annual budget for GROW Licking County Community Improvement Corporation, with anticipated total expenditures of \$474,882 and a net revenue of -\$33,882 noting that 2024 is expected to finish under budget.

Items flagged were expected revenue from the multi-year partnership with the Licking County Foundation, which was under review for renewal and would be communicated in December or January, reworking contract with Licking County Jobs and Family Services to meet their new programmatic requirements, and the increase in expected revenue from the Corporation's Infrastructure event, which exceeded expectations in 2024.

Executive Director Fitzsimmons also updated the numerous conferences and events the Corporation included to attend, including the Site Selector Conference and sponsoring the ICON Central 2025 conference in Columbus. Was made in increasing insurance for office contents and cybersecurity.

Board Treasurer Erin Grigsby moved to approve the budget as presented, and was seconded by Amy Dell. The budget was approved as proposed unanimously.

8.4 2024 Write-offs

GROW Licking County Community Improvement Corporation Executive Director Alexis Fitzsimmons presented to the board possibly voting to approve year-to-date write-offs. The board agreed to revisit the item in January after write-offs were confirmed, with the item tabled by Board Chair Jennifer McDonald.

8.5 Marketing Works Contract

GROW Licking County Community Improvement Corporation Executive Director Alexis Fitzsimmons presented the board a contract with MWFC LLC, doing business as Marketing Works for 2025 for board approval, remarking the contract would cover services for the redesign of the Corporation's website. The services entailed a one time fee of \$9250 and \$360 annually for hosting services.

Board Chair Jennfer McDonald noted that she is very impressed with Market Works' approach and their contracting history, specifically their history with other economic development organizations. Executive Director Fitzsimmons responded favorably to the quality of work, including training with Marketing and Communications Manager Reaghan Willison to make changes. Amy Dell seconded the Marketing and Licking County Works Committee's review and support of the contract.

Board Secretary Corey Alton moved to approve the contract as presented, and was seconded by Robert O'Neill. The contract was approved as proposed unanimously.

8.6 Trade and Industry Contract

GROW Licking County Community Improvement Corporation Marketing and Communications Manager Reaghan Willison presented the board a contract with Trade and Industry for the marketing and digital promotion. She noted the services offered by Trade and Industry would meet the same benchmarks as the previous supplier while costing \$10,000 less. The proposed contract with Trade and Industry was for \$15,000.

Board Vice Chair Joseph Robertson moved to approve the contract as proposed, and was seconded by Board Treasurer Erin Grigsby. The contract was approved as proposed unanimously.

9. Executive Session

Under ORC 121.22 Under § G-(1), Board Vice Chair Joseph Robertson made a motion to enter 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 Community Improvement Corporation. Mark Johns seconded.

The executive session began at 1:07 PM.

10. Adjournment

Board Chair Jennifer McDonald adjourned the meeting at 2:13 PM.

The next GROW Licking County Community Improvement Corporation board meeting is a board retreat and strategy meeting, scheduled for on Monday, November 26, 2024 at 12 PM at Licking County Library at 101 W Main St, Newark, Ohio, 43055.

The Corporation's next regularly scheduled board meeting is on Monday, January 13, 2024, at 12 PM at Heath-Newark-Licking County Port Authority, 851 Irving Wick Dr W, Heath, OH 43056