



Marion County Development

MISSION: The mission of the Marion County Development Commission (MCDC), a department of county government, is to enhance the quality of life and standard of living in Marion County by promoting and developing Marion County as a quality destination to live, work and visit.

MINUTES

Marion County Development Commission

Tuesday, November 5, 2024, The Bread Board, 616 Franklin Street, Pella

MCDC Present:

Kayla Flanders, Steffanie Bonnstetter, Jim Mitchell, Doug Stewart, and Brian Thomas

Ex-Officio Present:

Carla Eysink

Others Present:

CALL TO ORDER.

The regular meeting of the Marion County Development Commission was called to order by Doug Stewart, at 7:15 a.m., Tuesday, November 5, 2024, at 616 Franklin Street in Pella.

Commissioners reviewed the financial report. A motion was made (Mitchell/Flanders) to approve the financial report. Motion carried.

DISCUSSION ITEMS:

- **FY25-26 Budget Request:** Commissioners discussed targets for the FY25-26 budget for staffing and programs. The goal is to have the department staffed by two individuals with salaries close to the statewide average for our size of group while working to keep the overall budget bottom line close to the current fiscal year level.
- **Strategic Plan Roll-out:** Eysink reported that video filming is being scheduled and the video will be ready in early January. Commissioners discussed when to roll-out the video and strategic plan. Consensus was to combine this with the BEST OF RED ROCK announcement event on January 30 at Cordova Park. The event is schedule to begin at 7:30 a.m.
- **Pitch Sponsors:** Watkins is working to secure sponsors for the Pitch Event this spring. The goal this year is to run the program through MCD's budget and gain support to help make the program more financially feasible to continue.
- **Best of Red Rock Contest:** We will be doing video of #1 presentations the day prior to the announcement on January 29. Staff needs 2 volunteers in the morning and 2 volunteers in the afternoon to help with the video and presentation.

PROJECT UPDATES:

- **Empower Rural Iowa:** Watkins is worked with a couple businesses to submit applications to the new Empower Rural Iowa grant programs.
- **EPA Grant Application:** The application was submitted, but there has not been any awards in this program within the Midwest.
- **Red Rock Area Travel Guide:** Eysink is working to finish advertising sales and guide design. The plan is to get the guide to the printer in December.
- **CONNECT:** The October CONNECT meeting was held at Pella Corporation with Rep. McCulla and Sen. Roozenboom in attendance. The discussion focused on state legislative issues. The next meeting is scheduled for February.
- **Renew Rural Iowa Workshop:** Was held at Cordova Park with about 20 participants. The workshop focused on helping businesses at all stages plan for the future.
- **Quarterly Pulse Survey:** The second quarterly pulse survey was sent out. A report is now available on the website.
- **Leadership Red Rock:** This year's program is underway with the first session being held at Cordova. The November session will be held at Weiler.

COMMUNITY UPDATES:

- Central enrollment is looking good for next year.

ADJOURN:

Next regular meeting Tuesday, January 7 on-line only.