

Wyoming County Business Center, Inc.
Board Meeting Minutes
April 5, 2018

1. Call to Order

The WCBC, Inc Board of Directors met on April 5th at 3:00 p.m. at the Wyoming County Agriculture and Business Center, 36 Center Street Warsaw, New York.

Present were: James Pierce, President/CEO; Rick Fish, Chairman; Sam Gullo, Vice-Chair; Jeremy Satchell, Treasurer; Dan Leuer, Secretary; Jim Brick, Director; Robin Marschilok and Jennifer Tyczka, Wyoming County IDA; and Kevin Zanner, Agency Counsel.

Guest: Scott Gardner, President, Wyoming County Chamber of Commerce (joined the meeting at 3:54p.m.).

Rick Fish, Chairman, called the meeting to order at 3:01 p.m.

2. Review and Approval of the Minutes from September 18, 2017

The Board reviewed and approved the minutes on a motion made by S. Gullo. The motion was seconded by J. Brick and unanimously approved.

3. Review and Approval of Financial Report

J. Satchell presented the financial reports for the periods ending December 31, 2017 and March 31, 2018, outlining the revenue and expenses. The Board then approved the financials on a motion made by D. Leuer. The motion was seconded by J. Brick and unanimously approved.

4. Review and approval of audited financial statements and management report for 2017

R. Marschilok reviewed the Audited Financial Statements which were completed by Freed Maxick CPAs, PC, highlighting the change in net position from 2016 to 2017 and noting that there weren't any mis-statements or financial issues reported. Marschilok then reviewed the Report to the Board and discussed the opinions and recommendations from Freed Maxick, including adding professional experiences and background of the Board Members on the website, noting that the enabling statute is posted on the website as required, having a cybersecurity test performed by an outside source and reviewing the Investment Policy regarding the bank call report requirements. After review of the reports the Board approved the completed Financial Audit on a motion made by J. Satchell. The motion was seconded by J. Brick and unanimously approved.

Marschilok then asked the Board to review for approval the Mission Statement and Measurement Report included in the packet. After discussion and review of the governance certification questions the Board approved the Mission Statement and Measurement Report; with a change to question #3 to answer yes due to the Board approving the MOU for the WCIDA to Administer and Manage the WCBC activities, on a motion made by J. Satchell. The motion as seconded by S. Gullo and unanimously approved.

5. Action Items

a. Review and approve WCBC Annual Report

J. Pierce then presented the WCBC Annual Report of Accomplishments and Objectives to the Board. Pierce updated the Board on the FastTrac activities for 2017 and stated that there have been 67 businesses started and 112 jobs created since the inception of the FastTrac program. Pierce informed the Board that two executives from the Kauffman Foundation came to visit Wyoming County and met Burley's at the East Hill Creamery and then met with two businesses, here at the Ag Center, that graduated FastTrac and have been successfully running their businesses since. They observed the first night of class for our new students and have committed

to coming back for the graduation of the current class to see how far they've come in the 10 weeks. With the information they gathered they plan to tweak their training program and may even bring manuals back as a resource to go with the on-line programming. They will include the success stories they heard in their press release about the program.

Pierce noted the WCBC's continued work in Business Attraction Marketing and displayed the marketing material; business sector sell sheets, post cards and presentation folder. Pierce reviewed the continued Microloan program and noted a successful loan paid in full and the balance of the current loan portfolio at \$219,077.95.

Once Pierce finished his presentation of the Annual Report, the Board made a motion to approve the Report, moved by J. Brick and seconded by J. Satchell. The motion was unanimously approved. Pierce will present the Annual Report to the County Planning Committee on behalf of the WCBC Board.

b. Approve agreement with the Wyoming County IDA for administration of the WCBC

Pierce informed the Board that a new MOU for 2018 needs to be executed for the administrative services provided by the IDA. After discussion the Board approved the MOU for services in the amount of \$20,000 on a motion made by J. Satchell and seconded by J. Brick. The motion was unanimously approved.

c. Approve agreement with the Wyoming County IDA for marketing services

Pierce also asked for the approval of the Agreement for Marketing Services to the IDA for in the amount of \$20,000. The Board approve the Marketing Services Agreement on a motion made by J. Satchell and seconded by J. Brick. The motion was unanimously approved.

d. Consider annual investment in the Buffalo Niagara Enterprise

Pierce asked the Board to consider a \$5,000 investment in Buffalo Niagara Enterprise (BNE), as they had last year. Pierce informed the Board that BNE continues to promote our area and have done great work for the LDC in the past and continue to be dependable economic development partner. The Board approved of the request for the \$5,000 investment in BNE on a motion made by J. Satchell. The motion was seconded by D. Leuer and unanimously approved.

6. Discussion Items

a. Micro Loan Program

Pierce then reviewed the schedule of Microloans included in the package.

Troubled Accounts

There was discussion on the status of some troubled accounts that included Canaan's Butcher Block, after a judgment had been sent to all parties an automatic payment has been set up through the banks and payments of \$200/month have continued regularly.

Pierce stated that both guarantors for Silver Trails Outfitters, have filed bankruptcy and it doesn't look like we will recover anything from them. Twice is Nice Boutique, owners had also filed bankruptcy and a proof of claim has been submitted, there has been no new information on the case.

Josh Wolcott former owner of Wolcott Brothers Music continues to send \$80 weekly for payment, even while on unemployment.

An update on New York Stork Exchange, one of the guarantors had been found and an execution for garnishment of wages was started and payments are being received at the attorney's office and forwarded to the WCBC. There is a Judgement to be served on the other guarantor but she

has continued to evade being served by changing jobs frequently. The Attorney's office will continue to pursue the guarantor.

Pierce stated that there hasn't been a lot of new loan activity, however, there are three loan applications out and expected to be submitted soon.

Pierce then asked the Board to consider the interest rate for the microloan loan program. Currently the rate has been half of prime for a main street business and prime for others; which is reviewed on a case by case basis. The Board discussed reducing the rate to make it more attractive to borrowers and agreed to set the interest rate at 2% on a motion made by S. Gullo. The motion was seconded by J. Brick and unanimously approved.

Pierce informed the Board that a recent letter has come from The New York State Office for Community Renewal regarding Microloan and CDBG dollars acquired through previous grants. These funds have been used in our revolving loan program.

b. FastTrac New Venture Class Update

J. Pierce updated the Board on the 2018 activities: since the inception of the program there has been 136 students with 124 graduates, 67 businesses have started and created 112 jobs. We receive sponsorship from Complete Payroll and Bank of Castile. Recently a sponsorship from Five Star Bank has also been received. A scholarship program was offered for college students and Wyoming County High School students meeting established criteria. There are now 10 people attending the spring class. Pierce reviewed a confidential list of business concepts from the participants. First class started March 20th, the program runs for 10 weeks through May 29th on Tuesday evenings from 6-9 p.m.

Pierce and Tyczka added that there have been changes implemented by the Kauffman Foundation and the program went from classroom to online last Fall. With the anticipation of no longer being provided with manuals, the program facilitators, Mike and Jeff Fitch, worked together and developed a custom manual to use for the continuation of in person class room training. The Board agreed that both Mike and Jeff Fitch should get a one-time stipend for the extra work performed. J. Satchell made a motion to award the Fitches each \$500 as a stipend for preparing the manuals on their own time. The motion was seconded by S. Gullo and unanimously approved.

c. Business Attraction Activities

A. Pierce then introduced Scott Gardner; President of the Wyoming County Chamber, who has been brain storming with him on various marketing activities. Gardner added that they have sent direct mailings including letters and postcards to industry clusters to hopefully attract their interests to Wyoming County. They have worked off a mailing list provided by the BNE and are currently developing an email list to send more information out in that form. The mailings have been sent with a concentration on the Canadian Markets. There has been some success in developing some contacts. A direct mail post card and letter was sent to hotel owners in a 150 mile radius, this has resulted in 3 contacts from developers including one that is taking a serious look at building a hotel in Warsaw.

Gardner indicated that they will also push advertising through social media, use the post cards to develop an e-mail blast, construct a website, a linked in profile page for the WCBC to share stories and press releases to keep people up to date. Gardner said he will use Google search engine to optimize key words and study the analytics to find where the marketing efforts are reaching. S. Gullo asked if we could reach out to a company like

Creative Foods Ingredients with ties to Canada and leverage their contacts to reach Canadian businesses. Gardner said that is being done. D. Leuer asked if our efforts are geared toward organic/new businesses or relocation of existing and if we have ideas to help our farmers diversify. Pierce answered that we are targeting both. Gardner agreed and said we are working with BNE and GRE to do both find businesses looking to relocate as well as diversify and use our area resources.

The Board then discussed the troubled farm industry and options for ag land diversification.

B. Workforce Development Initiative

Gardner continued his update to the Board stating that he and Jim had worked to put together a workforce development roundtable discussion. The meeting brought together several agencies working with employment and work force issues both for youth and adult. It was the first time many of the agencies had ever been in the same room together and it was a valuable discussion on the needs and observations across the region. The next step is a survey which is being developed now to gather information from small and large businesses and identify their needs in regards to the issues with employment. The survey will help to pinpoint what businesses need help with from candidate readiness to in-house training needs. Broome County has done a similar project and developed a strategy to address major concerns and needs. Once we have a better idea on the majority needs we can focus on areas such as youth and careers, adult education, apprenticeships and internships, and the flexibility of funding.

Pierce added that the Governor has kept \$175,000,000 in the State budget to address workforce issues of all kinds across the state.

Leuer stated that the September meeting had prompted discussion about CDL training and subsidizing the training cost and he hopes the workforce group will focus on higher income job placements. Gardner agreed but added the problems he's heard of for the CDL trainees include the strict regulations; logging and time paperwork, which cause a lot of drivers to seek a career change and make it harder to attract new drivers.

R. Fish added that another issue for small business is the benefit package that larger companies or municipal jobs can offer. Once an employee is trained it is hard to keep them when a job with good better benefits becomes available.

7. Other Business

There being no other business the meeting was adjourned at 4:50 p.m. by unanimous consent.

8. Next Meeting – The next meeting - TBD