

**Minutes For The Duchesne County Economic Advisory Board Meeting
Held on Tuesday, August 11, 2020, beginning at 1:00 p.m.
in the Crossroads Senior Center in Roosevelt, Utah**

Present-

Board Members: Commissioner Irene Hansen, Jenny Adams, Tyson Stewart, Cody Ivie
Business Outreach Specialist Dorothy Carter
Board Members Excused: John Zilles, Lezlee Whiting, Louiz Rodreges

A Quorum was not present.

- **Opening Comments**

Commissioner Irene Hansen welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked everyone for their willingness to serve.

- **Pledge of Allegiance**

Those in attendance recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

- **Introduction of the Advisory Board**

Commissioner Hansen Introduces those in attendance.

- **Approval of the Agenda**

Commissioner Hansen made those in attendance aware that three members of the board were not present and a Quorum was not possible. Therefore there would be discussion and information presented only.

- **Discussion of Board Roles and Responsibilities**

Commissioner Hansen Presents the original 18 page outline of the Rural County Grant program. The introduction states that the State of Utah 17-54-101 established the Rural County Grant Program. Effective July 1, 2020, the Utah Governor's Office of Economic Development (GOED) through the Office of Rural Development (ORD) will administer the Rural County Grant Program. Oversight for the Grant Program will be by the Governor's Rural Partnership Board.

- **Discussion and Consideration to approve Resolution creating the Advisory Board**

Due to a printing error the Resolution was not available and will be presented at the next meeting

- **Discussion and Consideration of Explanation of County Policy: Board Expense Reimbursement**

Commissioner Irene Hansen states that board members will receive a meeting stipend of \$50.00 for each meeting. Additionally whenever travel is necessary as meetings are moved between Duchesne and Roosevelt mileage will also be paid to board members. Some electronic meetings might be held, due to Covid 19.

- **Discussion of Senate Bill 95 – Overview and Guidelines**

Commissioner Hansen provided history behind the passage of Senate 95 in the 2020 legislative session. She gave specific details regarding the loss and sunset of Utah's Rural Incentive Package and the reason why the original Rural County Grant Program while helpful would not replace the tax credits and direct incentive to businesses. However Commissioner Hansen stated that while we are disappointed by the changes it still provided an opportunity for the Duchesne County Economic Development Advisory Board to institute some helpful and important programs that can still directly benefit local county businesses. Commissioner Hansen will be doing the grant application before the deadline of September 1, 2020. Cody Ivie and Jenny Adams offered to assist if needed.

- **Discussion of Utah Governor's Office of Economic Development (GOED) Role**

Commissioner Hansen explained who G.O.E.D. is and that there are three employees specifically hired to serve the 25 Rural Utah Counties. James Dixon, Rebecca Dig and Nan Groves Anderson are the rural professionals that will assist the County and or Advisory Board if necessary. The GOED office also has a compliance office that will be guiding the process and doing the follow ups with each county to see if specific goals were met and what if any return on investment there was to the state of Utah.

- **Discussion of Utah legislative Special Session Budget Changes**

Commissioner Hansen provides information regarding the changes implemented through the special sessions because of the budget constraints due to the pandemic. In Conclusion the Board was briefed that the total possible per rural county was originally \$800,000.00 and was reduced to a maximum of under \$100,000.00

- **Discussion of Duchesne County Economic Development Plan Presented**

Commissioner Hansen Presents a copy of the Duchesne County Economic Development Plan Updated October 2019 "Utah's 25,000 Rural Job initiative" A Covid 19 Statement was added to the front page. Commissioner Hansen states that an update will be initiated in 2021 to capture the changes in economic strategy in a post election and post Covid Era.

- **Discussion of Cares Act and COVID Relieve Business Grant application**

Commissioner Hansen presents a copy of the 2020 Cares Act Business Grant which is unrelated to the Senate Bill 95 Grant Program but can certainly be a companion and opportunity for partnership.

- **Discussion of Senate Bill 95 Grant Application due September 1, 2020**

- **Discussion of Budget**

Commissioner Hansen States that the last number she received from James Dixon regarding the rural grant was approximately \$95,833.00. per rural county

- **Discussion of Best Practices**

Commissioner Hansen Presents some ideas for consideration that have been vetted by Rebecca Dig with the Utah Rural Office just to clarify and consistency with ideas they are seeing from other rural counties. Rebecca Dig indicated that she felt the concepts were viable.

- **Discussion and Consideration of Proposed Projects Recommendation**

The board members looked at each item in the order they were submitted. Individual budgets to go with each item were not assigned.

1. BEAR Program

A prior BEAR Application used for Grant Cycle 5/25/2018 was given to each board member for reference and it was explained that the BEAR Program was one of the Rural programs that ended with Senate Bill 95 July 1, 2020. A specific page highlighted by an orange tab gave a good overview of the BEAR Program and how valuable the service had been to businesses. Reaching directly out to businesses by personal visits builds great relationships and allows businesses to share best practices and explain issues and challenges they may be having. Collectively this information is valuable to stake-holders. All those present know Dorothy Carter the BEAR Outreach Specialist and gave personal stories of how her time and expertise had helped them with disseminating information to businesses.

2. Business Gift Certificate Program

This idea for the Senate Bill 95 Grant Program was inspired by the Duchesne County Restaurant Gift Certificate Program that has promoted locally owned dining, local eateries and cafes within Duchesne County. The Program has by all accounts been a huge success getting new customers to come to businesses they wouldn't otherwise utilize. This is a way for businesses to reintroduce themselves to the public in a mid or post co-vid 19 world. This program would expand the program to include many other small businesses that have been devastated as a result of Covid 19. Some businesses for consideration included theaters, salons, mechanic shops, gift stores, retail, professional services, tourism destinations, lessons and many many more. Nothing motivates customers like free or discounted services. Tyson Stewart mentioned that it would be very helpful if some help could be given to businesses to enhance their online presence and to find opportunities for delivery. People have indicated that their top priority is convenience and safety. Stewarts has found this service vital during the pandemic.

3. In a previous discussion John Zilles had mentioned that he saw a very great need for customer service training for frontline employees in Duchesne County Businesses. Over a dozen highly successful customer workshops have been held but usually the companies will not send the frontline employees because of the high turnover rate. The outcome means that high turnover and minimal training leaves customers with a less than satisfying experience in many businesses. A suggested program would include a way to invite and incentives the employees directly without burdening the businesses with paying for scheduling employees to come. The entry level workforce including those between jobs would be invited to a 6 -8 hour training and then given a certificate and an \$75.00-\$100.00 Visa Card for completing the course. This would be offered several times throughout a 6-8 month season

for convenience. Tyson Stewart recommended some vetting process for candidates and also a mandatory follow-up with students to make sure they were putting the process into practice. Duchesne County has several, non-profits, banks, credit unions, hospitals and successful businesses who have been through high Discussion of Next Steps Level training and so the instructors would likely not cost the county anything.

4. Duchesne County Economic Development has worked with small businesses over the past 5 years to provide training opportunities for marketing. They have also partnered with local advertising agencies to bring advanced tools for business marketing. Businesses are finding little success in being able to use old methods to tell their story. In a post Covid world reinventing your business and marketing will be essential to be successful. The final program would include working with local marketing agencies to give grants to businesses through an advertising agency that would enable them to develop a marketing plan and a short term advertising campaign. The Advertising company would have to do the work directly with businesses to help them be successful long term. This is not just selling advertising such as a one and done. The company would have to invest 25% to have skin in the game. Cody Ivie expressed how important he felt this would be for businesses who are experts in their field but do not have any understanding of bringing customers to their door.

While the board did not have a quorum they indicated their full support for the items as presented with those additions indicated. They all agreed that they would be happy to be involved with the implementation of these important ideas and programs for businesses.

Commissioner Hansen noted she would keep board members informed when the grant had been submitted and the contract signed and the monies received.

- **Discussion of Meeting Schedule**

Next Meeting would be scheduled after the grant has been approved. The meeting may be scheduled in Roosevelt or Duchesne during business hours depending on convenience for those attending. Others may be able to attend by call in.

- **Adjournment**

Meeting was adjourned at 2:50 p.m.

Commissioner Irene Hansen
Chairman