

**Two Rivers Regional Council of Public Officials  
Governing Board Meeting Minutes  
October 14, 2021**

**Present:**

Theresa Bockhold

Megan Howell

Dave Bellis

Kevin Endebrock

David Hoskins

Mark Yingling

Steve DeMoss

Mark Sprague

Bill Stadler

Derek Ross

Natalie Roseberry

Derek Ross called the meeting to order. He asked for a motion to approve the minutes to the July 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2021, meeting. 1<sup>st</sup> by Natalie Roseberry; 2<sup>nd</sup> by Theresa Bockhold. Roll call vote; all ayes

**Executive Director Report:** Jeremy Oshner gave the report:

- Strategic plan update: started the new letter in July; asked everyone to subscribe
- Hired a marketing position, Mark Schneider to conduct outreach for the agency and bring awareness to the agency and programs
- Conducted onboarding with 2 new board members
- The quarterly staff meeting was held on September 23<sup>rd</sup> via zoom. Jon Vrandenburg gave a presentation on Weatherization. The Agency Community Needs Assessment and newsletter were discussed
- Working with the Leadership team to get an annual report completed
- We hired nine new staff. Rachel Rabe's, Fiscal Director's last day of employment was August 31<sup>st</sup>; Mike Muehl started as Fiscal Director on September 27<sup>th</sup>
- The Pike County Building is not moving along as we would like. We are working with the City of Pittsfield and the Engineer to get the façade fixed.

- Technical Assistance Plan with DCEO is moving forward. We are sending out the Community Needs Assessment so we can complete the Community Action Plan
- September 13<sup>th</sup> the Community Services Department and Weatherization departments moved to 706 Maine. A Ribbon cutting ceremony will be held on October 20 at 10:00
- Agency Audit will be done October 12-15

Derek Ross asked for a motion to accept the Ex-Director report. 1<sup>st</sup> Dave Bellis; 2<sup>nd</sup> Dave Hoskins. Role call vote; all ayes

Mark Yingling asked about the Revenue/Expense report being over and asked if we would make up the difference by the end of the year. Jeremy stated drawing on LIHEAP and other grants should help with it.

### **Fiscal Department**

Mike Muehl gave the report. Mike stated he is currently going through procedures. The auditors are starting so working with them.

**Community Development Report:** Chad Frederick gave the report. The Land Bank is now fully operational and have a couple properties we are working with. The land bank has a full board; Adams County, City of Quincy, Morgan County and City of Jacksonville comprise that board.

The Strong Communities grant that was received and used for the Land Bank we can start using those funds and we have everything in place for TRRC to be the administer for the land bank.

Working with a Jacksonville group to get funding for the Performing Arts to open in Jacksonville.

Chad has been working with the Navigator program with DCEO, the Institute of Rural Affairs is the hub, they oversee the region. COVID funds were released for the Back to Business grants that are focused on female owned businesses, minority owned and specialty businesses such as hair salons and hotel. They should receive word soon that they are getting funding.

The Illinois rental grant will be a 2-year program; deadline is Monday

All Emergency Business loans are paid up from COVID and will be paid up by next month.

Dave Bellis asked if Adams County has any properties in the Land Bank. A property has been gifted and another is from a death. They are both in the City of Quincy. Jacksonville has a list of properties that they are working on.

Mark Yingling asked if any rural projects are in the program. Currently in Adams they are in the city. Jacksonville is looking at a rural property. Mark asked what it takes to join the group; Chad stated that once the program starts, if another entity shows interest the board will vote to allow them in. The board meets monthly.

The land bank association held a meeting to bring all the land banks together

### **Community Services Department**

Becky Pruden gave the report:

- The LIHEAP program began September 1<sup>st</sup> and we have seen a high number of disconnects.
- We have hired seasonal staff until May.
- We have more funding for furnace repair/replacement. Homeowners are the only ones allowed in this program
- A big change in the LIHEAP program this year is that Adams, Brown and Schuyler have been moved to the Northern region of the State which

means the benefit levels are higher. Pike was left in the Southern region. We are seeing clients in the office this year which will decrease the number of denials.

- We will be taking applications at the Findley apartments in Pittsfield; we will see many Pike County residents
- PIPP program recertifications are going on currently. The PIPP program will most likely see a decrease in participation since the benefit matrix in LIHEAP was increased.
- We are still taking applications for Weatherization and will keep that as ongoing procedure to ensure Jon has the number of applications to complete his funding year.
- Food pantries are still going strong with DOT food continuing to donate to us weekly
- The Christmas basket program will start December 6<sup>th</sup> with pick up December 11<sup>th</sup>.
- The REACHOUT is open . There will be a meeting held by the City of Pittsfield on parking around the square and down by our building on the 26<sup>th</sup>. Rachel Baker and I plan to attend. Ladies' night will be held November 4<sup>th</sup> and we will have the REACHOUT open.
- The school supply project went well in Brown, Pike and Schuyler
- The Next Step Housing committee meets monthly in Schuyler, Linda Clark and I are working on the By Laws so we can establish a 501 c3 status
- The Central Illinois Food Bank have changed the process we use at the food pantry. We will be able to use the new system to get better demographics on the families which will help in writing grants.
- We were involved in the shut down of the Welcome Inn hotel. We set up at the makeshift shelter for the week helping to relocate the residents.
- The shelter grant we administer with DHS is for the homeless population; we sheltered them at the Welcome Inn and Eagles Nest both are shut down
- We are going to start administering the rental grant

**Weatherization:** Jon Vrandenburg gave the report.

- Jon expressed how nice it is to be located at the 706 Maine office.
- We have 32 applications approved so far. Assessments are being done
- We are in all stages of the program, and it is working great
- We have a monitoring review with our State Specialist next week.
- We are getting the certifications we need. Jon received his energy auditor certificate and will be taking the Quality Control Inspector test in the fall.
- Brett Bishop has been hired as an assessor/inspector and will be attending classes every other week. It is a 10-week certification.

**Workforce Development:** Jeremy gave the report

- The report is in the packet
- There is a JTED grant that will run 2 years. We have had it in the past.
- Derek Ross asked if they help local employers with the work opportunity tax credit. Jeremy stated that we do not.

**Marketing:** Mark Schneider gave the report

- Signage was added to the 706 Maine office
- Ribbon cutting to be held
- An afterhours event with the Chamber of Commerce will be held on March 10<sup>th</sup> from 4:30-6:00
- We have a You Tube channel for the agency. 4 videos are on it with the Workforce staff highlighted
- We are working on a new website. We have submitted a 5,000.00 grant to the Tracy Foundation. The price is \$6,900.00; the current website was developed in 2014 and is not user friendly.
- We have been on the news twice recently with Becky on talking about energy assistance and Mark talking about the lunch and learn workshop at the QBTC
- Social media interest has increased. We are on Instagram. We are looking at Tic Tok to reach the younger people.

- Mark is attending workshops
- Dave Hoskins asked if there are other Foundations outside of the Tracy Foundation that we are seeking funding from. There are several other grants that are being looked into.

Derek Ross asked for a motion to accept the department reports. 1<sup>st</sup> by Natalie Roseberry; 2<sup>nd</sup> by Dave Bellis. Roll call vote taken; all ayes

### **Old Business**

- **Fiscal Procedures Update - tabled**

### **Personnel Committee Report – Bill Stadler gave the report**

A meeting was held Tuesday the 12<sup>th</sup>

- **Juneteenth Holiday** - Discussion was held the holiday of Juneteenth would replace Lincoln's birthday
- **Personnel Standards**- The inclement weather policy will be looked it after this winter. The bereavement pay was made clear; updated how time is accrued. The leave time will be based on hours worked. Dave Bellis would like to have a meeting after the first of the year to go over the document each year

Derek Ross asked for a motion to accept the report. 1<sup>st</sup> by Steve DeMoss; 2<sup>nd</sup> by Dave Bellis, Role Call vote taken; all ayes

### **New Business**

- **Foundation Appointment –**
- **Personnel Committee Appointment –**

Derek Ross asked for volunteers; Steve DeMoss made a motion to appoint David Hoskins. 2<sup>nd</sup> by Dave Bellis

### **Public Comment and Announcement Section – Open**

- **No comments**

**Adjournment – Derek asked for a motion to adjourn 1<sup>st</sup> by Dave Bellis 2<sup>nd</sup> by Steve DeMoss. Meeting adjourned at 7:14 p.m.**

**Becky Pruden respectfully submitted the minutes**