

SUMMARY OF I-69 THUMB REGION - REGIONAL PROSPERITY STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING

The I-69 Thumb Region Regional Prosperity Steering Committee met at 10:30 a.m. on Wednesday, November 8, 2017 at the Lapeer County Health Department.

Present: Anna Pinter, Brent Jones, Brian Chapman, Carl Osentoski, Corey Schmidt, Dan Casey, Derek Bradshaw, Dylan Hellus, Eric Andreychuk, John Horvath, Linda Burchell, Mary Ann Ketels, Paula Nas, Rachel Verschaeve, Thomas Crampton, and Tom Young.

Others Present: Dana Walker, David Merot, and Debby Compton.

Derek Bradshaw advised that both the Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson were unable to attend the meeting. We are looking for a volunteer to chair this meeting.

Dan Casey, St. Clair County volunteered.

Motion: Action: Approve, **Moved by** Brent Jones, **Supported by** Tom Crampton, to approve Dan Casey as Acting Chairperson for this meeting.

Motion passed unanimously.

Acting Chairperson Casey called the meeting to order at 10:33 a.m.

I. Introductions

Everyone introduced themselves.

II. First Impressions Tourism Program Update

Anna Pinter stated that Corey Schmidt from the City of Marlette and Dana Walker from Imlay City were invited to talk about their experience with the First Impressions Tourism Program (FIT). Ms. Pinter was part of the evaluation team, however, she was not a visitor to either Marlette or Imlay City. As a visitor she was more interested in the small downtown than the commercial area.

a. Corey Schmidt, City of Marlette

Mr. Schmidt advised the committee that the community got a lot of energy from attending the assessment meeting. A group of people suggested decorating the downtown for fall. The city provided the volunteers with \$100 to decorate around downtown. Once the community saw this it brought on emails and calls expressing a lot of ideas of other things that the city could do. Mr. Schmidt stated that if the group is looking for a recommendation, he highly recommends this program. The City of Marlette got a lot out of it. Mr. Schmidt said that even communities that do not fit into the tourism basket, he still recommends this program. The community got a lot of ideas out of it that were very helpful. Discussion ensued.

b. Dana Walker, Imlay City

Ms. Walker stated that the program was very worthwhile. The first thing they did was an online assessment. They concentrated more on the downtown and she expected it was going to be more of the M-53 corridor. Ms. Walker said she expected more hard truths as well. Maybe in the future the word "Tourism" could be changed because the program is great for all communities and every community could benefit from this program. The results mentioned the community needed more signage. It is a great program and she highly recommends it. Ms. Walker also stated that it meant a lot more coming from four regular people. Discussion ensued.

III. 2018 Regional Prosperity Initiative Funding

a. Budget

Derek Bradshaw reviewed the proposed 2018 Regional Prosperity Initiative Funding Budget with the committee.

Motion: Action: Approve, **Moved by** Carl Osentoski, **Supported by** Brian Chapman, to approve the 2018 Regional Prosperity Initiative Funding Budget as presented.

Motion passed unanimously.

b. Application

Anna Pinter advised that the application will be similar to last years and will be sent out soon to the committee for review and comments. The application is due December 1, 2017.

c. Letters of Support

Anna Pinter stated that staff has been receiving Letters of Support and she thanked everyone that has submitted one and will be submitting one. Staff will continue to accept letters until Wednesday, November 29th.

IV. Governor's Office RPI Meeting – Update

Derek Bradshaw stated that a small group went to Lansing for the Governor's Office RPI meeting. The group joined other RPI groups from around the state. The participants were broken up into small groups and asked three questions. One of the speakers stated that if you think this is a good program talk to your Legislators about it. Discussion ensued.

V. MI Start Smart Update – UM-Flint – EDA Center

Paula Nas stated that there will be a MI Start Smart portal where you will be able to go and get regional mapping as well as a data dashboard that is being created. There is a MI Start Smart website for small business owners and entrepreneurs to access support services for the whole region.

Paula Nas advised that there will be a grand opening this week for a second location of the EDA center in the Ferris Wheel in Flint. She encouraged everyone to come out and see the new location. There is a conference room

with space available to hold meetings, if anyone wants to have a meeting they can help organize it.

David Merot stated that there are three (3) buckets in the MI Start Smart right now.

Acting Chairperson Casey asked if anyone had anything further to add. No one spoke.

VI. Next Meeting

a. Wednesday, December 13, 2017

Acting Chairperson Casey stated that the next meeting will be held on Wednesday, December 13th at 10:30 a.m. at the Lapeer County Health Department.

Acting Chairperson Casey adjourned the meeting at 11:21 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Debby Compton, Secretary
GLS Region V