

# Green County Development Corporation Board Notes

August 15, 2019

Blackhawk Technical College, Monroe, WI

1. **Attendance:** Nikki Matley (Thrivent Financial), Matt Urban (Blackhawk Technical College), John McNeil (Big Radio), Craig Fuchs (Orchid International), Richard Thoman (Monroe City Council/County Board/AmericInn), Joe Hunter (Colony Brands), April Fuhr (Village of Monticello), Doug Sutter (Keller), John Bernstein (City of Brodhead), Dr. Tracy Pierner (Blackhawk Technical College), Jesse Duff (Fehr Graham), Beth Luchsinger (Green County Board), Cara Carper (Green County Development Corporation), Rick Waski (Monroe School Superintendent), Mark Borowicz (Blackhawk Technical College), Senator Howard Marklein, Senator Janis Ringhand.
2. **Call to Order:** President Nikki Matley called the meeting to order at 7:36 am.
3. **Welcome of Guests:** Each guest briefly introduced themselves: Rick Waski, Mark Borowicz, Senator Howard Marklein, Senator Janis Ringhand.
4. **Approval of Agenda, Minutes and Financials:** Motion by John McNeil; second by Jesse Duff. Motion carried.
5. **Events Update/Staff Update:** Cara provided a written report and a brief update.
  - a. Talent Pipeline Management (TPM) Update: We have login ability for our manufacturers, but due to staffing changes, the first training session has been postponed. We hope to have training for our manufacturing group in Sept/Oct.
  - b. Revolving Loan Fund Update: Despite radio ads, newspaper articles and personal letters sent last month, we have not yet received any donations. Cara is following up with emails and calls and is hopeful things will start moving.
  - c. Executive Leadership Breakfast: We have a speaker - HR Expert and author Kathy Ryan - and are working on a date in October. Location is likely the new Ag Center at BTC.
  - d. World Dairy Expo: GCDC will be staffing our World Dairy Expo booth October 2-5. We will be sending out a request for those who would like to volunteer to join us at the booth.
6. **Community Roundtable/Partner Reports/Board member Business for the Good of the Order:**

Dr. Tracy Pierner (BTC) – The fall semester starts next week. This year is the first time in three years with an enrollment decline.

  - The revamped Student Success Center should be complete soon.
  - BTC purchased 38 acres adjacent to the Janesville campus for a Transportation Safety Complex.
  - Thirty six Rock County rising high school seniors just completed internships at 24 companies.
  - BTC will be starting a “Middle College” which is a high school within the college. Fifty freshman will be starting this year. They will graduate in 4 years with an Associate Degree along with their high school diploma.

- New programs at BTC this year include: Surgical Tech, Substance Abuse Counseling, Digital Marketing, Leadership
- The Nancy B. Parker nursing scholar program is raising funds to provide scholarships to all nursing students.

**Richard Thoman (County Board, Monroe City Council, AmericInn)** – Budget season will begin soon. There are new staff and new Alders at the City of Monroe. Troy Maggied with Southwest Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (SWWRPC) did a great presentation on the Housing Study at County Board. Richard has asked him to speak to Monroe City Council as well. The County is re-issuing bonds with funding for a county-wide radio system, roof for the courthouse and Pleasant View projects.

**Rick Waski (Monroe School District)** – They are just wrapping up summer school and getting ready for the new school year. This year they are starting Spanish language for all students (K-12). Monroe is only the third school district in Wisconsin to offer Spanish at all grade levels. Colony Brands provided the \$500,000 to pay for the program over 5 years. In the future they will need 2 more teachers. There are 15 new staff members at Monroe Schools this year. The district is planning for a significant facilities projects – reconfiguring buildings, going from 5 buildings to 4, 70% new/30% remodeled. They are looking for community feedback and community support on the plans.

**April Fuhr (Village of Monticello, Bug Tussel)** – Monticello has a new clerk – Ann Goers. A new walkability study committee is starting to meet. Bug Tussel has 8 new Green County towers and 6 in Lafayette County. There was a great deal of interest regarding broadband at a meeting in Orfordville. More than 60 people attended.

**Joe Hunter (Colony Brands)** – On January 1, 2020, Colony will have a new president – Bob Erb. John Baumann is retiring after 23 years as president/CEO, but is keeping community relations activities and will be part of the Executive Board. Colony hosted 72 interns this year, including 2 students from outside the U.S. Colony’s Day of Giving Back to the Community is coming soon.

**John McNeil (Big Radio)** – Two current Spotlights on Green County included: building the Revolving Loan Fund, and hiring people with disabilities (by Kobussen & Aptiv). Football starts next week with 9 games next weekend. Big Radio’s purchase of Bliss Communication’s stations WCLO and WJBL is now complete. Twenty years ago Big Radio had 2 stations, now they have 16! If you have ideas for upcoming Spotlights on Green County, let John know.

**John Bernstein (City of Brodhead)** – Two empty buildings in Brodhead have now been purchased. The Antique Mall will now be a carpet and flooring showroom. The former Bank of Brodhead/Huntington Bank building has been purchased by local investors and will be available for office space. The Kelch Museum Flying Hamburger event is next Wednesday, August 21 from 5-7 pm at the Brodhead Airport. Free will donation.

**Doug Sutter (Keller)** – Keller has just completed Badger State Cold Storage. The Monroe Chamber will be hosting a Business After 5 at Badger State Cold Storage on Friday, August 23 from 5-7 pm.

**Senator Janis Ringhand** – The Senate is currently on break and not in session. The budget did pass on time this year. Education and transportation received more money in the budget. Janis mentioned she is on the following committees: Ag/Revenue/Financial Institutions, State Building Commission, Economic Development, Labor and Regulatory Reform, Governor’s Council on Workforce Development, Financial Literacy. They will be back in session in October.

**Beth Luchsinger (County Board)** – Beth agreed the SWWRPC presentation on housing was very interesting. The county is so short of housing – especially workforce housing. Seniors who could move out their houses if there was a nice place to go. New Glarus is planning their 175<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebration for 2020. She is excited about the new Human Services Director. The Health Department is getting great things done and involving lots of people in its Green County Healthy Community Coalition.

**Craig Fuchs (Orchid International)** – One of Orchid’s top 10 customers did a Quality Audit at Orchid. Orchid received the highest score ever given to a supplier. The next Chamber meeting is Sept. 10.

**Jesse Duff (Fehr Graham)** – Monroe’s Highway 11 traffic is switching. The new side is very nice. They will be changing ramps for the next couple of months and should complete work by November 24. They are working with CG Schmidt on Parkside Group HVAC. They are also working on lift stations for Browntown. Fehr Graham has a wastewater treatment plant electrician on staff, which is very beneficial for clients. They are working with Keller on a senior housing project in Brodhead.

**Senator Howard Marklein** – Having the budget done on time was especially good for school districts. The surplus at the end of June was used for roads. DOT is developing a grant program. Funding for broadband was increased in the budget to include \$24 million over the next 2 years. Legislation coming up includes: Tobacco 21 – raises age to purchase tobacco and vaping products from 18 to 21; Fixing referendum issues – allows the use of estimates of new construction data to determine referendum questions.

**Matt Urban (BTC)** – The World Dairy Expo booth is a partnership between GCDC and BTC. BTC welcomes thousands of high school FFA students on the first day of Expo and then the booth is dual-use the rest of the Expo. Manufacturing Day is October 4 and includes bringing all high schools in the BTC district to see the Advanced Manufacturing Center in Milton, as well as visit manufacturers (including Kuhn North America, Orchid International and Monroe Truck). Manufacturers in Green County have banded together to provide training to 175 employees through a Workforce Advancement Training grant through BTC. BTC has started a curriculum for a Welding Academy for a local business that will start August 26 at the Milton facility for 11 weeks. Next Wednesday all programs on campus will be starting up.

**Mark Borowicz (BTC)** – Mark is the new Director of Workforce and Community Development at BTC. He looks forward to engaging locally with the business community. Corporate training includes leveraging WAT grants to bring businesses together for training. They are hiring new driving instructors for the Truck Driving Program and expanding it to a

diploma program and offering Class B training. They are seeing a continued need to provide Safety training (motorcycle, traffic, industrial). The Continuing Education postcard will be coming out soon, so watch for it. If any businesses need certifications, let BTC know.

**Nikki Matley (Thrivent Financial)** – Generosity Day is coming up Saturday, September 14 from 9 am-1 pm on the Square in Monroe. Punchcards will be provided to keep track of the number of activities each person does. If a person does 20 of 50 activities, they receive a voucher to eat at the farmers market/restaurants or a sno cone/candy bag. Anyone can participate and make a difference at Generosity Day! Monroe Kiwanis has a couple of booths at Fall Nationals on September 21 at the fairgrounds. They are looking for volunteers who can help make and sell sandwiches. Let Nikki know if you can help.

7. **Next Meeting:** The next Board meeting will be Thursday, September 19 at the Green County Courthouse.
8. **Adjourn:** Motion to adjourn by Dr. Pierner, second by Richard Thoman. Motion carried at 9 am. The board was then treated to a tour of the NEW Ag Center by Matt Urban.