

**Green County Development Corporation Board Notes**  
**Thursday, July 16, 2020**  
**Via Zoom Call**

1. **Attendance:** Nikki Matley (Thrivent Financial), Matt Urban (Blackhawk Technical College - BTC), John McNeil (Big Radio), Richard Thoman (Monroe City Council/County Board/AmericInn), Mike Sanders (1100 Partners), Beth Luchsinger (County Board), Brian Wilson (Village of Belleville), Becky Olson (Village of Belleville), Doug Sutter (Keller), Dr. Tracy Pierner (BTC), Drake Daily (Village of New Glarus), Ron Schaaf (Sugar River/Bank of New Glarus), April Fuhr (Village of Monticello/BugTussel), Luke Buholzer (Klondike Cheese), Mike Williams (Colony Brands), Tom Johnson (Monroe Truck Equipment), Joan Rufenacht (County Board), Rick Waski (Monroe School District), Cara Carper (Green County Development Corporation).
2. **Call to Order:** President Nikki Matley called the meeting to order at 7:34 am.
3. **Introduction of all on the call:** Each person on the call introduced themselves. We welcomed new representatives to the call, Mike Williams of Colony Brand and Tom Johnson of Monroe Truck Equipment, as well as Belleville's newly hired economic development specialist Becky Olson. Welcome!
4. **Approval of Agenda, Minutes (June 18, 2020) and Financials:** Motion by Ron Schaaf; second by Brian Wilson. Motion carried.
5. **Events Update/Staff Update:** Cara provided a written report and a brief update.
  - a. Driftless Homes Project Update – We continue working with Green County communities to do presentations about the opportunity and answer questions.
  - b. Revolving Loan Update – Our first Growth Opportunity Fund loan was approved! Additional applications are in the works. Southwest Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission has new funding for their revolving loan fund, so businesses can potentially receive BOTH!
  - c. COVID Response – Cara provided an update on “We’re All In” grants.
  - d. Drive Though Job Fair – More than 100 vehicles drove through the BTC parking lot to receive a bag with available positions at 17 Green County businesses yesterday.
  - e. Leadership Breakfast Idea – Cara asked board members to suggest topics and speakers for the GCDC virtual Leadership Breakfast to be held this fall.
6. **Community Roundtable/Partner Reports/Board member Business for the Good of the Order:**

*Brian Wilson (Village of Belleville)* – Brian introduced Belleville's new economic development and marketing specialist Becky Olson. This is a full-time position and Becky started this week. Management intern Kyle Knott will be on staff until the end of the month. The Village Board has made some recent changes. They continued the state of emergency due to the COVID crisis and expedited the use of outdoor seating by businesses. (Belleville is partially in Dane County, so is following Dane County

regulations as well.) They are looking at alcohol sales for outdoor seating areas. Kwik Trip has completed their permits and closed on the property at Highway 69/County PB and will begin construction next year. The old elementary school was sold to a daycare from Verona and is being remodeled. The Village is working on a Planned Unit Development in Bakers Wood for 27 senior housing single homes. The new economic development website: DevelopBelleville.com will be live on Monday. The new village website VillageofBelleville.com will also be available.

*Ron Schaaf (Sugar River/Bank of New Glarus)* – The bank will have a new commercial lender starting next week. The residential business has grown so much (they met their goals for 2020 in June), they have hired a new lender. All branches are following a COVID response to keep employees and customers safe.

*Luke Buholzer (Klondike Cheese)* – Klondike recently completed an equipment upgrade on the feta line. They have hired a new food sales manager. Dairy prices are on a rollercoaster ride (record lows and record highs). A new product (yogurt-based cucumber dill dip) is selling at 40% above projections, and they are running out of packaging materials. All employees on the floor wear masks. The new sales office allows everyone to spread out. They haven't had any major personnel issues due to COVID.

*Doug Sutter (Keller)* – Keller carried a backlog into 2020 and were expecting a lag due to COVID, but with some aggressive pricing for customers, they have landed a number of projects, including a 340,000 square food fulfillment center up north. They are now less worried about the gap. Doug is pinning down some new opportunities in Monroe and Janesville. Keller has a lot of depth on their crews and are keeping up, despite changes due to COVID.

*Richard Thoman (County/City of Monroe/AmericInn)* – The County Sheriff's radio project is coming along. Considerations are being made for ATVs on county roads to connect to Brodhead. The City of Monroe is still looking for a new City Administrator. Twelve candidates are under consideration. The Monroe Fire Department is working to resolve issues with rural departments. Richard is hopeful the Finance Committee will be able to move the Driftless Homes project forward. The Highway 59 exit should be completed by Friday. AmericInn business has picked up a little, which is encouraging.

*Tom Johnson (Monroe Truck Equipment)* – Tom is the Chief Financial Officer. He considers his role to take a good company and build it to last. He has a lot of economic development experience, including with Greater Mankato Economic Development in the past. He has focused on healthcare and led leadership visits between communities to share good ideas. Monroe Truck Equipment is doing well. Their backlog is strong and bookings are picking up. COVID has not been an issue and employees are naturally separated, due to the nature of their work.

*Rick Waski (Monroe School District)* – Reopening schools is challenging. The School Board's plan is 80% complete. It is a three-tiered plan, based on county health results. Tier 1 - 100% occupancy with precautions and distancing when/where possible. This plan is a 4.5-day plan with early release on Friday. Tier 2 - 50% occupancy and students attend every other week in groups based on last names A-K, L-Z. This will likely be a 4-

day week with all virtual learning on Friday. Tier 3 - all instruction will be virtual. Plan H - opt in plan for parents wanting virtual instruction all next year no matter what. (This plan is pending board approval on July 27<sup>th</sup>.) Masks are mandatory. Most people don't like something about the plan. The school district is hosting a re-opening listening session next Thursday. Rick asks that everyone participate to make the situation as manageable as possible. The school district is hosting a daycare listening session today. The school district has added new medical personnel. They increased the number of health assistants by one so one in each building and then the school nurse can float between buildings for contact tracing.

We are hosting a virtual listening session for Monroe businesses on our draft reopening plan. The meeting will be held at 2 pm on Thursday, July 23rd. Here is the Zoom address and password for the meeting:

Topic: MONROE BUSINESS INFORMATION AND LISTENING SESSION ON REOPENING Time: Jul 23, 2020 02:00 PM Central Time (US and Canada) Join Zoom Meeting  
<https://zoom.us/j/98625931715?pwd=UitPTVNWbi9nWXR6b0tOMjFFOHBFdz09> Meeting ID: 986 2593 1715 Password: YQ442pgrgK

I am asking that you consider attending and invite the businesses and organizations you serve. The more we communicate, the better off we are.

*Matt Urban (BTC)* – The Monroe Campus had suspended a few trainings in April, but they are working with the Manufacturing Consortium to get the training started back up (under the existing Workforce Advancement Training (WAT) grant). All of those trainings will be complete by November. A new WAT grant was submitted with the Green County Consortium (double the amount of last year at \$112,000). If approved, those trainings will start in August. Monroe Truck Equipment started sending employees on the BTC bus to the Milton Advanced Manufacturing facility for training in July. Today is the last day of CNA classes. Phlebotomy classes are still running. BTC campus' Stage 5 COVID response has been extended through the fall semester. It requires mandatory masks, limited class sizes and no outside events in the building.

*Mike Sanders (1100 Partners/Emergency Operations Center (EOC) Public Information Officer)* – The EOC continues to meet weekly. People of the county have done pretty well to limit the spread of COVID, but results are trending up. The messaging has been around Green County Mask Up, and they are working hard to ensure PPE is available for all who need it.

*Dr. Tracy Pierner (BTC)* – BTC has been open for business since the beginning of June. They have reconfigured public spaces for social distancing and invested a significant amount in technology. Almost 100% of classrooms will be fully MyEdChoice, meaning students can decide whether they want to attend class in person, live via Zoom or watch a recorded version at a later time. BTC has invested in laptops and hotspots for students. Students can check them out of the library for a year. The food pantry is open and well used. BTC has had some positive cases of COVID, but there has been no spread. August 1 will be virtual graduation. BTC is concerned about enrollment and the budget. They are preparing for a 25% decline in enrollment and a 25% cut in state funding. The

Transportation and Public Safety Project is up for discussion regarding whether BTC will pursue a referendum on the November ballot. The BTC Board passed the intent resolution to pursue Public Safety & Transportation project and scheduled a public hearing on July 29 at 5pm on Central campus and through zoom. In August, the Board will decide to pursue referendum based on feedback from public hearing. If the referendum passes, the impact on taxpayers will be \$3 per \$100,000 evaluation in year one. That amount decreases each year, for a total cost of \$12 per \$100,000 evaluation. If bonding rates continue to decrease, there could be no impact on the mill rate.

*Beth Luchsinger (County Board)* – The County Health Committee is monitoring the COVID situation. Be sure to follow the County Dash Board at: <http://greencountywi.maps.arcgis.com/apps/opsdashboard/index.html#/0f3c6356dc0140d9a97d035255ec7556>. Health Director RoAnn Warden is doing a phenomenal job in leading the county. Home of Our Own in New Glarus is moving forward. They plan to start taking application in August. Bill Oemichen will be the property manager.

*John McNeil (Big Radio)* – Spotlight on Green County focused on the Drive Thru Job Fair. Big Radio also worked with Gail Graham at Workforce Development to run commercials about the Job Fair. The Lafayette County Fair is going on this week. The livestock auction will be broadcast LIVE on Saturday. Big Radio supported the 4<sup>th</sup> of July Fireworks in Monroe by broadcasting patriotic music. The next Spotlight on Green County could be about the revolving loan fund. John has a new grandson, Maxwell Vincent. He was born 3 weeks ago.

*Becky Olson (Village of Belleville)* – Becky looks forward to working with all of us.

*Mike Williams (Colony Brands)* – All Colony facilities are up and running at 75-85%. They have had many transformations due to COVID including: temperature checks, 100% masks mandatory, 100% social distancing, split shifts, virtual meetings, and the most stringent quarantine policy. Their number one goal is to keep employees safe. Ninety five percent of the administrative team is working from home until after Labor Day.

*Drake Daily (Village of New Glarus)* – The Village has made its first claim under the Recovery Act for \$100,000 for COVID. Marine Credit Union has closed and the building will be available soon. The decision to hold Octoberfest and Beer, Bacon & Cheesefest will be made at the end of the month.

*April Fuhr (Village of Monticello/BugTussel)* – BugTussel has a new program for schools. Connect with April if you have questions. BugTussel is looking at the new grant cycle for broadband. The BugTussel University class, “Understanding AI” went well. More classes, including “AI and Talent Management” and “Digital Visioning,” are planned. The Village of Monticello has approved ATV and UTV use in the Village limits and Sugar River Trail. Fifty-two people attended the meeting. The Green Cares Food Pantry needs a grant of \$1,000 to give every family a bottle of Badger State Ethanol hand sanitizer and a gallon of bleach. Oliver (April’s new puppy) is growing and chewing everything.

*Joan Rufenacht (County Board)* – Joan is on the Pleasant View Nursing Home committee. Pleasant View has done COVID testing multiple times. No resident has tested positive. The census is down. People are depressed because they are not seeing their families.

*Nikki Matley (Thrivent Financial)* – On Tuesday, July 21 at 8 pm, Thrivent will be hosting author Jon Acuff (<https://acuff.me/>) as a speaker. Acuff's topic is "Pivot, Don't Panic." Nikki encourages everyone to join this virtual presentation, along with your employees. It is a free opportunity. (Cara's note: we would have loved to have Jon Acuff as a speaker for the GCDC Breakfast, but he is MUCH too expensive. Enjoy him on Thrivent's dime.)

7. **Next Meeting:** The next GCDC Board meeting will be Thursday, August 20.
8. **Adjourn:** Motion to adjourn by Matt Urban, second by Doug Sutter. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 8:51 am.