



# Marion County Development

MISSION: *The mission of the Marion County Development Commission (MCDC), a department of county government, is to enhance the quality of life and standard of living in Marion County by promoting and developing Marion County as a quality destination to live, work and visit.*

## MINUTES

Marion County Development Commission Regular Meeting-Wed., April 14, 2021, Central College Annex Board Room, Pella

MCDC Present:

David Vollmar, Susan Canfield, Barb Kniff McCulla, Butch Hayes and Mindi Sudman

Ex-Officio Present:

Carla Eysink

Others Present:

none

### WELCOME & INTRODUCTIONS.

The regular meeting of the Marion County Development Commission was called to order by Chair, David Vollmar, at 7:15 a.m., Wednesday, April 14, 2021 at Central College's Annex Boardroom.

### ACTION ITEMS:

1. A motion was made (McCulla/Canfield) to approve the February minutes. Motion carried.
2. A motion was made (Canfield/Sudman) to approve February and March financials. Motion carried.
3. Commissioners discussed the annual workplan. Commissioners also discussed the MCDC budget status for the current fiscal year.
4. A motion was made (Hayes/McCulla) to approve the \$900 annual fee for the business retention & expansion license through Blaine/Canada called Synchronist which is used in the BEST OF IOWA BRE program. Motion carried.
5. Commissioners were provided a handout to help promote the Central Iowa Regional Broadband Survey.
6. Commissioners discussed the presentation of the annual business information in a CONDITION OF BUSINESS program with federal and state elected officials as suggested at the Quarterly Local Government Economic Development Connect Meeting.
7. Commissioners discussed representation to the EDD CEDDS planning group to guide the strategic planning process. Eysink had contacted the cities of Pella, Knoxville, and Pleasantville to provide a representative. Eysink would also serve and the remaining spot should be from a business. Consensus was to ask Marion County Bank since they have locations in Knoxville and Pella. The formal board will be established once the EDD is established. This group is to help over the next 4 months with the strategic plan. There will be opportunities for others to provide input through stakeholder meetings.
8. Commissioner discussed the 2022 Travel Guide. The goal is to update the bid document and have bids ready for the June MCDC meeting to review. Commissioners suggested to add 4 pages to allow for more advertisers and content.
9. Commissioners discussed the Placemaking initiative. It was felt that since both Pella, Knoxville and Pleasantville have either completed or are in the process of completing a Placemaking type initiative that MCDC should focus our efforts on the lake area. Commissioner discussed the challenges and opportunities. Eysink was instructed to develop a bid document for the project.
10. Eysink presented bids from Neapolitan Lab to bring the economic development and tourism websites into sections of the new marioncountyiowa.gov site. The cost for the economic section would be \$9,000 and the tourism section would be \$15,000. There is a possibility that IT could help with part of the cost and the remainder could come out of the special projects line item. This would allow both sections to be completed prior to the end of 2021. Eysink shared some ideas for improving both sections. A motion was made (Canfield/Sudman) to move forward with the project. Motion carried.
11. Eysink indicated that the cordless keyboard and mouse have failed, and new ones are needed as well as a headset for zoom meetings to reduce noise. A motion was made (McCulla/Canfield) to approve these purchases. Motion carried.
12. Commissioners review categories for the 2021 BEST OF RED ROCK contest. Eysink was instructed to take feedback to develop the 2021 ballot categories. The contest will start May 1 and run until November 1.

### EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS REPORT:

1. Work continues on the Targeted Industry Attraction Study by AdyAdvantage.
2. Eysink updated commissioners on the Teaching for the Workforce program. DMACC and Eysink have met and the program will be on-line this summer with both live on-line sessions and modules where teachers can view at their pace. Eysink and Steenhoek have learned Blackboard to design the course curriculum and load course content. The plan is for the class to be held in June. The purpose of the program is to elevate educators understanding of STEM occupations within Marion County and discover new ways to incorporate career soft skills into curriculum to better prepare students for the workplace.
3. Eysink reported that all advertisers have now paid for their ads in the travel guide and guide distribution has begun to both local locations and state welcome centers.
4. Eysink is serving on a committee to update the marioncountyiowa.gov website for the county. Neapolitan Labs were chosen as the vendor to complete the website. The new site will launch in mid-May.

### REGIONAL REPORTS:

1. Marion County and Mahaska County received approval to initiate a 4-company pilot for the Opportunity2 Region for economic gardening. Next week the project coordinators will receive training.

### COMMUNITY REPORTS:

Meeting Adjourn

