



# 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  
Wednesday, June 14, 2023, Main Street Markt, Pella, IA

MCDC Present:

Megan Weiler Green, Doug Stewart, Rob Judkins, Brian Thomas, Tony Aylsworth & Steff Bonnstetter

Ex-Officio Present:

Karen Eischen & Carla Eysink

Others Present:

none

### CALL TO ORDER.

The regular meeting of the Marion County Development Commission was called to order by Chair, Rob Judkins, at 7:15 a.m., Wednesday, June 14, 2023, at 503 Main Street, Pella, IA.

A motion was made (Thomas/Stewart) to approve the April and May minutes. Motion carried.

A motion was made (Aylsworth/Weiler-Green) to approve the financial report. Motion carried.

### DISCUSSION ITEMS:

- **Digital Passport Prizes:** As part of the digital passports, participants can earn prizes. For the A to Z Foodie Trail Passport, the level 1 prize will be a sticker for 5 points and participants that earn 10 points can be entered into quarterly drawings for gift baskets. Eysink requested funding up to \$600 to purchase local gift certificates for these prizes. A motion was made (Weiler-Green/Thomas) to approve this expenditure. Motion carried.
- **Executive Committee:** Commissioners thanked Rob Judkins for his 9 years of service to the MCDC. Rob has been a leader who has been very valuable in development of the MCDC program of work. Re-appointment paperwork has been submitted to the Marion County Board of Supervisors to reappoint Megan Weiler Green and Brian Thomas. The Executive Committee is working on a recommendation from the Bussey area for the vacant rural position.
- **2024 Red Rock Area Guide Print Bid:** Bids were received from two companies for the 2024 Red Rock Area Travel Guide. Commissioners reviewed bid information. Final determinations on exact quantity and number of pages will be made in the fall once the publication is designed. A motion was made (Thomas/Bonnstetter) to select Town Crier who was the low bid for the project and to pay a deposit of \$10,000 to ensure paper costs will be at the bid rate. Motion carried.
- **2024 Red Rock Area Guide Advertising Rates:** Commissioners discussed advertising rates for the 2024 Red Rock Travel Guide. A motion was made (Stewart/Aylsworth) to keep the rates the same as 2023. Motion carried.
- **Marion County Housing Assessment:** Eysink shared information from Maxfield Research for the Marion County Comprehensive Housing Analysis Study and progress in raising matching funds. A motion was made (Thomas/Stewart) to approve Eysink to sign the contract. Motion carried.
- **MCDC Strategic & Marketing Plan:** Eysink shared information from UNI's Institute for Decision Making (IDM) for the Marion County Development Strategic and Marketing Plan. A motion was made (Aylsworth/Weiler Green) to approve Eysink to sign the contract. Motion carried.
- **Leadership Red Rock FY23-24 Fees:** Commissioners discussed fees for the FY23-24 Leadership Red Rock program. A motion was made (Weiler Green/Aylsworth) to keep fees the same as FY22-23. Motion carried.
- **MCDC FY 23-24 Meeting Schedule:** Commissioners reviewed the schedule of meetings and events for FY23-24 noting that additional meetings would be added for the Strategic Plan project and the Housing Study.
- 
- **CONNECT:** The next CONNECT meeting is scheduled for June 2 at Weiler. The meeting will focus on child care issues.
- **May 23 Performance Evaluation:** Eysink invited commissioners to attend the MCDC Executive Director performance evaluation on May 23 during the regular Board of Supervisors meeting.

### PROJECT UPDATES:

- **Business Retention & Expansion Program:** Eysink is serving on both the IEDA task force and GDSMP committee to design a new BRE program. Eventually, MCDC will need to select a new CRM program to store data.
- **CONNECT:** Thank you to Weiler for hosting the CONNECT meeting focused on child care. The next meeting in September will focus on legislative issues.
- **Business Exit Planning Workbook:** Eysink has the exit planning workbook drafted. Committee members are provide edits and comments.
- **Digital Passports:** The A to Z passport is done and ready for launch. Work will begin on the fall restaurant and bar passport called Feelin' Spicy. This passport will launch in early September and run until the end of November.
- **Office Update:** Eysink thanked commissioners for their input. The MCDC office will remain at 3014 E. Main.
- **iTIP Vision Award:** Eysink was honored by the Iowa Travel Industry Partners for her long time service to the industry with their Vision Award at a ceremony in Cedar Falls at the iTIP annual meeting.

**COMMUNITY UPDATES:**

- Habitat has received a grant to build 6 houses in Marion County. Three lots are still needed.
- Central College has a channel on the Pella Fiber network. A special story is being done on the History of Pella.

**ADJOURN:**

*Next meeting Wednesday, July 26 at 7:15 at 3014 East Main Street, Knoxville, IA.*