



Willard Community Improvement Corporation



Meeting Minutes
September 8, 2022
3:15 PM
Willard Council Chambers

Attending: Ricky Branham, Courtney Carnahan, Joseph Daniel, Bryson Hamons, Lori Huff, Jack Kousma, Jacob McKenzie, James Pomerich, Diana Speller, and CIC Administrator Carol Knapp.

Guests Attending: Barb Babcock, Margo Barnett, Johanna Beebe, Ruby Greer, Karen Wilson, and Karoleen Wood.

President Joe Daniel welcomed board members and guests. With roll call, a quorum was established.

July 18, 2022 Meeting Minutes Approval

- Board members were provided minutes prior to the meeting.
- Motion to approve by Jack, seconded by Lori, and passed.

OLD BUSINESS

Approval of CIC Official Documents

- Code of Regulations
- Conflict of Interest Policy
- Confidentiality Agreement
- Jacob made a motion to approve the CIC official documents as provided, seconded by Courtney.

Discussion:

- Bryson asked about the approval of expenditures and if it would be prudent to establish a set dollar amount that did not need board approval.
- Carol suggested that Policies & Procedures be established to clarify the processes utilized by the CIC. Board members agreed that the development of Policies & Procedures would be advantageous. Carol will develop and provide to board members prior to the next meeting.
- Board membership was discussed.
 - Number of directors – Per Section 2.2 of the Code of Regulations, the CIC shall be governed by a Board of Directors having seven (7) or more members as shall be fixed by the members from time to time. It was noted that Committees can be developed for specific focus and committee members do not have to be board members. The ORC also defines the percentage of board members that are required to be representatives of the governmental entity (ORC 1724)
 - Removal of directors – Per Section 2.3 of the Code of Regulations, a director can be removed for good cause by the vote of ninety percent (90%) of the remaining members of the Board of Directors. It was suggested that attendance be a factor in the determination of good cause. Carol will prepare attendance requirements for the board's consideration.
 - Approval process for directors – It was suggested that the Code of Regulations include an approval process for new directors. Carol will prepare an approval process for the board's consideration.
- Voting by proxy – Per Section 4.5 of the Code of Regulations, any member may authorize another member by written proxy to vote for him/her on one or more matters voted on at a meeting. Members voting by proxy or email shall be deemed to be present at the meeting.

- Alternate attendee – Ricky asked if an alternate could attend on behalf of a board member that could not attend the meeting. Carol advised that in her prior experience, an alternate could be designated to attend on behalf of the board member. The alternate would be designated and serve for one year when needed. The board indicated that they would like this to be part of the Code of Regulations.
- Ricky asked if Zoom attendance would be permitted. In light of the pandemic, this would be a good option for the board. Carol will include in the Code of Regulations.
- Joe called for the vote to approve the official documents recognizing that the Code of Regulations would be amended at a future meeting. Motion passed.
- Carol advised that Conflict of Interest and Confidentiality Agreements needed to be signed by board members and distributed the forms. Conflict of Interest reaffirmation is required annually.

Vision Discussion

- Myrtle Avenue Boulevard Archway, Signage, and Gateway Signage
 - Jack suggested that the board prioritize projects.
 - The archway would provide an entrance to the downtown and include signage. Ricky asked if the business districts had been identified. Myrtle Avenue downtown district has been referred to as the historic downtown; however, there are no buildings on the national historic register and the area has not been identified as a historic district. The downtown area is identified as the Central Business District in the Willard Codified Ordinances Chapter 1151 – B-2.
 - Gateways
 - Joe shared a picture of the gateway in Leipsic. It was very nice and maintenance free (brick).
 - The City owns property at Route 99 and 224 that could be used for larger gateway signage.
 - Carol met with a billboard company that is interested in potentially leasing property from the city and installing a digital billboard. This could possibly be a good location. If we incorporated the billboard into our gateway, we would want to have some degree of control over it. We need the gateway to be the focal point, welcoming, and conscious of enhancing the entrance into the city. Carol and Bryson will have additional conversation with the billboard representative.
 - Presently, there are signs to the entrances to the city by Tractor Supply, Pepperidge Farm, and Route 99 by the cemetery. The signs are aged, rusted, and in bad shape. The Chamber owns the signs. It was suggested that the present signs be removed since they are no longer representing a positive entrance into the city. It was suggested that a letter be sent to the property owners advising them that the old signs will be removed and replaced with newer, eye-appealing signs. Carol will determine who the property owners are and draft a letter.
 - ACTION – Board members were asked to bring design ideas to the next meeting. Courtney asked if her students could be involved. The board welcomes student involvement.
 - It was suggested that we start with the three smaller gateways since they would not be as expensive and would show positive action.
- Myrtle Avenue Demolition Properties Potential Usage (5, 7, 9, and 11)
 - The Huron County Land Bank is utilizing grant funds for the demolition of these properties.
 - 5 and 9 are owned by the land bank. 7 and 11 owned by private individuals. Permission to demolish their buildings was obtained.
 - All four properties' historic waiver was approved.
 - Asbestos assessments will be starting in the next week or so. If abatements are needed, they will then be scheduled.
 - It is anticipated that the demolition will take place prior to the end of the year.
 - Jack asked if the foundations would be removed. James will check with Tim Pelsang who represents Willard on the land bank board.

- Old Fire Department Potential Usage
 - The idea of a restaurant similar to Ziggy's in Amherst was brought up.
 - A rental hall was another idea.
 - A land swap with Martin for 11 Myrtle was suggested as well. James advised that Martin would be interested in this opportunity.

NEW BUSINESS

Financial

- The CIC bank account has been established with Premier Bank.
- Carol presented the CIC financial report:
 - \$532.00 – ANEW Proceeds from Spring & Fall Fest
 - \$490.00 – Goods in the Woods Vendor Fees to date
 - \$1,000.00 – Goods in the Woods Sponsorship to date
 - \$500.00 – Donation to CIC
 - \$2,522.00 – Total Income to date
- Quick Books
 - Carol joined Tech Soup and can purchase Quick Books for an annual fee of \$75.00.
 - Quick Books from Intuit would be \$892.00 annual fee.
 - We would need to order checks and deposit slips compatible with Quick Books. Carol is researching sources for best deal.

CIC Sub Committee

- ANEW – stands for “Area Neighbors Enhancing Willard”. The group started one year ago.
- Fund raising has been the focus of the group. They hosted the Fall Fest and Spring Fest and are now working on Goods in the Woods.
- ANEW identified the Willard Dog Park as their project. Proceeds from fund raising events go toward the dog park.
- ANEW could be a sub committee of the CIC or we could serve as their fiscal agent and charge an admin fee. If we serve as fiscal agent, we will need a memorandum of understanding defining roles.
- Ricky shared that he thought ANEW was a great idea and expressed appreciation for new ideas and activities for the community.
- Ricky made a motion to make ANEW a sub committee of the CIC, seconded by Jacob and passed.

OTHER BUSINESS

CIC & ANEW

- It was brought to our attention that there is considerable confusion in the community about the Community Development Department, CIC, ANEW, WBA, and Chamber and their roles.
- Community Development Department
 - The Community Development Department is a collaboration between the City of Willard, the Willard Area Chamber of Commerce, the Willard Area Economic Development Corporation, and the United Fund of Willard. Carol reports to City Manager Bryson Hamons.
 - The creation of the Willard CIC was identified as the first priority for the Community Development Department.
 - Carol is the Community Development Director. She is Administrator of the CIC.
 - The CIC is one of the many things that the Community Development Department is responsible for.
 - A stakeholders meeting is planned to provide an update on progress made since the creation of the community development department.
- CIC
 - The CIC is a private, not-for-profit corporation created under ORC 1724.
 - The CIC is very beneficial to the City of Willard in that it has more flexibility and can act in a quicker manner.

- The CIC is governed by the Board of Directors.
- The CIC has an entirely different role in the community than ANEW, WBA, or the Chamber.
- ANEW
 - Project – Willard Dog Park
 - Present Focus – Fund raising for the Dog Park
 - Diana suggested that this group has a quality-of-life focus.
- Chamber
 - As previous Chamber Director, Ricky described the Chamber as membership oriented and focused.
- WBA
 - Ricky described the WBA as the boots-on-the-street.
 - Mission statement for the WBA would be helpful.
- Community Events & Activities
 - The majority of the events and activities that take place in the city are a collaboration between various organizations.
 - Organizations are not in competition with each other since they all have the greater good in mind – enhancing Willard.
- Communication
 - The WBA and Chamber meet monthly. Carol attends these meetings and is more than willing to answer questions at any time.
 - ANEW has been meeting weekly due to the planning of Goods in the Woods. ANEW is not an “exclusive” group and all are welcome.
 - Due to the confusion about the Community Development Department and CIC, Carol will increase outreach so that the public is more informed about the efforts taking place in the city.

Other

- Jack advised that an individual spoke to him about doing “Christmas in the Village” next year. There was concern that another event would impact the Christmas Parade, Tree Lighting, and Festival of Lights.
- Johanna advised Joe that Steve Beal with the Senior Enrichment Services would like to meet. Since this meeting would be community development, not CIC, Carol will schedule a meeting.
- Diana asked if the city had considered hiring a consultant to develop a revitalization plan for the city. Plans are very costly and although some grants are available to assist with this effort, since the CIC is so newly created, we do not have the history to show our sustainability.
- When the water tower is repainted, it could be the Goldfish Capital of the World.

Meeting adjourned at 4:55 PM.

Next meeting will be Wednesday, November 2 at 3:15 PM in Council Chambers.

Respectfully submitted,

Carol A. Knapp

Carol A. Knapp, EDFP
Community Development Director
CIC Administrator

Approved by Board of Directors on November 2, 2022

Joseph Daniel

Joseph Daniel, President