



COLES Together

The economic development organization for Coles County

Coles Together Operations Committee Meeting July 25, 2022

<u>Members Present:</u>	Doug Abolt, Mike Stanfield, Mike Taylor, Rick Hall, Carlos Ortega, Bob Shamdin, and Brock Ashley
<u>Members Absent:</u>	Brandon Combs, Brooke Kieffer
<u>Others Present:</u>	Angela Griffin
<u>Call to Order:</u>	Called to order by Doug Abolt at 7:30 a.m.
<u>Approval of Minutes:</u>	A motion to approve the June 2022 Board of Directors meeting minutes was made by Mike Stanfield and seconded by Rick Hall. The motion passed.

Griffin welcomed Matt Webb to his first board meeting. Webb is the Manager at the Casey State Bank currently located on Dettro Avenue in Mattoon. The bank will be building a new facility on Lerna Road in Mattoon and relocating the branch to that location.

Treasurer's Report

Mike Taylor presented the June Treasurer's report. He stated June 30 is nine months into the fiscal year which ends on September 30. Comparing year over year, it was one year ago in June that the organization made the contribution to GDB International which is why in the marketing line (6800) there is such a significant difference. In June 2021 we paid \$75,000 to GDB International which were funds held in reserve for a Charleston area economic development project. When comparing June 2022, we did not have a substantial marketing expense. Annual contributions in June 2022 are lower but that is due mainly to timing of when the contributions are received. There are more expenses than revenues for the month but when looking at year-to-date, there is net income of \$107,000 as compared to last year when we were showing a net loss. Our budget is about \$77,000 year-to-date, so we are running about \$30,000 over budget on a net income basis for the first nine months. Revenue is running \$23,000 higher than last year due mostly to the community navigator grant. However, we also have expenses for the community navigator grant that offset those contributions. Expenses are running \$106,000 lower than last year primarily due to the one-time expense item related to the GDB International payment. Overall, revenue is above last year and above budget and expenses below budget and below last year's expenses.

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Approval: A motion to approve the June 2022 financial statements was made by Rick Hall and seconded by Brock Ashley. The motion passed.

Nomination of new board members to replace Jerry Esker:

Upon the retirement of Jerry Esker from Sarah Bush Lincoln Health System, the hospital has requested Steve Pankey be named Esker's replacement. Pankey is the Corporate Compliance and HIPAA Privacy Officer at the hospital. Griffin has spoken with him, and he is excited to join the board.

Approval: A motion to approve the nomination of Steve Pankey to the board was made by Mike Stanfield and seconded by Rick Hall. The motion passed.

President's Report:

Griffin stated the former Trailmobile property, currently owned by GDB International was subject to an unannounced and random on-site inspection by state and federal EPA regulators. Apparently there had been a filed opened when Crop Max owned the facility that was subject to further inspection and ongoing monitoring because the transformers inside the building are known to have PCBs, so they are being monitored for leakage. The owners of GDB asked Griffin to attend the inspection so she walked through with the inspectors, who could not be specific about what their findings were but did say if there has been any leakage or contamination, it is minimal and contained. They will issue a formal report in the next three months. GDB has been very cooperative and is willing to do whatever is needed to clean-up any leakage that may exist. The owners pride themselves on being an environmental company and said the last thing they want is to be involved in is damaging the environment. Once the report is issued, there may be legal ramifications for the previous owners for not disclosing the open file.

Ed Carter has purchased the facility at 1710 West Polk and intends to move his construction business to this location and renovate the facility. We are working with him to apply for enterprise zone benefits for the project.

We continue to work with Jeremy Yost and a number of subcontractors to get extensions on previously issued enterprise zone certificates. The project was delayed again, this time by a distressed cargo ship between China and California carrying items for interior build-out. The items are anticipated soon but are going to take at least a month to install. Opening is pushed back until late September.

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Project Updates:

The Texas-based company planning to acquire the former S&K facility on Dewitt Avenue in Mattoon for a new third party logistics project has put the project on hold. With Amazon's first quarter sales down, they have also put the opening of their own warehouse and distribution centers that were under development on hold. So, this company, which is a third-party logistics provider to brands and companies that sell on Amazon, has decided to take a wait and see approach but remains highly interested in the Mattoon location.

Confidential Project – We continue to meet with the state program managers and the company's site location consultants to complete the applications for the state's EDGE program and the state's Prime Sites program to support the project.

Griffin stated a new lead was received after the report went out. A company using the code name project Clean that manufactures hand sanitizer dispensers is looking for 30,000 SF and the only transportation requirement was that it be within three miles of an interstate or 4-lane highway and utility needs are low. We are submitting the former S&K facility, even though the Texas company remains focused on it. It is 25,000 SF and can be expanded. The company would create 30 jobs

The other projects reported on last month--Callaway, County Roads, and Neptune Bio, were all submitted and are under review.

Outreach

The June webinar will be the first in a three-part series on business resiliency. During the series we will present best practices, pivots, and changes that were implemented by local businesses that allowed them to weather the pandemic. The Thursday, June 28 webinar will focus on changes to customer engagement that were implemented, mostly in the retail and service sector. Planning to present a webinar focused on pivots and best practices in manufacturing and industrial settings will follow.

Rick Hall reported the sports complex meeting went well. The city staff did great job and community support was good. He stated the economic impact study shows how much the development will benefit the county as a whole, including the Charleston school district. Commercial opportunities are coming along, and the city will take next key steps on August 16.

Abolt stated the resort development occurring east of Charleston will be complementary to the sports complex and will also provide camping opportunities the resort cannot accommodate.

Ashley asked if the organization would consider making a donation to the development of the sports complex. Griffin stated it is something the organization can consider however in the past we have always refrained from using investor funding to make contributions to community projects and fundraisers. With the focus on manufacturing and industrial development, it would be hard to make that type of donation fit within our mission. Additionally, we have always found

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that our most significant investors, and even many of our smaller investors, are already donating to those types of projects and we would essentially be making a double donation for them if we used their investment in Coles Together for those reasons. And while precedent setting is not necessarily a priority concern, it would open the door for future requests that would be difficult to decline once we make the first donation. However, Griffin acknowledged this is a once-in-a-lifetime project that will change the economic landscape of the county and if the developers of the complex want to prepare a presentation and request to present to the board, she will put it on the agenda.

Marketing Report

Considine stated she has been working on boosting Facebook posts, including boosting key posts. She has been working with the sports complex committee and completing speaking events including to the retired teacher organization. She is also working to upgrade and update the website and on business retention marketing materials for businesses.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:25 AM.

Respectfully submitted by:

Carlos Ortega, Secretary