



CASS COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION/BROWNFIELD AUTHORITY

Kevin Anderson

Rick Russwurm

Leslie McClelland

Lauren Thurston

Samuel Barrera

Hope Anderson

Jeff Nelson

David Kring

Alexis O'Flynn

Douglas Dallich Jr.

July 26, 2023

Time: 8:30 am

Board Members present: Kevin Anderson, Rick Russwurm, Samuel Barrera, Hope Anderson, Jeff Nelson, Alexis O'Flynn and David Kring. Members absent were Leslie McClelland, Lauren Thurston and Douglas Dallich Jr. Communications Manager Ambrosia Neldon was present to take minutes. Market Van Buren Director Zach Morris and community member Doug Elder were also present.

1. Kevin Anderson called the meeting to order at 8:32 a.m.
2. Rick Russwurm moved, Hope Anderson seconded, CARRIED, the approval of the agenda.
3. Newly appointed member Alexis O'Flynn, who works for the Village of Cassopolis, introduced herself.
4. There were no public comments.
5. Hope Anderson moved, Jeff Nelson seconded, CARRIED, to approve the April 26, 2023 minutes.
6. Hope Anderson moved, Jeff Nelson seconded, CARRIED, to approve the financial report provided by Treasurer Rick Russwurm.
7. New Business:
 - a. SB 129-132
 - i. Chair Kevin Anderson shared his knowledge and experience of Senate Bills 129, 130, 131, 132 regarding the Brownfield Authority opportunities, some examples of how the City of Dowagiac have taken advantage of Brownfields, and how these bills could benefit Cass County.
 - ii. The board said some key challenges of taking advantage of these bills are educating local municipalities of the opportunity, finding enough time for clerks and supervisors to tackle these projects, and connecting developers to opportune properties.
 - iii. Market Van Buren Director Zach Morris suggested inviting Fishbeck, an architectural firm that is familiar with these bills, to the next EDC board meeting. Fishbeck is presenting to the Van Buren Brownfield Development Authority soon.
 - iv. Chair Anderson emphasized the importance of networking with current and prospective property owners, developers and financiers in order to bring ideas to fruition.
 - v. Marketing Manager Ambrosia Neldon will work with GIS Director Erika Espeland to create a map of available properties and share them on the Cass County EDC web page as a marketing tool.
 - b. Market Van Buren
 - i. Market Van Buren Director Zach Morris shared an update on the organization's progress in Cass County since partnering with the County.



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- ii. Morris said the County's partnership with Market Van Buren lapses in 90 days, and he is working with the County to renew the contract.
- iii. The renewed contract is proposed at \$115,000 per year, an increase from the \$95,000/year that Morris said better aligns with the scope of work MVB is offering. Original figures were proposed without experience; new figures have been updated now that MVB has a better idea of what to expect.
- iv. Board member Rick Russworm said that in the past, whenever the EDC board has not had a professional firm to partner with, little to no progress has been made.
- v. Commissioner Sam Barrera supported the decision to renew, said he would check in with Administrator Newton to learn the next steps in closing the contract.
- c. Rick Russworm moved, Sam Barrera seconded, CARRIED, to adjourn the meeting at 9:34 a.m. The next meeting will be the fourth Wednesday in September.