

PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES COMMITTEE MEETING

The Planning and Environmental Services Committee Meeting was called to order by Chairperson Meyette on Thursday, September 24, 2020 at 10:00 a.m.

Roll was called. Present: Mr. Powers, Ms. Meyette, Mr. Gustafson, Mr. Sebolt, Mr. Walker, Mr. Byl, and Mr. Brown.

Mr. Sobie, Oceana County Administrator; Ms. Anderson, Oceana County Clerk; and Ms. Jodi Nichols, Oceana Economic Alliance. Mr. James Kelley, MSUE, was present via zoom.

Moved by Mr. Sebolt and seconded by Mr. Walker to approve the minutes of the August 27, 2020 Planning and Environmental Services Committee meeting as presented.

Voice vote. Motion carried.

Public participation was provided via teleconference using Zoom. The online meeting ID was 840 2867 4484.

No public comment on agenda items.

Ms. Meyette asked if Ms. Nichols was a participant involved with the Nestle Gerber expansion. Ms. Nichols mentioned that a colleague from The Right Place was involved with the expansion.

Ms. Jodi Nichols, Oceana Economic Alliance, gave an update on the activities of the Oceana Economic Alliance. Ms. Nichols reported that their goal is to assist existing local companies/businesses to further expansion and growth. The struggles reported by local companies pertain to workforce; such as attracting new employees and/or being able to retain adequate employees. Another facet of the struggle companies/businesses are seeing is that sufficient housing is not readily available for employees. Companies/businesses are also seeing an issue with childcare and transportation services for their employees.

Ms. Nichols mentioned that the Oceana Economic Alliance has helped 97 businesses throughout Oceana County. There are also small business restart grants available from the State via the CARES Act. Ms. Nichols announced that the Oceana Economic Alliance hosted an online round-table series to help small businesses brainstorm with others. She also mentioned that they have developed www.discoveroceana.com as a free marketing tool during the pandemic and will continue to utilize it as a directory for those who live in the county and for those who visit the county.

Mr. Walker wondered if <https://www.discoveroceana.com> should be added to the County's website. Mr. Sobie indicated that he would speak to Ms. Contreras, Technology Coordinator, to include this link on the website.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. James Kelley, MSUE, mentioned that MSUE has applied for a federal grant. The grant would cover Oceana, Lake, Mason, and Newaygo Counties and would be for a regional housing study. It would combine MSUE's curriculum with Purdue University and Iowa State University's curriculums. The main goal would be to provide a more regional approach to housing issues. Once approval and more details become available, Mr. Kelley will give another update.

There being no further business to come before the Board, Chairman Meyette adjourned the Planning and Environmental Services meeting at 10:22 a.m.

Respectfully,

Amy L. Anderson
Oceana County Clerk