



## **ANNUAL ECONOMIC SUMMIT**

Thursday, November 7, 2019 • 5:30 – 8:00 pm • Benedum Commons  
Bethany College, Bethany, WV

1. Remarks by Mayor of Bethany, and Bethany College VP Danny McMasters.
2. Program provided by Danny Swan, Co-Founder and Executive Director of Grow Ohio Valley. Non-profit founded in 2014. Their mission is to achieve regional food security. WV and their food security unfortunately is weak with WV being one of the top states with diabetes, and health related issues regarding the lack of healthy food. Three essential components to their business model architecture (Food hub, farms, education). Recently opened the Public Market in Wheeling which has a consignment model that provides 80% of earned monies going back to the farmer, and 20% to the market for utilities, etc.
3. Meeting was called to order at 6:58pm, after dinner, networking, remarks, and program.
4. Attendance
  - a. Please refer to sign-in sheet which was submitted with minutes. David Kick submitted vote by email, and Michael Traubert attended by proxy of email and provided vote by voicemail.
  - b. Secretary confirmed quorum present.
5. Business Meeting
  - a. Secretary called for a motion to be made; motion made by ME Yancosek Gamble for the following minutes, seconded by Bud Billiard.
    - i. May 2, 2019
    - ii. July 18, 2019
  - b. Financial Report
    - i. September & October 2019 Financials Attached
    - ii. USPS PO Box invoice, and WV Economic Development Council 2020 Membership Dues of 100.00 was paid.
  - c. Quarterly VISTA Report – highlights attached
6. Old/New Business
7. Reports Attached – BCEDA 3<sup>rd</sup> Qt. 2019 Report
8. Roundtable
  - a. Legislative Updates
    - i. WV Sen. Weld – in the next session, an amendment that looks at getting rid of Business and Inventory Tax which would be a constitutional change (relates to the machinery etc. that a company/business uses in their dealings) which not many states have. Also looking at a 100 million reduction in the FY and looking at hiring freezes and such which would hopefully not touch upon services.
    - ii. WV Sen. Ihlenfeld – Senate Bill 1 (WV Invests), over 1k students who are enrolled due to this legislation for fall 2019, majority are under the age of 24. Informed us of updates regarding: Non-intoxicating beer act – changes would help the craft beer industry; Removal of the limit on hotel occupancy tax proceeds and on how the funds can be used; 635 – 10 yr tax credit for post mine sites; Minimum 5% of produce must be

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purchased in-state; Working on bill to increase access to transportation for those who are seeking treatment for recovery; and lastly is personally working on getting county commissions more authority to help with vacant property issues.

- b. Brooke County Commission Updates
  - i. AJ Thomas sends his regrets due to being under the weather.
  - ii. Commissioners are working with legislators for our roads
  - iii. Have torn down over 100 dilapidated structures over the past four years.
  - iv. Pietro Furitini has since opened their doors.
  - v. Brooke Power in Colliers Area is continuing to look great for the outlook in our community for jobs, etc.
  - vi. Commission is still working on their judicial annex and should see some quick work
- c. BDC – Marvin Six
  - i. Beech Bottom – \$3.2 million project – working on renovations on the oldest part of a building located = estimated to be done late 2020.
  - ii. Working with the DEP for investments for some projects that have sites that are contaminated. This would be helping flip areas that need attention in order to attract investors to sound area (i.e. Follansbee Steel Site).
  - iii. Brooke Glass- Remediation has started. Site work is hopefully to start within the next year.
  - iv. Do not assume that projects have stalled or are out of money; it takes time to get paperwork, inspections, etc. completed in order to move forward with things.
  - v. Some activity with the old Middle Schools, but nothing huge to report.
  - vi. Three Springs Sites – both industrial and housing is growing in that area.
  - vii. September 2020 – Hosting a WV EDA Conference will be hosted by the BDC; will be showcasing both Hancock and Brooke during this time. Over 150 people to be expected.
- d. Brooke County EDA Final Summarization
  - i. How can we work together to mobilize development? Meetings such as this begin the conversation. Contact members of the EDA for further discussion, etc.
  - ii. Weirton Area Economic Outlook 2019-2024 attached.
- e. Brooke County Park & Recreation Commission – Bud Billiard and other board members
  - i. Splash pad is being installed at Brooke Hills Park; closing in on the goal in having a complete water park.
- f. BHJ Metropolitan Planning Commission - Mike Paprocki
  - i. Has been partnering with the BDC which allows them to perform assessment and redevelopment projects. Brooke County Sewer Facilities Plan (Washington Pike Area), is being worked upon.
  - ii. Joint partnership with Hancock and Brooke County which is working on the broadband assessment and feasibility studies.
  - iii. Transportation Plan – Bridge between Brooke and Brilliant is one project currently ongoing with over \$140 million in investments.
  - iv. Collecting surveys from community members of all three counties in order to ascertain what the area needs, what needs improvement, what is working, etc. (results so far are



showing isolation due to lack of transportation, lack of accessibility to healthy foods and health care.)

- g. Beech Bottom – Greg Sheperd
  - i. Working on projects to increase broadband in order to help both community members and incoming businesses.
- h. Bethany- Shirley Kemp
  - i. Trying to revitalize a few old businesses; in process of planning a heritage festival and trying to grow tourism
- i. Follansbee – Mayor Velegol
  - i. Upgraded 5 parts in the city with funds from the 1 % Tax
  - ii. Water and Waste Water Project – plans are in place in order to address issues in the area (both short term and long term)
  - iii. City plaza has been stripped out, street there will be shut down, and will be built up in order to have an inviting area
  - iv. Upgrading the firehouse is currently moving to phase 2 as phase 1 has been completed.
- j. Weirton –
  - i. Working on side walk projects, and access roads.
- k. Wellsburg – WV Sen. Weld
  - i. Working on the Home Rule Program Application; working with property owners now in order to get vacant homes and dilapidated addressed.
- l. URA – WV Sen. Weld
  - i. Working to prioritize buildings that can be redeveloped.
- m. Downtown Wellsburg Committee – Alex Weld
  - i. Looking at vacant properties in order to see what can be revitalized for redevelopment.
  - ii. Bringing in more foot traffic with block parties; as well as working on a makers market which will be set up in the former Legends Building for Small Business Saturday in November 2019. By setting up an event in a vacant building, the hope is to show potential investors what is available.
- n. Follansbee Chamber – Debbie Puskarich, President
  - i. Job Fair – held in order to help Coppers employees find similar jobs with over 20 potential employers present to collect resumes, etc. It outgrew the spur of the moment idea, and will be repeated and expanded in 2020. Connected with WV Northern for a Resume Fair in order to help these employees polish off a resume to be used for the fair.
  - ii. Many events have had great response (Manufacturers Month, Trunk or Treat, Blue Mass, and much more). Joint projects are very successful, and the chamber is open for more.
- o. Wellsburg Chamber – Luke Diserio, President
  - i. Annual dinner for 2019 was the biggest attendance and had the most monetary donations which will help sustain the chamber for the next year; New Annual Event (Golf Luau) has been started in order to produce another event.



- ii. Working heavily with the Christmas Parade for 2019 6pm after Parade; has helped produce an event which will be in the Central Park to provide more room for activities. Please contact the chamber for any projects and or help that one may need.
- p. WVU – John Deskins, Assistant Dean, College of Business & Economics
  - i. WVU will be producing research on how business relate to other businesses. How they are growing nationally, not nationally, etc. Will help pick out industries that are flourishing and will use that in order to pitch ideas to those looking at WV for their companies. Contact for continued information and updates.
- q. WV Northern Community College – Karri Mulhern
  - i. Weirton, Wheeling, and New Martinsville campuses.
  - ii. Many new apprenticeships are in the works that will be able to help the economic growth in the area.
  - iii. Small business center is located within them in order to help local businesses.
  - iv. Partnering with BDC in order to open a welding center in Weirton in order to train and produce qualified workers for the workforce needed in both currently and the future.
  - v. Worked with Brooke County HS; some students will graduate with an associate in welding before they graduate in June 2020 with their HS diploma.
- r. Brooke County Schools – Tim Pannett
  - i. CEFP – working on a 10 year plan – to make a decision on future of Brooke County Schools current sites and usage needed.
  - ii. Planting programs in lower schools in order to produce students ready for engineering programs in HS.
- s. West Liberty University – Jason Koegler
  - i. Currently on the rise despite current funding etc. Has over 1,000 students on campus; no current room available on campus.
  - ii. 2 new master’s programs will be unveiled next year.
  - iii. 32 Freshman are attending this year from Brooke County.
  - iv. President met with Wheeling President, and Bethany President have come together for a collaboration project that
  - v. TopperStation.com = new station
- t. Upper Ohio Valley Regional Tourism –Norm Schwertfeger
  - i. Counties involved (3 in PA, 4 in OH, and 5 in WV); meeting qtly.
- u. Brooke County Office on Aging/Senior Center - new Director Angela Kocher
  - i. No longer operating in a deficit; working on getting workers longer hours as the community is in need of it; provide congregate lunches; home delivery of meals are currently in partnership with Bethany’s dining hall helping with food preparation.
  - ii. New theme, “You Before Me”
  - iii. Transportation currently offered to over 40 clients (dialysis, doctors, etc. visits)
- v. Pat Sutherland – Bethany Communications
  - i. Introduced some of the current students in the communications department which would like to take the time of some of the attendees after the meeting for interviews.
- w. Brooke County Public Libraries – Alexandra Schneider (Eberle)



- i. 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Branch will be celebrated as an open house on 1/20/19 from 10-11
  - ii. Census 2020 – please educate your patrons, patients, coworkers, etc. that this is important as it determines funding sources over the next 10 years.
9. EDA Wrap-up
- a. Touring Blue Stream Farms and their Aquaponics Facility this upcoming Saturday in Weirton.
  - b. *Dive Into Your Business Ideas* – Program hosted by the BCEDA at the Brooke County Public Libraries main location in Wellsburg in the River Room on 12/4/19; 5:30-7:30
  - c. For further information on events and updates: please contact us by email, and by liking and following our Facebook page.
10. Meeting was adjourned at 8:33pm

Respectfully submitted,

*Alexandra L. Schneider*

Alexandra L. Schneider (Eberle)  
BCEDA Recording Secretary

**EVENT SPONSOR**



**ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

**Facilities:** Bethany College

**Dinner:** Southwestern Energy

**Music:** Instrumentals by Aaron Carey, Bethany College, Bethany, WV