



WARREN COUNTY
ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT
COMMITTEE



**Meeting Minutes of
December 13, 2018
Wayne Dumont, Jr. Administration Building
165 County Route 519 South, Belvidere, NJ 07823-1949**

The meeting was called to order at 8:06 a.m. by Betty Schultheis, chair, who then led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Present: Mitchell Jones, Andrea Kirchuk, John Kruk, Chris Maier, Linda Stettler, Terry Urfer, and Chair Betty Schultheis. Also present were county staff David Dech and Corey Tierney, and guests Dawn Smith, Ben Spinelli and Frank Pinto.

Approval of Minutes: The meeting minutes of October 11, 2018 were moved by Ms. Kirchuk, seconded by Mr. Jones, and approved.

Status on White Paper: Mr. Kruk spoke with Dr. William Austin, president of Warren County Community College, and he has the proposal almost done. Then he needs to give to the Freeholders to authorize the work. Mr. Kruk would like to see the data for what the cost is of ordinances on the local level on the economy. He also would like to see overall impact on local economy and individual towns.

Status on Processes: Warren County Planning Director Dave Dech provided a status report at the previous meeting. Mr. Dech showed two different ways portraying the information, the hard way or the easy way, and chose the easy way. Mr. Dech is in the process of putting it into the story map, and he will do another presentation in the next month or two.

Update on new position in Rutgers Cooperative Extension of Warren County: Mr. Jones said Hank Bignell is out meeting farmers and getting his "feet wet" in his new position.

NEW: WCCC and the free courses they offer: Mr. Urfer was very impressed with a free Excel course and had attended a couple of other courses. Mr. Urfer stated the need to get the word out with businesses and towns about these free courses. Mrs. Smith stated NJBIA is grant funded, had 42 businesses participate and open enrollment, a new program is starting in January. Mrs. Smith is looking to get the word out to businesses and municipalities. Mrs. Smith is working with Jim Sheldon of Hackettstown BID to bring the open enrollment program to attract people in

Hackettstown and Washington since people don't want to take the drive. Mrs. Smith has a brochure to show us and Mr. Jones asked for a copy. Mr. Maier suggested putting this on our website and Wanderings to get the word out.

NEW: Flashing billboard on Rt 80: Mr. Urfer looking for a resolution for the need to help farmers with a flashing billboard- to promote businesses. Chair Mrs. Schultheis said we need to find rules from the State first.

Grow Warren Presentation:

The presentation was distributed via email and reviewed by Ben Spinelli and Frank Pinto of the consulting group Greener by Design. Among the highlights:

- There is a lot of potential in this County. We need to find a way to maximize it, hour from NYC and hour and half from Philadelphia. There are lots a people just a short time away.
- People want to know where the food is from and how it was grown.
- Threats: expensive to have land, aging farmers.
- Recommendations: CSAs, tailgating and specialty products. People want to have connection with where there food is from and are willing to spend more for it.
- Need to help get more farmers: Offer WCCC courses.
- Farmers need to use logo to help identify this area.
- Foodshed Alliance - food hub - network of farmers working together - bunch of products - together under one brand - meats, proteins. Need to make relationship with urban counties like city of Paterson. They have ethnic needs for produce. We can make it and sell to them.
- We have lack of processing facilities, only Artic Foods.
- Lancaster has a brand of agriculture - we could tap into that market - closer than they are.
- Farmers to be profitable need CSA, tailgating, on farm visitation and value added product.
- NJ is a density populated state - lots of potential - bring your product in their population.
- Warren County NJ is #1 in Christmas tree and livestock - need to promote that - get people to come and need places for people to stay, such as bed and breakfast accommodations.
- Economic development extension agent is needed - need funding for that.
- Need more places for people to stay - very few.
- Need bus ride for urban people to get Warren County experience.

Where do we go from here: County needs to decide - Need farmers to provide us with feedback and handhold them; need key person from the county to help with regulations. This presentation needs to be given to Freeholders. They recommend we have Mark Saluk from Economic Development Hunterdon County come give us some ideas.

WCCC status- Continuation from earlier: Mrs. Smith continues to work with QuVa Pharma and the Opportunity Partnership Grant. They have their eye on Transportation Logistics in Phillipsburg - would like to help if there is a need.

Status on ED renewals: 3 members have been reappointed by the Freeholders, Mr. Palitto, Mr. Sheldon and Mr. Jones.

Status on Phillipsburg Mall: No update, it has been sold.

Warren Heritage Scenic Byway Committee on Funding Request: Mr. Maier provided an update- no response from Commissioner get signs without the application and money. State came up with this and we need their help. Recommend not fund the \$11,000 if can't show where it is. Mr. Dech

said State DOT Coordinator will be at the Scenic Byway Committee in January 14 in Greenwich and can present to her and can go from there.

The meeting adjourned at 9:41 a.m.

Next meeting: January 10, 2019

Respectfully submitted,
Brittany Nigro