

# **POLO ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION**

The January 17, 2019 meeting of the Polo Economic Development Corporation was held at Polo City Hall. Susie Corbitt opened the meeting at 7:00 p.m.

Members present were Mark Scholl, Susie Corbitt, Betty Obendorf, Greg Cross, Louise Hall, Josh Faivre and Andy Faivre. Also, present was Mayor Doug Knapp.

Absent: Sydney Bartelt, Mike Faivre, Jim Cole and Don Vock.

## **INTRODUCTION OF NEW DIRECTORS:**

None.

## **APPROVAL OF THE NOVEMBER 15, 2018 MEETING MINUTES:**

Louise Hall made a motion to approve the November 15, 2018 PEDC meeting minutes as presented, seconded by Betty Obendorf.

## **APPROVAL OF THE NOVEMBER & DECEMBER 2018 TREASURER'S REPORTS:**

Josh Faivre made a motion to accept the November & December 2018 treasurer's report for the general checking and the revolving fund account as presented, seconded by Mark Scholl. The motion carried by voice vote without dissent.

The purchase of the Polo Subway was official on 1/1/19, their first payment is due the last week of January. They want to wait a little before they have a ribbon cutting. Discussion held that they have changed the name of the business, but no one seemed to know what it is.

## **CORRESPONDENCE:**

None.

## **UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**

### **A. Discussion on Affordable Housing.**

Discussion held that this needs to be one of our top priorities, but maybe not just for seniors, but also for family housing. Greg Cross discussed the need to bring more young families into Polo in order to keep our unconsolidated school system going. He feels we need families in Polo in order to have a viable community and spoke of how high the school's testing scores are in the State of Illinois.

### **B. Discussion on Upcoming Grocery Store.**

The soft opening for the Polo Fresh Foods Market will be held on Monday, 1/28/19 at 10am. Susie contacted Mr. Patel to see if he wants a group there, so the Polo Chamber of Commerce, PEDC and City Officials are invited to be at the store at 10:00am on the 28<sup>th</sup>.

Vindi Wells will be there to take a picture to be published in the Tri-County Press and Sauk Valley Media papers. There will be a Chamber of Commerce ribbon cutting held at a later date.

The store schedule after the opening will be daily from 7:00am to 7:00pm. Mr. Patel will reevaluate the hours as he sees the need.

Louise Hall brought up the possibility of punch cards and maybe issuing the Chamber Polo Dollars for those. Discussion held that Mr. Patel needs to iron out all the bugs with the store before being approached with this idea. Josh Faivre will have this placed on the Chamber of Commerce agenda for discussion. Josh did state that he will be present at the next February Chamber Board meeting to represent the PEDC.

### **C. Discussion on Pharmacy.**

Installation of all the electronics and the security system will be done on 1/22/19. The State inspections of the building have not been done as of this date. Discussion to reach out to Representative Demmer & Senator Stewart were held. Susie will contact Kip Sabinson to see if he would like her to make those contacts.

#### **D. PEDC & Polo Chamber of Commerce Business Interviews.**

Josh Faivre reported there was no January Chamber Board of Directors meeting held. Breakfast with Santa and the tree lighting festivities in the Louse D. Quick Park was successful. The senior center at the last minute decided to not do the gifts and wrapping section for the children at Santa's Breakfast so this summer the chamber will start asking for gifts to be donated.

#### **ELECTION OF OFFICERS:**

At this time Mark Scholl made a motion to elect the following PEDC slate of officers; Secretary Treasurer- Sydney Bartelt, Vice President Mike Faivre, President Susie Corbitt, seconded by Louise Hall. The motion carried by voice vote without dissent.

#### **NEW BUSINESS:**

##### **A. Discussion on the Economic Growth Corporation Meeting.**

City Clerk Sydney Bartelt and Susie Corbitt met with Brian Hollenback, President & CEO of the Economic Growth Corporation (EGC) out of Rock Island, IL on 11/20/18.

They were including Polo in a Home Accessibility Grant that was to be submitted within a weeks' time. We had to come up with contacts and get letters of support from various businesses, health care & elected officials to be submitted.

Home Accessibilities Programs (HAP) provides funding to units of local government and non-profit organizations throughout the State to provide home accessibility grants to their local constituents. These grants help people stay in their homes and prevent premature or unnecessary institutionalization of the elderly and people with disabilities.

The Illinois Housing Authority with this grant if approved gives up to \$25,000 per home whether a home owner or renter is in need to adapt accessibility in the home such as walk in showers, wheelchair ramps, fixing leaky roofs, remodeling hallways & flooring for wheelchair access, so as to not have to go into a nursing home or other facility. This is for 60 years and over or low to moderate income. This program includes IHDA Housing Assistance. EGC has not heard back as to if their grant has been approved, but was anticipating possibly in the spring to hear so. The City of Polo may have to amend the comprehensive plan with a brief two-page document. Andy Shaw from Blackhawk Hills RC&D has been contacted by City Clerk Bartelt concerning an update. Blackhawk Hills RC& D is who did the most current updates to the city's comprehensive plan.

This is the economic development group who did the lofts and the Halo Branded Solutions projects in Sterling, so it is so exciting to get our foot in the door. They came and spoke with Mayor Knapp, Alderman Schoon, City Clerk Bartelt, Dustin Finkel and Susie Corbitt in January of last year.

Also discussed were other programs:

Financial Capability Counseling.

- 1) Money management principles
- 2) Understanding your credit
- 3) Preparing for home ownership/rental
- 4) Personalized goal counseling
- 5) Homebuyer education

Samuel Odeyemi from EGC has been in discussions with their Housing Manager to conduct these classes via Skype or Go to Meeting as well.

Also discussed very briefly was the Congress school with the blight programs, which Brian Hollenback seemed interested for senior housing.

#### **OTHER BUSINESS:**

##### **A. Report on the Ogle County Economic Development Group's Meeting.**

At the October OCED meeting it was decided that the group would be possibly disbanded, due to lack of public/business/private donations, but the local people who have been attending would continue to meet quarterly.

The theory of the Public Private Partnership is that Ogle County would fund 40% of the programs, the 6 (+/-) communities will fund 30% and the communities will seek the final 30% from private donations. ComEd and Nicor have committed to \$1,000.00 for this year (2018),

The group met on 1/15/19 with Mr. Manheim and Mr. Hopkins present. Ogle County Chairman Kim Gouker was present and stated he feels the County can come up with money for 2019 as long as the present communities, banks, ComEd & Nicor stay committed and that this committee makes better attempts to get funding. After lengthy discussion it was decided to come up with a list of possible commitments and an outline for everyone to follow when the presentations are done.

Susie Corbitt reported it is much less costly for our municipality to spend a small amount of money versus hiring an economic developer full time at a cost of a minual of \$55,000 a year.

Discussion was held on the next step for the PEDC to work on with the swat analyzes, housing and what's next. Greg Cross spoke on the school system. His sister is a superintendent and he sat down with her looking at the records, with Polo's being high, but everyone new is going to Byron.

Discussion held on our seniors and schools are the most important things we need to work on. Mayor Knapp feels we need to do radio spots to promote Polo. Discussion was held that we have not contacted Kate O'Conner who offered to work with us on promotional assistance. Susie Corbitt will make contact with Kate for her to possibly come back to discuss this with us. We need to find our identity first and we need to fix that. Sauk Valley has their 2019 best businesses and maybe we could get included in that the next round. Susie & Sydney can get the pages from the comprehensive plan for our review at the next meeting. Discussion held on a lot of people want to move to Polo for our schools, but there is no housing, so again we need to address that problem.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

Andy Faivre made a motion to adjourn at 8:01pm, seconded by Greg Cross. The motion carried without dissent.

**The next meeting of the PEDC will be held February 21, 2019 at 7:00pm.**

Respectfully submitted,  
Susie Corbitt  
PEDC President