

BOARD MEETING MINUTES – June 10, 2020 – Video Conference Call – 3:30pm

**Meeting was called to order**: President Jerry Wehrle at 3:34pm.

**Attending:** Jerry Wehrle, Sandy Decker, Dave Armstrong, MaryAnn Lippert, Rebecca Giroux, Seth Hudson, Todd Johnson, Bob Borremans, Errin Welty, Carol Wetuski, Kenyon Kies, Steve Peterson

**Absent:** Michael Decorah

**Approval of May 13, 2020 Minutes:** Motion by E. Welty. 2nd by R. Giroux. Motion carried.

**Summit Update:** S. Peterson said that some refunds were being processed for attendees & exhibitors. He said the # was low overall with 21 attendee requests and 3 exhibitor requests. The exhibitor ones were state departments who could not roll over their designated funds for 2020 to the 2021 Rural Summit. With 148 Attendees registered, there were many that rolled over their registration to 2021. Peterson said that no sponsors requested refunds. An estimate $ amount of registration refunds was about $1,200. S. Decker complimented on how Hotel Marshfield did a mass cancellation for attendees booking rooms, so everyone didn’t have to. M. Lippert said that the staff at Hotel Marshfield has always been great to work with and how appreciative they were with us rescheduling the 2021 Rural Summit at their location.

**Update on Webinar Possibilities:** This was an update on the Road to Rural Recovery campaign. S. Peterson said that many Partners have been contacted and are very enthused about partnering with us on this campaign. He said they all had many resources that they are offering that we can help promote and get the word out. Peterson said that he has upcoming conference calls with Deb Brown from SaveYour.Town and Kelliann Blazek with Rural Prosperity at WEDC in a week. Brown would be coordinating some video webinar links and Blazek would be following up on the Rural Prosperity program, recently appointed Blue Ribbon Commission and their game plan for rural recovery. S. Hudson said that he had more contacts he was working on to add to our campaign as well. M. Lippert is working on her Partners roster and S. Peterson asked other Board members to help with connecting with Partners/Sponsors/Resource people as well. Peterson said that he is adding a lot of info on the Road to Rural Recovery Facebook page and the launch of the web site component is coming once more info is added.

**Draft WRP Internal Operations Plan:** Board decided to table discussion on this until we could have a face to face meeting and/or designate more time at our next meeting to work more extensively on this subject.

**Small Community Forums Update:** S. Decker said there has been very little discussion on this by the committee. E. Welty added that with COVID-19 still an issue and traveling restrictions for many involved with the committee that little is going to be done right now and there will be no Forums held in 2020.

**Video Conferencing System License:** R. Giroux presented breakdowns of pricing packages for Zoom Video and Go-to-Meeting systems. The options were discussed, and the Board decided that no action would take place yet because of costs and not knowing where WRP would be going in the future with hosting webinars and video conferencing with a large amount of people. The breakdowns would be looked at again when/if the need occurs to get licensed.

**July In-Person Meeting Planning:** It was discussed and decided that future Board meetings be held on Fridays instead of Wednesdays. Many Board members felt Wednesdays were tough to do with their own job time frames and the amount of time designated to our board meetings. It was decided that the next Board meeting would be on Friday, July 10th. The Board discussed options for times and meeting locations. It was determined that everyone meeting in one place may not be possible, in part to the COVID-19 restrictions. M. Lippert & S. Decker felt that we needed a long form meeting so we could have the time to really discuss and formulate ideas on the internal planning issues facing WRP in the future. The Board agreed to having the July meeting as a video conference call from 10:00am – 12:00pm, take a ½ hour lunch break and then reconvene from 12:30pm – 2:30pm. D. Armstrong will be offering the Zoom video conference service and will be getting the log in information out to all the Board members.

**Fall 2020 Partners Event:** S. Peterson urged the Board to table this due to the unknown of the COVID-19 situation and our Partners may be very busy working on other recovery projects at that time and we don’t need to take up their time at this point. Board agreed.

**WRP Manager Report:** S. Peterson felt that he had covered most of his report in the earlier topic discussions. He said that there is a good amount of activity on the web site and Facebook pages and urged all Board members that if they have info, contacts, resources that they come across, that they please send them to him. Peterson stressed that all that WRP is doing for the rural communities and small businesses is important and there are many board members with strong networks to work in.

**Other Items:** S. Decker brought up the Top Rural Development Initiative winners and how to handle this since we aren’t having a Rural Summit to spotlight them and present them their awards. Do we just mail them their awards? Do we hold on to them until the 2021 Summit? She asked the Board for input. E. Welty said that WEDC is facing the same issues with their award winners. She said they were going to coordinate mailing out the awards and then having the winners do a short video thank you and WEDC would send out a mass news release about the entire presentation. The Board discussed doing the same thing and S. Peterson suggested that any Board member living close to the award winners could meet with them and present the award. M. Lippert suggested the video concept, but expand it a bit more telling the viewers what their project was, successes, what they learned, etc. S. Decker was going to work with B. Borremans about getting the awards ordered and follow-up with the getting the video presentation concept in place. The videos would be featured on the WRP web site & Facebook page. The 2020 TRDI Winners would also be recognized at the 2021 Rural Summit as well.

**Adjournment:** Motion by D. Armstrong. 2nd by J. Werhle. Motion carried. Meeting ended at 4:27pm.