

## February 9, 2009 Work Session

A work session meeting of the Board of Trustees was held on Monday, February 9, 2009, in the Village Board Room. President Conlin opened the meeting at 7pm. Trustees present for the meeting were Russell Perrine, Shirley Stone, Mike Hilgenberg, Matt Bernius, Mike McWilliams, and Darrell Duzan.

Visitors present were Theresa Binion, Terry Clark, Trudi Crossman, Jim Fleming, George Fritz, Karen Good, Rod Randall, and Wayne Risley. Village employees present were Theresa Binion, Bob Crossman and Sue Perrine.

President Conlin stated State Rep. Chapin Rose is sending forms to complete to submit to the state to apply for federal stimulus money. The Village needs to be in position and have information ready for these types of opportunities.

There was discussion about the proposals up to this point and the idea of establishing an Arthur Area Development Corporation (AADC). Concern about the level of funding support from the Village for the AADC was stated. This group would increase business activity and that will have an effect on the Village's and residents' finances and taxes. There was concern about having too many duties for this new person, but this person's goals will be decided by the AADC board, not the Village. The AADC will leave a void for project coordination in the Village; a lot of that work goes back to Village committees working with Village employees. Committees do need to give employees more direction. Grant writing to benefit the Village is expected to be part of the job.

A preliminary draft of Articles of Incorporation for Arthur Area Economic Development Corporation, a not-for-profit entity, was distributed. It would be autonomous through membership. The first thing to do is to establish a budget and establish by-laws. This would be a new organization, not a renewal of the old Corporation.

Conversations in committee have been very positive, and they are working together. Given it's still in the discussion stage, not too many businesses, beyond those on the Economic Development Committee, have been brought into the discussion. The Committee does not want to move too far forward without the Village's support.

The candidates for office were asked for their opinions.

*Jim Fleming* is in favor of concept. He likes that it's a separate, confidential entity. He suggested the Village representative not be chair of board. He also suggested businesses that are not based in town, but have customers here as contributors, i.e. phone and sanitation.

*Wayne Risley* stated this is definitely needed, but it will take a while for this person to come up to speed on the job. This person should be ahead of Village board when it comes to projects and will save the Village money on salaries.

*Karen Good* really likes this idea and the confidentiality of it. She stated it's not just to get businesses here, but to get people here. There are a lot of people who leave town every day from work. It's very important how AADC board members are chosen; it needs to be one person from each entity with a term.

*Trudi Crossman* doesn't think the Association of Commerce should run it, and all business people should be asked. A lot of businesses will not be able to donate a lot right now because of the economy. She is concerned about large upcoming Village expenses. R. Randall explained the Association is initiating the process and would be a member of the AADC board, like the Village, but not run it.

There was discussion about special representatives to the Board, i.e. a school board representative, someone from each of the other taxing bodies.

President Conlin stated if there are changes that need to be made to the Tourist Center, they should be done at this time. Given the money paid in salaries for the Center, he doesn't think the Village is getting a comparable return on investment. There was discussion about tourism tying in directly with the new program, and the new program giving new guidance to it. There is a fear of "tainting" the program towards tourism, but it could be a big help to have that staff to the program. It was suggested to reconfigure the Village's committee structure to allow for stronger ties to tourism. Most agreed that tourism tied with the AADC as soon as possible. There was discussion about T. Binion not having an avenue for coming to the Board with concerns or ideas. She stated an idea she had to have people eat in downtown again and be able to walk to downtown businesses to shop. She doesn't think that everything possible is being done to "sell" Arthur.

As most of the candidates were present and stated their support for this initiative, the current Trustees were supportive of moving forward. The next step is for the Economic Development Committee to complete the Articles of Incorporation and draft a budget and by-laws.

President Conlin adjourned the meeting at 8:11pm.

APPROVED David J. Conlin  
Village Resident

ATTEST Jennifer Perrine  
Village Clerk

DATE February 16, 2009