



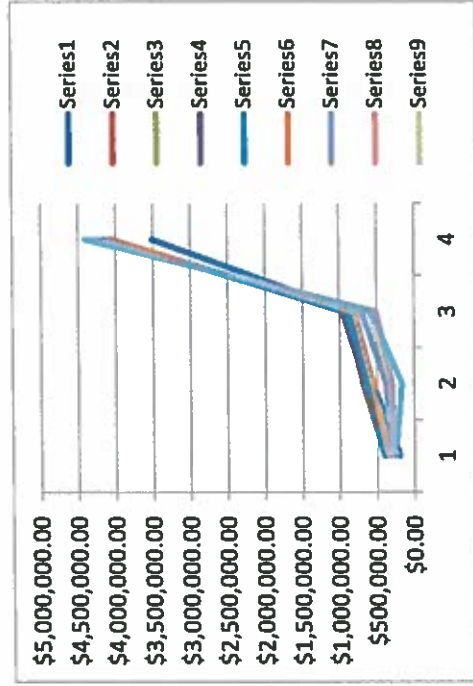
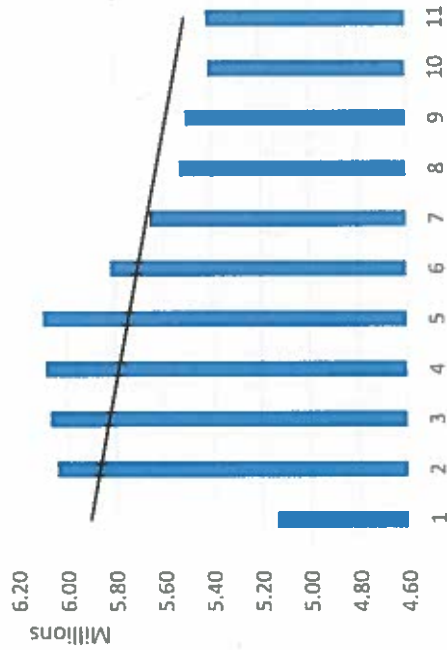
E·C·G·R·A
ERIE COUNTY GAMING REVENUE AUTHORITY

**EXECUTIVE
DIRECTOR'S
REPORT**
FOR
FEBRUARY 2018

**Revenue Dashboard
by Quarter
2007 - 2017 YTD**



Year	1st Qtr	2nd Qtr	3rd Qtr	4th Qtr	Total
2007	201,418.07	562,082.72	867,508.44	3,507,952.54	5,138,961.77
2008	366,211.37	672,936.98	941,125.00	4,063,561.53	6,043,834.88
2009	407,507.87	701,525.21	898,525.69	4,060,932.24	6,068,491.01
2010	385,476.85	665,559.96	962,909.94	4,073,449.24	6,087,395.99
2011	393,440.61	636,302.96	903,421.25	4,166,222.13	6,099,386.95
2012	356,241.99	554,752.50	794,443.73	4,114,583.35	5,820,021.57
2013	318,869.71	374,557.04	701,478.54	4,261,932.00	5,656,837.29
2014	281,934.65	315,628.24	584,126.03	4,350,692.65	5,532,381.57
2015	264,934.67	308,566.19	541,749.43	4,390,710.21	5,505,960.50
2016	271,003.84	300,719.61	507,757.83	4,332,642.04	5,412,123.32
2017	254,570.93	172,041.71	578,894.78	4,412,495.64	5,418,003.06
	3,501,610.56	5,264,673.12	8,281,940.66	45,735,173.57	62,783,397.91





December 20, 2017

James Sparber
Finance Director
Erie County Courthouse
140 W 6th Street, Room 111
Erie, PA 16501-1011

Dear Mr. Sparber:

In accordance with the Pennsylvania Race Horse Development and Gaming Act of 2004, as amended, (the Act) the Department is required to distribute quarterly the Local Share Assessment collected from slot machines to the municipalities in which a licensed gaming entity is located. The distribution is based on the amount of money collected.

An ACH payment for the LSA from May 27, 2017 – September 30, 2017 in the amount of \$1,157,789.56 should be deposited in your bank account within 3 – 5 business days. Any reductions to the Gross Terminal Revenue (GTR) for promotional items is the result of the Gaming Bulletin 2015-01 and the Pennsylvania Supreme Court's April 28, 2014 decision in Greenwood Gaming and Entertainment Incorporated v. Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Department of Revenue (90 A.3d 699 (Pa. 2014)).

If you have any questions, please contact me at 717-772-4372.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Shawn Barnes'.

Shawn Barnes, Director
Bureau of Fiscal Management

Receipt

067-021010-042100 578,894.78
067-021050-042100 578,894.78

Perry Wood

From: Pasquale, Sue Ellen <SPasquale@eriecountypa.gov>
Sent: Tuesday, February 06, 2018 3:11 PM
To: Perry Wood
Subject: 4th quarter 2017 distribution

Dear Perry:

Per our telephone conversation this afternoon, the Finance Department reviewed the new gaming law with the County Solicitor, Marcy Haller. The County Solicitor stated that the land bank allocation starts 1/1/18. Therefore the 4th quarter allocation will be allocated 50% County and 50% ECGRA. Tomorrow, 2/7/18 we will wire transfer the sum of \$4,412,495.64.

Let me know if you have any questions.

Thank you,
Sue Ellen

Sue Ellen Pasquale
Manager of Accounting
County of Erie
140 West 6th Street
Suite 505
Erie PA 16501
Phone: 814 451-6376
Fax: 814 451-6454

Email: spasquale@eriecountypa.gov



January 30, 2018

James Sparber
Finance Director
Erie County Courthouse
140 W 6th Street, Room 111
Erie, PA 16501-1011

Dear Mr. Sparber:

In accordance with the Pennsylvania Race Horse Development and Gaming Act of 2004, as amended, (the Act) the Department is required to distribute quarterly the Local Share Assessment collected to the municipalities in which a licensed gaming entity is located. The distribution is based on the amount of money collected.

An ACH for the fourth quarter of 2017 payment in the amount of \$8,824,991.29 should be deposited in your bank account within 3 – 5 business days. Any reductions to the Gross Terminal Revenue (GTR) for promotional items is the result of the Gaming Bulletin 2015-01 and the Pennsylvania Supreme Court's April 28, 2014 decision in Greenwood Gaming and Entertainment Incorporated v. Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Department of Revenue (90 A.3d 699 (Pa. 2014)).

If you have any questions, please contact me at 717-772-4372.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Shawn Barnes' with a stylized flourish at the end.

Shawn Barnes, Director
Bureau of Fiscal Management

4,412,495.69



COUNTY OF ERIE

OFFICE OF COUNTY EXECUTIVE

Kathy Dahlkemper
COUNTY EXECUTIVE

MEMORANDUM

TO: Perry Wood, executive director, ECGRA

FROM: Kristin Bowers, Office of the County Executive

DATE: January 10, 2018

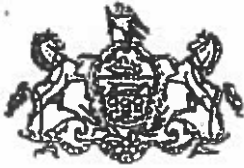
RE: ECGRA board appointment

Enclosed please find paperwork regarding the appointments of Mr. Tony Logue, representing County Council's 4th District, and Katherine Wyrosdick and Lisa Smith Presta, representing the County Executive's appointments to the ECGRA board. These terms will expire December 31, 2022.

Thank you.

Erie County Courthouse ● 140 West Sixth Street ● Suite 504 ● Erie, Pennsylvania 16501

PHONE (814) 451-6333 ● FAX (814) 451-6334 ● TOLL FREE 1 (800) 352-0026 ● TDD (814) 451-6237



COUNTY OF ERIE

OFFICE OF COUNTY EXECUTIVE

Kathy Dahlkemper
COUNTY EXECUTIVE

MEMORANDUM

TO: Members of Erie County Council

FROM:  Kathy Dahlkemper,
County Executive

DATE: January 3, 2018

RE: Erie County Gaming Revenue Authority

Upon the recommendation of County Councilman Carl Anderson III, I hereby convey notice of my appointment of Mr. Anthony Logue to a four-year term on the Erie County Gaming Revenue Authority, replacing Mr. David Yaple, whose term expired December 31, 2017.

This term will expire December 31, 2022.

Thank you.

cc: Douglas Smith, Clerk
Perry Wood, executive director, Erie County Gaming Revenue Authority
File



COUNTY OF ERIE

OFFICE OF COUNTY EXECUTIVE

Kathy Dahlkemper
COUNTY EXECUTIVE

MEMORANDUM

TO: Members of Erie County Council

FROM:  Kathy Dahlkemper,
County Executive

DATE: January 3, 2018

RE: Erie County Gaming Revenue Authority

As County Executive, I hereby convey notice of my appointment of Ms. Katherine Wyrosdick, of 1023 W. Sixth St., Erie, PA 16507, to a five-year term on the Erie County Gaming Revenue Authority. This represents a new appointment, with a term expiring December 31, 2022.

This appointment would be effective January 20, 2018, after Ms. Wyrosdick's employment with the County of Erie comes to an end.

Thank you.

cc: Douglas Smith, Clerk
Perry Wood, executive director, Erie County Gaming Revenue Authority
File



COUNTY OF ERIE

OFFICE OF COUNTY EXECUTIVE

Kathy Dahlkemper
COUNTY EXECUTIVE

MEMORANDUM

TO: Perry Wood, executive director, ECGRA

FROM: Kristin Bowers, Office of the County Executive

DATE: January 10, 2018

RE: ECGRA board appointment

Enclosed please find paperwork regarding the appointments of Mr. Tony Logue, representing County Council's 4th District, and Katherine Wyrosdick and Lisa Smith Presta, representing the County Executive's appointments to the ECGRA board. These terms will expire December 31, 2022.

Thank you.

Erie County Courthouse • 140 West Sixth Street • Suite 504 • Erie, Pennsylvania 16501

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COUNTY OF ERIE

OFFICE OF COUNTY EXECUTIVE

Kathy Dahlkemper
COUNTY EXECUTIVE

January 10, 2018

Ms. Katherine Wyrosdick
1023 W. Sixth St.
Erie, PA 16507


Dear Ms. Wyrosdick,

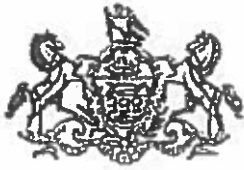
Thank you for your willingness to serve on the Erie County Gaming Revenue Authority. Upon my recommendation, your appointment to the board was approved by Erie County Council on January 9, 2018. This term, which will take effect January 20, 2018, will expire on December 31, 2022.

The County of Erie congratulates you and extends its appreciation for your willingness to serve. Please accept my gratitude and high regard for the time and service you provide.

Sincerely,


Kathy Dahlkemper

cc: Douglas Smith, Clerk
Perry Wood, executive director, Erie County Gaming Revenue Authority
File



COUNTY OF ERIE

OFFICE OF COUNTY EXECUTIVE

Kathy Dahlkemper
COUNTY EXECUTIVE

MEMORANDUM

TO: Members of Erie County Council

FROM: Kathy Dahlkemper, 
County Executive

DATE: January 4, 2018

RE: Erie County Gaming Revenue Authority

As County Executive, I hereby convey notice of my appointment of Ms. Lisa Smith Presta to a five-year term on the Erie County Gaming Revenue Authority.

This represents a new appointment, with a term expiring December 31, 2022.

Thank you.

cc: Douglas Smith, Clerk
Perry Wood, executive director, Erie County Gaming Revenue Authority
File



COUNTY OF ERIE

OFFICE OF COUNTY EXECUTIVE

Kathy Dahlkemper
COUNTY EXECUTIVE

MEMORANDUM

TO: Perry Wood, executive director, ECGRA

FROM: Kristin Bowers, Office of the County Executive

DATE: January 10, 2018

RE: ECGRA board appointment

Enclosed please find paperwork regarding the appointments of Mr. Tony Logue, representing County Council's 4th District, and Katherine Wyrosdick and Lisa Smith Presta, representing the County Executive's appointments to the ECGRA board. These terms will expire December 31, 2022.

Thank you.

Erle County Courthouse ● 140 West Sixth Street ● Suite 504 ● Erle, Pennsylvania 16501

PHONE (814) 451-6333 ● FAX (814) 451-6334 ● TOLL FREE 1 (800) 352-0026 ● TDD (814) 451-6237



COUNTY OF ERIE

OFFICE OF COUNTY EXECUTIVE

Kathy Dahlkemper
COUNTY EXECUTIVE

January 10, 2018

Ms. Lisa Smith Presta
100 State St.
#700
Erie, PA 16507


Dear Ms. Presta,

Thank you for your willingness to serve on the Erie County Gaming Revenue Authority. Upon my recommendation, your appointment to the board was approved by Erie County Council on January 9, 2018. This term will expire on December 31, 2022.

The County of Erie congratulates you and extends its appreciation for your willingness to serve. Please accept my gratitude and high regard for the time and service you provide.


Sincerely,


Kathy Dahlkemper

cc: Douglas Smith, Clerk
Perry Wood, executive director, Erie County Gaming Revenue Authority
File

MEMORANDUM

TO: Perry Wood
Secretary of the Board
Erie County Gaming Revenue Authority

FROM: Lisa Smith Presta, Esq. 
ECGRA Board Director

DATE: January 18, 2018

RE: Potential Conflict of Interest Disclosure

On this date, the Board of Directors of the Erie County Gaming Revenue Authority was presented with Resolution Number 1, 2018, entitled "*Resolution to Enter into Agreements with Nine (9) Applicants to the Mission Main Street Grant Program.*" My law firm, MacDonald Illig Jones & Britton LLP, may represent one or more of the recipients, but I was not able to confirm this prior to the January 18, 2018 meeting. Accordingly, in an exercise of caution, and in order to avoid any potential conflict of interest, I will abstain from deliberating or voting on Resolution Number 1, 2018.

Please make this memorandum, initialed by me, part of the minutes of the January 18, 2018 meeting per the requirements of the Pennsylvania Public Officials and Employees Ethics Act and in accordance with applicable law.

Thank you.



January 24, 2018

Brian J. Polito, CPA
Superintendent of Schools

Bea Habursky
Assistant Superintendent

Board of School Directors

Frank Petrungrar, Jr.
President

John C. Harkins
Vice President

Linda Aleksandrowicz

Robert S. Casillo

Robbie Fabrizi

Darlene Feeney

Angela McNair

Mary Frances Schenley

Thomas A. Spagel

Tyler Titus

Angela G. Jones
Secretary

Dear Mr. Wood,

As I hope you know, our district is embarking on a comprehensive 5-year strategic planning process to guide and improve our critical work of educating Erie's students. The planning process will begin in February 2018 and will be completed by June 2018, in time for implementation during the 2018-2019 school year. Importantly, the strategic planning exercise offers the *entire Erie community* an opportunity to articulate our collective vision, goals, and roadmap for Erie's Public Schools. It is our way of mobilizing the **diverse voices** of Erie stakeholders around a **unified direction** for our school system.

Alignment to community initiatives is vital to the strategic planning process. To that end, we are convening an **Alignment Team** made up of key community leaders to provide input during the development of our Strategic Plan. **This team will meet from 7:30 a.m. to 8:15 a.m. on the following dates: Friday, February 23; Tuesday, March 13; and Tuesday, April 3.**

We are grateful to Gannon University for agreeing to host these meetings in the Yehl Ballroom of the University's Waldron Campus Center (124 West 7th Street). Performance Fact, Inc. – an organization with extensive experience in strategic planning and community engagement – will facilitate the sessions. Please see the attached document for additional information about the Alignment Team and the planning process in general.

Your participation in these meetings is essential to developing a strategic plan that reflects our collective hopes and dreams for a stronger, thriving school system. We look forward to hearing your perspective and the diverse viewpoints of others, so that Erie's Public Schools will **move forward as one** towards accelerated learning, growth, and success for all students.

We hope you will join us! Please contact Terry Yeager at 874-6002 or tyeager@eriesd.org RSVP by February 16 to confirm your willingness and availability to serve on the Alignment Team. Thank you for your continued support of Erie's Public Schools and the 11,000 students we serve.

Sincerely,

Brian J. Polito
Superintendent of Schools

Erie's Public Schools
148 West 21st Street
Erie, PA 16502-2834
P: 814.874.6000
F: 814.874.6049
www.eriesd.org



PERFORMANCE fact, INC.

Developing leaders. Transforming Practices. Inspiring Results.

Moving Forward as One!™ Strategic Planning Process

A primary purpose of planning is to facilitate unity of purpose, or alignment. Alignment is the process of reaching mutual understanding about common goals. It gives shared meaning to the work of the school or school district, thereby enabling successful accomplishment of the goals of the organization.

To be effective, the alignment process must proactively seek out and embrace the diverse voices of the organization's diverse stakeholders. If we want all stakeholders to be committed to and be meaningfully engaged in the implementation of the plan, it is wise to involve each stakeholder in the development of the plan itself.

Strategic School Improvement Planning

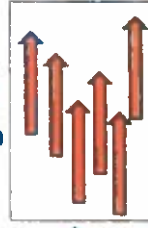
Strategic School Improvement Planning

Why Plan?

Misalignment



Alignment



Alignment: getting people, process, program and structure on the same page, going in the same direction.



Phases of the Strategic Planning Process

- 1 "Is everyone ready to go?" [Community mobilization]
- 2 "Where are we now?" [Assessment of current state]
- 3 "Where are we going next?" [Core purpose, goals, measures]
- 4 "Is everyone still with us?" [Stakeholder "reality check"]
- 5 "How are we going to get there?" [Building blocks: practices, strategies, structures]
- 6 "Have we aligned resources with the Plan?" [Allocation of people, time, \$]
- 7 "Do we have the support of our leaders and policymakers?" [Formal approval]

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THINK. BELIEVE. GROW. TOGETHER.

© Performance Fact, Inc.

THINK. BELIEVE. GROW. TOGETHER.

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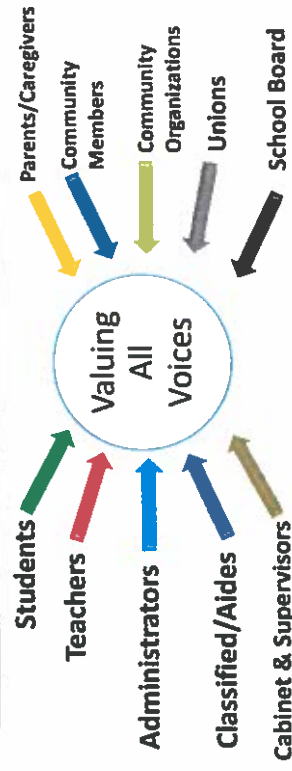
www.performancefact.com

EMBRACING VOICES OF DIVERSE STAKEHOLDERS

MOVING FORWARD AS ONE! – Performance Fact's strategic planning process – utilizes a series of stakeholder-teams to guide clients through the development of a strategic alignment plan that embraces each community's diverse voices.

Strategic School Improvement Planning

Embracing Diverse Voices & Perspectives



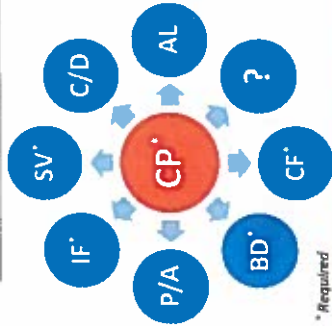
Meaningful Engagement strengthens understanding, appreciation and commitment!

© Performance Fact, Inc.

High-LEP, High-POU, High-SES

Embracing Diverse Voices & Perspectives

"Reality Check" Teams & Listening Sessions ...

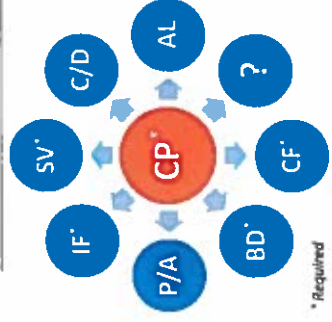


- SV = Student Voice Team
- IF = Instructional Focus Team
- C/D = Campus/Department Team
- P/A = Principals/Administrators Team
- AL = Alignment Team
- BD = Board Review Team
- CF = Community Forums

* Required

Embracing Diverse Voices & Perspectives

"Reality Check" Teams & Listening Sessions ...



- SV = Student Voice Team
- IF = Instructional Focus Team
- C/D = Campus/Department Team
- P/A = Principals/Administrators Team
- AL = Alignment Team
- BD = Board Review Team
- CF = Community Forums

* Required

DIVERSE PERSPECTIVES → UNIFIED DIRECTION

Core Planning Team (CP) consists of a cross-section of all stakeholders, including students whenever possible. Because the team includes internal and external stakeholders, it takes the lead in setting the broad direction for the plan, including the Goals, Measures and Benchmarks of Student Success as well as the "Four Pillars" (or building blocks) of educational practices, programs and structures. This team can have 20-150 members, as appropriate.

Student Voice Team (SV) consists of 30-100+ students who represent the diversity among all students (e.g., demographic, academic, attitudinal, dropouts, graduates, etc.). The team serves as the direct voice of the entire student body. Some of the students on this team may also serve on the Core Planning Team.

Instructional Focus Team (IF) takes the lead in identifying the professional practices that will enhance instructional effectiveness. The team consists of at least one teacher from each school, all (or representative sampling) of principals and other school administrators, and district-level teaching-&-learning coaches, facilitators, support staff, etc.

Principals/Administrators Team (P/A) provides school and district-level administrators an avenue for staying abreast of and guiding the work of the other groups, particularly since these school and district leaders will be directly responsible for overseeing the implementation of the plan.

Alignment Team (AL) consists of key decision-makers or opinion shapers from the key institutions within the community (e.g., school system, parent & community leaders, union, business/higher education, community-based organizations or CBOs, governmental entities, faith-based groups, etc.). The team size, membership, scope of involvement, or formal vs. informal structure depends on the local context and need.

Community Forum (CF) provides every resident an opportunity to participate in and influence the direction of the strategic plan prior to its completion and formal adoption by the Board. Community Forums are "reality check" sessions that are held at multiple times and in multiple locations throughout the community. The insights from the Community Forums are shared with the Core Planning Team for integration into the strategic plan, as appropriate.

Campus/Department "Reality Check" (C/D) offers all district employees – at the school site or in district support position – an opportunity to provide input and feedback prior to the formal adoption of the plan. The structure of the "reality check" is flexible, as long as all staff (or groups broadly representative of all staff) have a chance to voice their perspective. Those perspectives are presented to the Core Planning Team for integration into the formal plan, as appropriate.

Board Review Team (BD) ensures that the school Board is continually kept abreast of the progress of the strategic planning process. The updating process could be via formal presentations at periodic intervals, or through ongoing reporting by the Superintendent or Board-designated strategic planning point-person(s). The Board is encouraged to share its views regarding the ongoing planning process and

emerging outputs; however, the Board is urged to defer formal action on the strategic plan until it is presented by the Superintendent for formal adoption at the end of the planning process.



Strategic Planning Committee Meeting

Thursday, February 8, 2018
11:30am – 1:30pm
5240 Knowledge Parkway, Erie, PA 16510

AGENDA

- I. Settlement Agreement
- II. Discussion Items
 - a. Land Bank
 - b. Ridge Policy Group
 - c. Funding for parks
 - d. County Council remarks
- III. Revitalizing America's Smaller Legacy Cities
 - a. ECGRA Report Card
 - b. Legacy Endowment
- IV. Guideline Review
 - a. Renaissance Block Challenge
 - b. Anchor Building Program



Ridge Policy Group's Strategic Plan for ECGRA

ECGRA's Goals	State Opportunities	Federal Opportunities
Promote Commercial and Economic Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DCED: Business in Our Sites (Grants/Loans) • DCED: Keystone Communities Program (Grants) • DCED: PIDA (Loans) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EDA: Public Works program, Economic Adjustment Assistance Program
Promote Public and Private Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DCED: Greenways, Trails and Recreation Program (Grants) • DCNR: Potential use of grant programs here depending on projects and applicants. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EDA: Public Works grants • DOT: <u>TIGER Grants</u> • FTA: Metropolitan Transportation Planning Grants • DOT: FHA grants • ARC: Area Development & Access Road grants • USDA Rural Development Grants and Loans
Increase and Promote Broadband through out the city and county	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DCED: Business in Our Sites (Grants/Loans) • DCED: Keystone Communities Program • DCED: PA First (Grants/Loans) • DCED: PEDFA – Tax Exempt and Tax Bond Programs • DCED: PIDA (Loans) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>ARC: Area Development & POWER</u> • EDA: Economic Adjustment Assistance
Promote and Develop an Innovation district as well as promote centers for R&D	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governor's Office: RACP (Grants) • DCED Life Sciences Greenhouse 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>EDA: Regional Innovation Strategies Funding</u> • SBA- Regional Clusters
Summer Jobs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DCED: Pennsylvania First Program (Grants/Loans) • L&I: Industry Partnerships (Grants) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DOL: Career Pathways for Youth Demonstration Grants. • <u>YouthBuild</u>

WIOA youth training

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workforce Innovation Fund (WIF)
Other potential resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governor's Action Team • Commonwealth Financing Authority, Building Pennsylvania Program • Team PA • Historical and Museum Commission 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HUD CDBG program • National Endowment of the Arts • National Endowment for the Humanities

*Opportunity Zones
25% of PA can be designated*

ECGRA grants Impact Corry \$15,000 for downtown improvements

BY KIM LUX
kim@thecorryjournal.com

Impact Corry was awarded \$15,000 today from the Erie County Gaming Revenue Authority's Mission Main Street grant program. The local nonprofit has been a recipient of this grant every year since it was established in 2013.

"ECGRA and the Mission Main Street program have been instrumental in the positive momentum Corry's downtown business district has experienced in recent years," said Steve Bishop, Impact Corry president.

Bishop added this year's funding will go toward continuing the Downtown Master Greenway Plan, planting additional trees and purchasing signage for the rail-trail bike path.

"The only established rail-trail bike path in Erie County runs from Corry to Clymer," Bishop explained. "A new 'trail head' for this path has been established north of the Route 6 and Route 426 intersection. The proposed signage, roadway stencils and paint would be



Aime Szymanski/The Corry Journal

Impact Corry was awarded \$15,000 from the Erie County Gaming Revenue Authority today through its Mission Main Street grant program. Impact Corry has been a yearly recipient of the grant since its inception in 2013. From left are Impact Corry President Steve Bishop and ECGRA's Executive Director Perry Wood.

utilized to direct both rail-trail users, and Route 6 cyclists, to the public restrooms in Mead Park and to Corry's downtown businesses.

"This is just one more step in making Corry a bicycle friendly community, with an end goal of increasing business to our downtown mer-

chants," he added.

Bishop estimates the new signage to cost about \$6,200.

Additionally, Impact Corry would like to continue planting trees throughout the downtown district.

"We propose contracting once again with Dahlkemper Landscape Architects of Erie to plant an additional 10 trees on North Center Street," Bishop said. "Planting these 10 trees would boost the total tree count to 39, and ensure that the most significant tree-planting needs in the downtown have been fulfilled."

Bishop said that while the 29 pre-existing trees may seem like enough, there are still more spots where trees are desired.

"It seems like the 29 trees planted to date is a lot, but there are still substantial empty spaces along Center Street in particular that are begging for some greenery," he said. "Ten additional trees, combined with the 29 already planted, would go a long way toward completing that downtown greenway project."

◀ See ECGRA, P.2

Union City also receives Mission Main Street grants

BY KIM LUX
kim@thecorryjournal.com

The Erie County Gaming Revenue Authority awarded \$130,000 in Mission Main Street grants today to nine municipalities and nonprofits in Erie County.

Those receiving grants include Union City Borough, Union City Pride Inc., Impact Corry, Grand Borough, Edinboro Borough, Downtown North East Inc., Erie Downtown Partnership Inc., Preservation Erie and Sisters of St. Joseph Neighborhood Network.

Union City Borough was awarded \$15,000 for facade improvements for property and business owners in the downtown area. Downtown Union City has

been named to the National Register for Historic Places.

"The ECGRA funding will go toward improving buildings along Main Street," said Cindy Wells, borough secretary. "We will be working with Preservation Erie to develop an application process for businesses to apply to use the funding."

Wells said the improvements businesses can make will include painting, new doors, window replacements and other facade upgrades.

"It can be put toward anything that will improve the look of the buildings," Wells said. "We want to preserve the history of our downtown district."

◀ See Main Street, P.2

ECGRA

(Continued from front page)

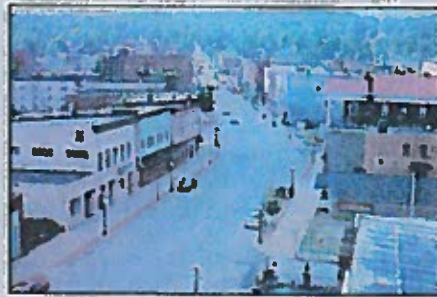
Since 2013, Impact Corry has invested over \$100,000 in improving downtown Corry.

Projects that were accomplished with ECGRA funding include: signage to direct motorists off Route 6 to downtown Corry, banners for Main Street, new waste containers and benches throughout downtown, historic interpretative panels, tree planting, purchasing downtown railroad properties and several others.

"There's rarely one big thing that brings about

change ... it's many little things that slowly add up and chip away at the status quo," Bishop said. "Being able to utilize Mission Main Street funds, along with the vital matching funds provided to date by the Corry Community Foundation and Arlene H. Smith Charitable Foundation, are what has allowed for these improvements to take place."

ECGRA has awarded a total of \$462,984, to organizations throughout the county, in Mission Main Street funding since it started in 2013.



Journal file photo

The Mission Main Street grant funding will allow Impact Corry to continue with the Downtown Master Greenway Plan, plant 10 additional trees along Center Street and post new signage near the rail-trail bike path. This photo was taken on top of the Corry Hi-Ed Building, 221 N. Center St., looking south over the downtown area.

Main Street

(Continued from front page)

According to Wells, Preservation Erie will be bringing consultants and architects to town to determine what improvements will be best.

This will be the first year Union City has received

funding from ECGRA.

"We are thrilled to receive this grant and really appreciate ECGRA's support," Wells said.

Union City Pride also received \$15,000 in Mission Main Street fund-

ing that will go toward storefront and streetscape improvements along Main Street.

"We will be focusing on the Main Street corridor in downtown Union City," said UC Pride President

Dave Nothum. "With the money, we will be replacing the banners that hang on the streetlights and replacing the benches on the sidewalks. We're also be doing some landscaping improvements as well."

January 26, 2018

Girard Borough receives ECGRA grant

By Sandy Rowles
Editor

ERIE — The Erie County Gaming Revenue Authority has placed a bet on Girard Borough's future.

Girard Borough was one of nine Erie County entities to receive gaming funds from the Erie County Gaming Revenue Authority.

The announcement was made Thursday morning Jan. 18. The money will be used by local governments, neighborhood groups, preservationists and their collaborators to retrofit buildings, parks and thoroughfares along countywide main corridors designed to help fight blight.

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Photo courtesy of Aimee Szymanski
Girard Borough Manager Rob Stabenbort, back row third from right, was one of the local officials who were on hand to receive funding from the Erie County Gaming Revenue Authority. The announcement was made Thursday, Jan. 18.

Grant

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Girard Borough received \$15,000 of a total \$130,000 Mission Main Street Grant, which was established in 2013.

"If we are able to spend it all, it will be a \$30,000 investment into Main Street," Borough Manager Rob Stabenbort said of the 50/50 grant.

This marks the first time Girard Borough received the funding. The Borough attempted to get a grant for the Keystone Block Building, but the building was not eligible for the grant.

Girard's part of the grant is earmarked for a two-part initiative. The first part includes a grant program to benefit owners of historic property and businesses in downtown Girard. The other includes a park renovation project.

Last week's grants mark the fifth round of Mission Main Street Grants and a total of \$462,984 of gaming revenue in-

Grant meeting set
A meeting will be held at 2 p.m. Sunday, Jan. 28, at the Girard Borough Office, 34 Main St. West, Girard.

vested this way by ECGRA. Mission Main Street grants are required to match ECGRA's investments, consisting of no less than \$25,000 has been spent to revitalize main streets across Erie County in five years.

Girard Borough asked for \$15,000 in its grant application, but it was not guaranteed it would receive it all. All projects required a 1:1 cash match.

Stabenbort said a lot of credit belongs to Melinda Meyers, president of Preservation Erie. Meyers wrote the grant for the Borough.

Councilwoman Jeanette

Miller has been working with Bill Callahan from the Pennsylvania Historic Preservation Office to get downtown Girard to be designated as a historical district.

A meeting will be held at 2 p.m. Sunday, Jan. 28, at the Girard Borough Office, 34 Main St. West, Girard.

The meeting will include forming a selection committee that will help decide who will get the grants and for how much.

"It is very exciting to get all \$15,000," Stabenbort said. "It is a lot easier to access new customers when the facade is in good shape and not dated."

Stabenbort added the Borough can apply again next year if the funding is available.

"I know Council is very excited about the program," Stabenbort said. "This will give the actual (building) owners some skin in the game."

Erie cast as where 'grand things' possible

By Matthew Rink
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A new book on urban renewal cities Erie as a city where "grand things are possible." Bruce Katz, a scholar with the Brookings Institution, and co-author Jeremy Nowak, dedicate a portion of the 10th and final chapter of their recently released book "The New Localism: How Cities Can Thrive in the Age of Populism" to Erie.

The book, published by the Brookings Institution Press, examines the different approaches cities are

taking — and the changing power structures they rely on — to flourish. The authors highlight the work of Pittsburgh, Indianapolis and Copenhagen as cities that no longer function as "administrative arms of higher levels of government," and where "power increasingly belongs to the problem solvers" who "congregate disproportionately at the local level." These cities have taken innovative approaches to dealing with social, economic and environmental problems.

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ERIE

that continue to this day — the authors specifically cite GE Transportation's recent workforce cuts — Erie "still retains enormous assets, many of them concentrated in or near the historic downtown."

Among those assets are Erie Insurance, Velocity Network, both of which are building new or renovating old downtown offices; McManis and Monsalve Associates, which created the downtown innovation district; Mercyhurst University, cited for developing academic programs focused on risk control, insurance underwriting, cybersecurity and data analytics; the Erie County Gaming Revenue Authority and the Lake Erie College of

Osteopathic Medicine.

In November, Katz was in Erie when local leaders unveiled plans for the downtown innovation district. He was also in town at the time as a returning speaker for Jefferson Educational Society's Global Summit series.

A graduate of Brown University, Yale Law School, and a visiting professor at the London School of Economics, Katz coauthored "The Metropolitan Revolution" in 2013. He previously served as chief of staff to U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Secretary Henry Cisneros and was the senior counsel and staff director of the U.S. Senate Subcommittee

on Housing and Urban Affairs.

Nowak is a chief strategist for Spring Point Partners and is a non-resident senior fellow at the Brookings Institution. He also serves on the board of directors of the Urban Science Center in Philadelphia and on the advisory board of the Institute for Urban Research at the University of Pennsylvania, among other things, according to his biography. Nowak created Philadelphia-based The Reinvestment Fund, one of the largest community investment institutions in the United States, and chaired the board of the Federal Reserve Bank of Philadelphia.

ANOTHER VIEW

GUEST VIEWPOINT

Loan program empowers Erie County's minority entrepreneurs

By Andre Horton
and the Rev. Dale Snyder

A November study conducted by 24/7 Wall Street, a USA Today content partner, detailed the disparities in American cities between black and white residents in various socioeconomic measures. The subsequent ranking system, rating Erie as the worst place in America for black families, and media coverage of the report left a blemish on Erie's reputation. Lack of educational opportunity and relatively high poverty and unemployment levels are serious issues facing black families in Erie. The report assessed that the median income of African Americans was 43 percent of what their white neighbors are earning, and that a staggering one in four (24.6 percent) of African Americans are unemployed as compared to 4 percent of whites. Erasing this disturbing trend is a challenge that needs to be taken head-on, head out of the sand, and in partnership with white, black and all minority citizens and leaders across Erie County.

We all must take ownership of the issue by setting policies and making investments to help chip away at this unsettling reality.

The Erie Urban Entrepreneur Program, financed by the Erie County Gaming Revenue Authority (ECGRA) and managed by Bridgeway Capital, provides much-needed access to capital for African-American entrepreneurs in Erie County. This program is a reason for hope and could serve as a guide for how to successfully work with minority business owners and aspiring entrepreneurs.

Minority-owned businesses often become a hub of employment in emerging and ethnically diverse neighborhoods and, in turn, these businesses spur community development. However, without access to capital, many minority-owned businesses fail to reach their full potential.

A 2017 study commissioned by the Minority Business Development Agency (MBDA), under the U.S. Department of Commerce, showed that access to capital remains the most important factor limiting the establishment, expansion and growth of minority-owned businesses. According

to the study, if U.S. minority business enterprises were to obtain entrepreneurial parity, the U.S. economy would realize 13 million more jobs.

There are some systemic barriers the MBDA identified as holding some people back when it comes to starting, growing or expanding a business — and the disparity is remarkable.

Minority firms are more likely to be denied loans at a rate nearly three times higher than non-minority firms. Minority firms, when approved, receive lower loan amounts and are likely to pay higher interest rates. (The average loan amount for all high sales non-minority firms was more than twice the amount for minority firms. And minority-owned firms are more likely to not apply for loans due to rejection fears. The fear factor in minority communities is difficult to quantify, but this study reported it as double the fear that a non-minority entrepreneur might experience.)

The Erie Urban Entrepreneur Program is taking those barriers head-on and has created a model that works with entrepreneurs ready to launch or expand their businesses. Reaching out directly to

African-American community members and launching the program at Erie City Hall, with no barriers to entry, allowed for local entrepreneurs to find a pathway toward capital acquisition. The program further differentiates itself in the market by offering a streamlined process, including a loan checklist with more relaxed lending standards and working directly with banks who had declined loans to some applicants.

Loan recipients are thriving and working to expand their new businesses — many of whom credit Bridgeway Capital's Erie region director, T.J. King, for working hand-in-hand with entrepreneurs. Bridgeway Capital looks at the whole borrower and not just the application. Dapper Don's Styling Lounge and Girl 6 are open for business, while the Learning Ladder Early Child Care Center is busy working on an expansion that would mean new hires. And, an encouraging sign that young black entrepreneurs are a good investment, the delinquency rate for this program remains very low, at just about 1 percent.

Since opening its Erie office in 2012, thanks in

large part to ECGRA's initial \$100,000 investment, Bridgeway Capital has offered 62 loans in Erie County totaling more than \$10 million. Twelve of those loans totaling \$718,000 were made through the Erie Urban Entrepreneur Program, helping to launch and grow minority-owned businesses.

The program, modeled after a pilot project launched by Bridgeway Capital in Pittsburgh, was conceptualized by ECGRA two years ago when its leadership saw a need for more programs to support African-American entrepreneurs in Erie. ECGRA's investment in Bridgeway was a wise one, and its leadership's foresight to carve out a percentage for minority entrepreneurs was enlightened. Erie's burgeoning entrepreneurial spirit is spreading to the minority-owned business community, and we are encouraged by this embrace by ECGRA and Bridgeway Capital.

Andre Horton represents the 2nd District on Erie County Council. The Rev. Dale Snyder is pastor of St. James AME Church.