



MEETING OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE AND BOARD OF DIRECTORS
Knowledge Park; 5240 Knowledge Parkway; Erie, PA 16510
October 12, 2017

AGENDA

1. CALL TO ORDER
2. ROLL CALL
3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA
4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – September 2017
5. COMMENTS BY CHAIRMAN
6. PUBLIC COMMENT
7. PRESENTATION
8. COMMITTEE REPORTS
 - a. Treasurer's Report
 - b. Regional Assets Committee
 - c. Strategic Planning Committee
 - d. Update from County Council
 - e. Update from County Executive's Office
9. REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
10. SOLICITOR'S REPORT
11. OLD BUSINESS
12. NEW BUSINESS
 - a. Resolution Number 12, 2017 – Resolution to adopt the 2017 ECGRA Regional Assets Guidelines & Application for Mission Main Street
13. ADJOURNMENT

Next Regularly Scheduled Board Meeting of ECGRA

Date: Thursday, November 9, 2017
Time: 8:30 a.m.
Location: Knowledge Park; 5240 Knowledge Parkway; Erie, PA 16510





Erie County Gaming Revenue Authority
Minutes of the Board of Directors' Meeting
September 14, 2017

CALL TO ORDER

The Board of Directors' Meeting of the Erie County Gaming Revenue Authority was held on September 14, 2017 at The Erie Zoo, 423 West 38th Street; Erie, PA 16508. Legal Notice of the meeting was given through an advertisement appearing in the Erie Times-News. The meeting was called to order by the Chair.

ROLL CALL

Mr. Bagnoni (via phone), Mr. Barney (arrives late), Mr. Domino, Mr. Paris, Mr. Sample, and Mr. Yaple. Mr. Lee, Mr. Wachter, and Mr. Wood are also present.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Mr. Yaple makes a motion to approve the agenda. Mr. Paris seconds the motion. Motion carries 5-0.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – August 2017

Mr. Paris makes a motion to approve the minutes. Mr. Yaple seconds the motion. Motion carries 5-0.

COMMENTS BY THE CHAIR

Mr. Sample: We still have no idea what is going on with our life but it appears that the House was working on things last night. Hopefully this will all get resolved because I know that the "Indians are getting restless" not knowing what is going on.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comment.

PRESENTATIONS

No presentations.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

- a. **Treasurer's Report – Mr. Wood:** I will fill in since Mr. Peters is not here. Briefly, on the Profit & Loss – a quick reminder about Gaming Revenue – you'll see \$172,000 coming in in August; that is for the second quarter and a reminder that it is an incomplete quarter. It's two out of three months and it's incomplete because the Supreme Court Stay expired at the end of May. In the year-to-date, you'll see the interest income and the summary of municipal grants and the first payment to the Summer Jobs Program.

On the Balance Sheet, the only major update that has been done there is that we have removed the Lead Asset Endowment from the Balance Sheet on the advice of Counsel. Tim actually has a memo on this under the Solicitor's Report. Do you want to talk about it for a moment?

Mr. Wachter: We reviewed the accounting standards and found that, because there is no variance power associated with the money (essentially we have no control over the money), that is not an item to be listed on our Balance Sheet. Mr. Peters asked for this opinion because the past auditors said to put it on our Balance Sheet and the current auditors said to take it off. Who is right? We went back and checked and we agree with the current auditors that it is correct to have it off of the Balance Sheet.

Mr. Wood: Next is the Statement of Cash Flows, then the Budget vs. Actual. There is something I am going to ask you gentlemen to vote on today and that is every two years we renew our online grantmaking system with a company called Foundant. We started using Foundant two years ago and our grantmaking system has been smooth; we have had no technical problems since we moved over to them. We have started to accumulate data in that system. I forgot to bring that up during budgeting because it is only every two years; we realized that when we got the notification from them that our license was going to expire. It's \$9,200 for two years, so it will require Board action.

We are going to create a line item under "Other Types of Expenses" for the online grantmaking system. I'm asking you to please vote on that under Old Business when we get to that point, but I can answer any questions you have.

Mr. Sample: So, we're not going to amend the budget, we're just going to put it under "Other Types of Expenses"?

Mr. Wood: If that is acceptable.

Mr. Yapple: Do you have to buy a two-year subscription?

Mr. Wood: Yes. That is the way it is structured.

Mr. Barney: But if we only use it for a year, do we get a refund?

Mr. Wood: I didn't ask.

Moving on to the Schedule of Grant Reserves, you'll see the summaries there. Tammi and I continue to evolve this document so it can best fit the needs of this Board to understand where we are at, certainly with the Committed Funds, and what we have done as of this current fiscal year.

The most changes came to the Committed Funds section at the end which now include what happened in the current month, the original commitment, and the amount remaining for distribution. That certainly helps us in the area of future grantmaking management.

Finally, we have the Check Detail; you'll see the settlement payments did go out as of August and the rest of our expenses there, including the payment for our audit. I can answer any questions you may have about that.

Mr. Yapple makes a motion to approve the financials. Mr. Domino seconds the motion. Motion carries 6 – 0.

- b. Regional Assets Committee – Mr. Wood: The only thing to report is that we did hold a grantmaking meeting in which we discussed the Community Asset Grants. Mr. Sample and Mr. Paris attended that and we did have two community advisory panel members, Breanna Adams from the County Health Department and Ashley Lawson from Gannon University.
- Mr. Sample: I just want to say that they were very helpful; they did an excellent job. They were from the latest round of graduates from The Jefferson Leadership Academy.
- Mr. Wood: That's how Tom found them.
- Mr. Sample: We have been very fortunate in getting people from the community come in; they've always had very valuable input.
- Mr. Wood: The results of that session are in New Business, under Resolution Number 10, 2017 to approve this year's competitive Community Assets Grants.
- Mr. Sample: There were some that we did not fund because, even though they were qualified under the guidelines, they just weren't a real good fit.
- Mr. Wood: We can certainly answer any of your questions regarding the Corry Beaver Club, the Edinboro Market, the North East Arts Council and the Veteran's Miracle Center. The last one we believe did not qualify based on the way the application was written and the functions of the organization. Even though they are all good organizations, they just didn't qualify fully.
- Mr. Sample: The Corry Beaver Club, for example, there just wasn't enough information.
- c. Strategic Planning Committee – Mr. Paris: We had a meeting on August 30, 2017 and a presentation from PACA, which was very nice. They were asking us for money, which would be part of a Pilot program, which we don't have anymore. We talked about bringing that back and changing the Strategic Planning to allow that to happen again, so we will be working on that.
- We also talked a bit about the STEM funding.
- Mr. Wood: We had an interesting discussion about the STEM funding, but it was brief. Once I got into the initial research, I realized this was going to be a much longer-term project in order to get to the bottom of how it would be most effective for us, as a grantmaking agency, to interact with the schools.
- Mr. Paris: We talked about the future of the Multi-Municipal grants and how that is all going to work out and hopefully making it more of a sustaining fund and we're looking at creating ways to do that.
- Mr. Wood: I would just like to add that through my Director's Report I am entering into the record Memo #1 and Memo #2 of 2017. In Memo #1 we talk about updating the Strategic Plan by looking at the idea of Pilots; how we can move it from our operations budget into a grantmaking bucket, what's the smartest way to do that. But that led to a larger discussion that it's been about two years since we've updated our Strategic Plan so we probably need to look at it holistically and have further conversations moving forward.
- Memo #2 is about the idea of sustainability funding, which was an interesting discussion; we've had this talk on and off for several years about creating another endowment for some of these other sources but we have not taken action on it. So now that we are in the Strategic Plan review process, now would be the time to discuss it in further detail.
- I'm entering these two Memo's into the record for your consideration.
- d. Update from County Council – Mr. Breneman is not present to report.

- e. Update from County Executive's Office – Mr. Lee: Thank you Mr. Chairman. This coming Tuesday, September 19, 2017, GECAC will be doing their wrap-up of the Summer Jobs & More Program. Mr. Wood, Mr. Batchelor, and some of the key members from the County as far as from an investment standpoint have been invited to attend. This meeting is open to anyone who would like to come but it is targeted to the employers that have participated in the program. We are going to be receiving their feedback on the pros and cons about what can be done moving forward to improve the program. In addition, Keystone Research Corporation will be presenting their report on the program, which is a really good time for us to engage the employers in the feedback process because we are looking to improve the program. Again, that will be this Tuesday from 9:30am – 11:00am at the Blasco Library.

Another initiative I would like to give a brief update on is the Community College initiative. The County has entered into an MOU with Empower Erie, and Empower Erie will play the role of Project Manager; the County will play the role of Project Administrator; the County will run this particular initiative. The County Executive has asked me to oversee this project personally and this is a project that we feel is really needed for the community, especially in light of Edinboro announcing that they will be transitioning out of the Community College arena starting next fall.

More importantly, we have continued to hear from employers in the region that they need a training workforce development center that is going to make their employees and their business more competitive.

The State had a meeting yesterday where they covered four key areas. One area was to formally announce a sub-committee which will be three persons that will represent and review the plan and submit it to the general Board, which is the State Board of Education. Two, they have reached out formally to the Governor's office to ask and request whether they will be putting this in the budget for 2018-19. Three, they have scheduled a public hearing here in Erie, which we requested, which will be October 10, 2017, Tuesday from 6pm – 9pm at the Blasco Library in the Hirt Auditorium.

The fourth was with the Department of Education. They had actually requested this back in July but this bears repeating; they have asked the Pennsylvania Department of Education to review the plan and come back with findings and recommendations. This is a process that could take up to year from the time that we submitted the application, which was June 30, 2017. We will continue to engage the public in this process; all this information is on our website in real time. This is an initiative that, we feel, is really going to add a lot of value to the region. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Barney: You spoke on the budget and whether it was going to be in there. They are having problems getting the regular school district their money through the current budget.

Mr. Lee: That's a good point. The money is going to come out of a different bucket of money; it's not going to come out of the money set aside for the Erie School District or other school districts. There is an appropriation at the State level for Community Colleges, so that would be part of that particular budget.

As far as the County share, we are looking at using the Gaming Funds, a portion of the Gaming Funds. We are also looking to use the money from the long-term debt from the Airport and the Erie Insurance Arena, initially. Make no mistake, this is a process. We're going to have to look at the financials very closely, the State will provide us feedback, we're going to have to make sure our projections are very realistic for the first five years, but the timing is perfect for us to sit down and work through this process to see the value of it.

Mr. Sample: Initially, didn't they say it would be a two-year process?

Mr. Lee: They may have said that. To be honest, the last time they reviewed a Community College application was 1993. We've been told that realistically it will be a one-

year process, but someone could have shared that it could be up to two years but we've been told that they are looking to have this finalized and completed within twelve months.

REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Mr. Wood: As Mr. Lee said, there is a wrap-up meeting coming up for the Summer Jobs Program. I have been very pleased with what Keystone Research has produced as far as an annual evaluation program and I think it has given us the kind of information we need to determine long-term trends and where the program is headed and formative ways that we can beef it up. It's a good use of our time to ask the employers what their experiences were like and have them, in a focus group fashion, give us some feedback; that has always been a great move.

As far as the rest of the Executive Director's Report, you will see the standard things in there; letters of appreciation, news clippings, one of which is about the Innovation District which continues to move forward. I have a whole list of projects including the Innovation District in which we, at some point, need to do some type of midterm presentation from the group; not necessarily a daily collection report at this point but a point where these projects get to a certain level and they have to come in and report to the Board.

The Innovation District is one of them. I think that having a presentation from the Innovation District is a good idea since they have an Executive Director now.

Mr. Sample: Where does their Director come from?

Mr. Wood: I met him right before they hired him. I'm thinking he's from California. I have a brief biography on him that I can get to you. He came from Lockheed Martin; that's the company he was working with. He had some kind of business in between that didn't work out so now he's back in the Innovation game.

I have a whole list of organizations that we would cycle in for presentations.

Finally, the big thing we did in the last month, although we continue to vet big projects like G.R.E.A.T.T. and PACA, we also had a Strategic Planning Committee Meeting which I thought was very productive. I have two Memos to enter into the record that are a result of that meeting in moving that Strategic Plan forward and updating that in the near future.

We do continue to monitor Gaming Legislation and we think that perhaps next week we'll know better if something will get through the Senate and the House, but I feel like I've said that to you before. Whatever happens in Harrisburg, happens. We're hopeful; fingers crossed. Sen. Laughlin continues to be a strong supporter of what we're doing here at ECGRA and that reflects in his conversations with us about the progress of the legislation.

Mr. Sample: I am very appreciative of Sen. Laughlin and his efforts. I think we need to get Michelle more on board. Corry and Union City have got a lot of funding and those aren't in Dan's territory and I know Michele wants to be actively involved.

Mr. Wood: That's a great point. I talk about Sen. Laughlin a lot but there is another Senator from Erie County and that is Sen. Michele Brooks. She represents some of those rural areas and she has been updated as well, but maybe not as aggressively as we've updated Sen. Laughlin. I think it would be good, from a government relations standpoint, to keep her in the loop on what we're doing, as well.

SOLICITOR'S REPORT

Mr. Wachter: I would like to enter my Memo that is on the SharePoint site into record; the opinion from Elliott Ehrenreich of my firm regarding the Endowment and whether it's appropriate for that to be on the Balance Sheet.

OLD BUSINESS

Mr. Wood: The Online Grant Management System (Foundant) is \$9,200; if the Board is amiable to us continuing that Online Grant Making System.

Mr. Yapple makes a motion to continue with the current Online Grant Making System. Mr. Domino seconds the motion. Motion carries 6-0.

NEW BUSINESS

- a. Resolution No. 10, 2017 – Resolution to enter into agreements with twenty (20) Erie County Community Assets in the arts, culture, entertainment, heritage, and recreation-based nonprofit sector.

Mr. Paris makes a motion to approve the Resolution. Mr. Barney seconds the motion. Motion carries 6-0.

- b. Resolution No. 11, 2017 – Resolution to accept the 2016-17 audited financial statements. You will see the final product of our audit, which is in the blue folder in front of you. This is MaherDuessel's first time auditing us, and I can tell you from the staff experience, it was a positive one; I felt like I learned something in the process. There are a couple things I would like to point out to you that were discussed at the last Board Meeting pertaining to the audit that I had further discussion with the Treasurer, as well as the auditors, about.

The first one is on page four in the Notes Receivable. This was a significant addition of language to the audit process in which we created an allowance for potentially uncollectable Notes in the amount of \$460,000. That number was discussed and agreed upon based upon the percentage that we thought would be potentially, not indefinitely, but potentially uncollectable. So, the idea of cost allowance was inserted.

The second thing is on page six in the Irrevocable Gifts – The Community Foundation. We had never reported the marked value of the consolidated Funds before; they recommended that we reflect that. Even though it is no longer on our Balance Sheet, they thought it was still valuable to reflect the value of that Fund, which is, as of March 31, 2017, \$12.8M.

On Page 8, Section 9, Contingencies, they thought it was important to reflect the potential financial vulnerability of ECGRA by adding in this paragraph. Tim and I both worked on this contingency paragraph from a legal standpoint in which it talks about Local Share Gaming Revenue and how the Commonwealth is basically the single source of revenue for ECGRA.

Mr. Barney makes a motion to approve the Resolution. Mr. Domino seconds the motion. Motion carries 6-0.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Paris makes a motion to adjourn.

Erie County Gaming Revenue Authority
Profit & Loss
September 2017

	<u>September</u>	<u>YTD</u>	<u>Budget YTD</u>	<u>2017-18 Budget</u>
Ordinary Income/Expense				
Income				
44800 · Gaming Revenue		426,612.64		
46400 · Other Types of Income				
46410 · Interest Income - Savings	6,767.59	38,236.30		
46420 · Interest Income - EDF #1		7,500.00		
46421 · Interest Income - EDF #2		12,000.00		
46422 · Interest Income - BWC	7,666.67	15,250.00		
Total Income	<u>14,434.26</u>	<u>499,598.94</u>		
Expense				
62100 · Contracted Services	8,115.10	51,638.37	63,799.98	127,600.00
62800 · Facilities & Equipment	1,386.89	9,462.21	11,794.98	23,590.00
65000 · Office Administration	2,653.77	17,816.08	14,127.60	28,250.00
65100 · Other Types of Expenses	11,648.72	60,229.46	29,749.98	59,500.00
66000 · Payroll Expenses	14,581.28	104,708.79	108,099.96	216,200.00
Total Expense	<u>38,385.76</u>	<u>243,854.91</u>	<u>227,572.50</u>	<u>455,140.00</u>
Net Ordinary Income	-23,951.50	255,744.03		
Other Income/Expense				
70000 · Grants / Settlements				
70030 · Community Assets	150,518.00	150,518.00		
70050 · Municipal Settlements		106,653.16		
70060 · Human Services		19,500.00		
70070 · Special Events		171,014.05		
70090 · Multi-Municipal Collaboration		238,350.00		
70120 · Summer Jobs Program	61,051.66	132,516.43		
70130 · Small Business Financing				
70136 · Ingnite Erie Industry + University		250,000.00		
70150 · Shaping Tomorrow				
70153 · Community College		15,000.00		
70157 · Innovation District		25,000.00		
Total 70000 · Grants / Settlements	<u>211,569.66</u>	<u>1,108,551.64</u>		
Net Other Income	<u>(211,569.66)</u>	<u>(1,108,551.64)</u>		
Net Income	<u>(235,521.16)</u>	<u>(852,807.61)</u>		



Erie County Gaming Revenue Authority
Balance Sheet
As of September 30, 2017

	September
ASSETS	
Current Assets	
Checking/Savings	
10000 · ErieBank - Checking	76,391.13
10100 · ErieBank - Savings	
10100 · Uncommitted Funds	7,829,046.49
10101 · Committed Funds	3,341,366.57
10102 · Restricted Funds	426,612.64
Total 10100 · ErieBank - Savings	11,597,025.70
Total Checking/Savings	11,673,416.83
Other Current Assets	
12000 · Notes Receivable	
12001 · Note Receivable - EDF #1	500,000.00
12002 · Note Receivable - EDF #2	800,000.00
12003 · Note Receivable - CIBA	18,846.25
12004 · Note Receivable - BWC	1,000,000.00
12005 · Note Receivable - Progress	1,000,000.00
Total 12000 · Notes Receivable	3,318,846.25
14500 · Prepaid Insurance	3,250.63
Total Other Current Assets	3,322,096.88
Total Current Assets	14,995,513.71
TOTAL ASSETS	14,995,513.71
LIABILITIES & EQUITY	
Equity	
30000 · Opening Balance Equity	2,927,064.18
32000 · Unrestricted Net Assets	12,921,257.14
Net Income	(852,807.61)
Total Equity	14,995,513.71
TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITY	14,995,513.71



Erie County Gaming Revenue Authority
Statement of Cash Flows
September 2017

	<u>September</u>
OPERATING ACTIVITIES	
Net Income	(235,521.16)
Adjustments to reconcile Net Income to net cash provided by operations:	
14500 · Prepaid Insurance	<u>812.66</u>
 Net cash provided by Operating Activities	 <u>(234,708.50)</u>
 Net cash increase for period	 (234,708.50)
Cash at beginning of period	<u>11,908,125.33</u>
 Cash at end of period	 <u><u>11,673,416.83</u></u>



Erie County Gaming Revenue Authority
Budget vs. Actual
September 2017

Expense	September	YTD	Budget	Over/(Under) Budget	% of Budget
62100 · Contracted Services					
62110 · Accounting Fees	1,534.00	6,534.00	6,500.00	34.00	100.52%
62120 · Government Relations Services	4,140.00	13,197.87	50,000.00	(36,802.13)	26.40%
62130 · Professional Services	275.40	20,400.20	36,000.00	(15,599.80)	56.67%
62140 · Legal Services	2,085.80	9,194.30	30,000.00	(20,805.70)	30.65%
62145 · Website Design	0.00	1,753.50	4,000.00	(2,246.50)	43.84%
62150 · Payroll Services	79.90	558.50	1,100.00	(541.50)	50.77%
Total 62100 · Contracted Services	8,115.10	51,638.37	127,600.00	(75,961.63)	40.47%
62800 · Facilities & Equipment					
62840 · Office Equipment	0.00	1,528.96	5,000.00	(3,471.04)	30.58%
62850 · Janitorial Services	0.00	998.80	590.00	408.80	169.29%
62890 · Rent	1,386.89	6,934.45	18,000.00	(11,065.55)	38.52%
Total 62800 · Facilities & Equipment	1,386.89	9,462.21	23,590.00	(14,127.79)	40.11%
65000 · Office Administration					
65010 · Books, Subscriptions, Dues	160.52	2,738.56	5,000.00	(2,261.44)	54.77%
65020 · Postage	65.99	538.87	600.00	(61.13)	89.81%
65030 · Printing	0.00	695.00	1,250.00	(555.00)	55.60%
65040 · Office Supplies	414.36	1,233.28	2,800.00	(1,566.72)	44.05%
65050 · Cell Phone	418.23	910.60	2,200.00	(1,289.40)	41.39%
65060 · Copier Lease	182.00	942.00	2,100.00	(1,158.00)	44.86%
65070 · Copier Printing Costs	150.41	1,499.33	3,500.00	(2,000.67)	42.84%
65080 · Bank Fees	0.00	56.98	50.00	6.98	113.96%
65085 · Professional Development	195.00	6,517.00	5,000.00	1,517.00	130.34%
65090 · Meeting Expenses	979.81	2,518.33	5,500.00	(2,981.67)	45.79%
65095 · Miscellaneous Expense	87.45	166.13	250.00	(83.87)	66.45%
Total 65000 · Office Administration	2,653.77	17,816.08	28,250.00	(10,433.92)	63.07%
65100 · Other Types of Expenses					
65105 · Outreach	0.00	8,143.64	12,000.00	(3,856.36)	67.86%
65110 · Advertising	0.00	7,421.12	12,000.00	(4,578.88)	61.84%
65115 · Phone/IT/Fax	1,182.10	7,181.68	18,000.00	(10,818.32)	39.90%
65120 · Insurance	812.66	4,875.96	9,500.00	(4,624.04)	51.33%
65130 · Grant Management Software	9,200.00	9,200.00	0.00	9,200.00	100.00%
65150 · Travel	453.96	3,562.72	8,000.00	(4,437.28)	44.53%
65160 · Special Projects	0.00	19,844.34	19,844.34	0.00	100.00%
Total 65100 · Other Types of Expenses	11,648.72	60,229.46	59,500.00	729.46	101.23%
66000 · Payroll Expenses					
66005 · Salaries & Wages	13,004.59	94,186.30	194,000.00	(99,813.70)	48.55%
66010 · FITW Tax	1,004.86	6,884.01	14,400.00	(7,515.99)	47.81%
66015 · FUTA Tax	0.00	41.99	150.00	(108.01)	27.99%
66020 · PASUI Tax	67.33	578.01	2,000.00	(1,421.99)	28.90%
66500 · Retirement	504.50	3,018.48	5,650.00	(2,631.52)	53.42%
Total 66000 · Payroll Expenses	14,581.28	104,708.79	216,200.00	(111,491.21)	48.43%
Total Expense	38,385.76	243,854.91	455,140.00	(211,285.09)	53.58%



Erie County Gaming Revenue Authority
Schedule of Grant Reserve
As of September 30, 2017

	September	YTD	Totals/Subtotals
Uncommitted Funds	7,829,046.49		
Committed Funds	3,341,366.57		

2017 Restricted Funds:

First Quarter Gaming Revenue		254,570.93	
Second Quarter Gaming Revenue		172,041.71	
Third Quarter Gaming Revenue		0.00	
Fourth Quarter Gaming Revenue		0.00	426,612.64

Disbursements:

First Quarter Disbursements		742,533.78	
Second Quarter Disbursements	211,569.66	341,044.86	
Third Quarter Disbursements		0.00	
Fourth Quarter Disbursements		0.00	1,083,578.64

Disbursements Detail

Grants/Settlements

Community Assets

Albion Area Fair, Inc.	6,096.00	6,096.00	
AmeriMarsala	9,180.00	9,180.00	
Community Access Television	9,039.00	9,039.00	
Corry Area Historical Society	9,530.00	9,530.00	
Edinboro Arts & Music Fest	8,199.00	8,199.00	
Erie Contemporary Ballet Theatre	5,886.00	5,886.00	
Erie PAL	10,791.00	10,791.00	
Erie Yesterday	8,064.00	8,064.00	
Fort LeBoeuf Historical Society	8,797.00	8,797.00	
Gannon University	8,829.00	8,829.00	
Greater Erie Alliance for Equality	3,474.00	3,474.00	
Humane Society of NWPA	5,326.00	5,326.00	
Lake Erie Fanfare, Inc.	7,988.00	7,988.00	
Martin Luther King Center	9,320.00	9,320.00	
North East Little League	6,105.00	6,105.00	
PACA	10,161.00	10,161.00	
Union City Area School Dist. Foundation	10,091.00	10,091.00	
Waterford Community Fair Association	5,466.00	5,466.00	
Wesleyville Area Museum	1,654.00	1,654.00	
Woman's Club of Erie	6,522.00	6,522.00	150,518.00

Human Services

All God's Children Ministries		2,500.00	
Community Resources for Independence		7,500.00	
Mission Empower		3,500.00	
Sisters of Mercy		6,000.00	19,500.00

Lead Assets

	0.00	0.00
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Erie County Gaming Revenue Authority
Schedule of Grant Reserve
As of September 30, 2017

	<u>September</u>	<u>YTD</u>	<u>Totals/Subtotals</u>
Special Events			
Albion Area Fair, Inc.		1,397.40	
Asbury Woods Partnership, Inc.		923.10	
Bayfront NATO, Inc.		3,697.50	
Borough of Union City		1,804.55	
Borough of Wesleyville		4,307.80	
CAFÉ		487.90	
Crime Victim Center of Erie County, Inc.		5,959.35	
Downtown North East		2,696.20	
Dr. Gertrude A. Barber Foundations		11,290.55	
Downtown Edinboro Art & Music Festival		536.35	
Edinboro Highland Games		14,875.00	
Erie Art & Music Festival		13,110.40	
Erie Asian Pacific American Association		2,489.65	
Erie Contemporary Ballet Theatre		563.55	
Erie Downtown Partnership		765.00	
Erie Drum Corps Association		871.25	
Erie Homes for Children & Adults		2,346.00	
Erie Lions Club Save an Eye Game		992.80	
Erie Regional Chamber & Growth Partnership		4,165.00	
Film Society of NW PA		908.65	
Goodell Gardens & Homestead		5,363.50	
Harborcreek Township		1,909.10	
Holy Trinity Roman Catholic Church		18,494.30	
Jefferson Educational Society		1,916.75	
Lake Erie Arboretum At Frontier		5,057.50	
Lake Erie Ballet		566.10	
Lake Erie Fanfare, Inc.		7,092.40	
Mercy Center for Women		20,839.45	
The Nonprofit Partnership		1,375.30	
North East Community Fair Association		3,202.80	
Presque Isle Partnership		3,791.00	
Roar on the Shore		4,817.80	
SafeNet		2,550.00	
Saint Patrick's Church		2,135.20	
Sister's of St. Joseph Neighborhood Network		4,037.50	
Union City Pride		1,065.05	
WQLN Public Media		2,454.80	
Waterford Community Fair Association		4,247.45	
Wattsburg Agricultural Society		2,310.30	
YMCA of Greater Erie		2,125.00	
Young Artists Debut Orchestra		854.25	
Youth Leadership Institute of Erie		620.50	
		<u>620.50</u>	<u>171,014.05</u>

Erie County Gaming Revenue Authority
Schedule of Grant Reserve
As of September 30, 2017

	<u>September</u>	<u>YTD</u>	<u>Totals/Subtotals</u>
Municipalities			
Multi-Municipal Collaboration			
Erie Area Council of Governments		100,000.00	
Jefferson Educational Society		97,000.00	
Girard Township		16,350.00	
Redevelopment Authority - City of Cory		25,000.00	238,350.00
Municipal Settlements			
Erie County		11,731.85	
Greene Township		11,731.85	
McKean Township		11,731.85	
Millcreek Township		11,731.85	
Summit Township		47,993.91	
Waterford Township		11,731.85	106,653.16
Neighborhoods & Communities		0.00	0.00
Small Business Financing			
Ignite Erie Industry + University; Penn State Erie - The Behrend College		250,000.00	250,000.00
Youth & Education			
Mercyhurst University - Innovation District		25,000.00	
Summer Jobs Program	61,051.66	132,516.43	157,516.43
Total Funds Disbursements	211,569.66	1,093,551.64	1,093,551.64
Committed Funds:			
	<u>September</u>	<u>Amount Remaining</u>	<u>Original Commitment</u>
1855 Capital Partners		500,000.00	500,000.00
Enterprise Development Fund		500,000.00	500,000.00
GECAC - Summer Jobs Program	61,051.66	17,483.57	150,000.00
Penn State, The Behrend College - Ignite Erie		250,000.00	750,000.00
PennVenture Partners		1,000,000.00	1,000,000.00
Shaping Tomorrow			
Empower Erie - Community College		370,000.00	400,000.00
Erie's Public Schools - Tech After Hours		133,333.00	200,000.00
Erie's Public Schools - Community Schools		75,000.00	150,000.00
Gannon University - Go College		31,250.00	125,000.00
Gannon University - East-West Bayfront Plan		14,300.00	50,000.00
Mercyhurst University - Innovation District		350,000.00	400,000.00
Primary Health Network - School Based Health Center		100,000.00	100,000.00
Total Committed Funds	61,051.66	3,341,366.57	4,325,000.00



Erie County Gaming Revenue Authority
Check Detail Report
September 2017

<u>Date</u>	<u>Num</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Memo</u>	<u>Amount</u>
09/05/2017	EFT	ECCA, Inc.	08/19/2017 to 09/01/2017 Payroll	-6,554.73
09/05/2017	EFT	Fidelity Investments	08/19/2017 to 09/01/2017 Retirement	-439.15
09/06/2017	2221	Great America Financial Services	September 2017 Copier Lease & Copies	-332.00
09/06/2017	2222	Velocity Network, Inc.	September 2017 Phone/IT/Fax	-810.17
09/08/2017	2223	Greater Erie Community Action Committee	Annual Dinner	-500.00
09/11/2017	2224	Amanda Burlingham	August 2017 Communications Services	-275.40
09/15/2017	2225	City of Erie Parking	Travel Expense	-10.00
09/15/2017	2226	Penn State University	2017 September Rent	-1,386.89
09/15/2017	2227	Ridge Policy Group	August 2017 Government Relations	-4,140.00
09/15/2017	2228	Albion Area Fair, Inc.	2017 Community Assets Grant	-6,096.00
09/15/2017	2229	AmeriMarsala	2017 Community Assets Grant	-9,180.00
09/15/2017	2230	Community Access Television	2017 Community Assets Grant	-9,039.00
09/15/2017	2231	Corry Area Historical Society	2017 Community Assets Grant	-9,530.00
09/15/2017	2232	Edinboro Arts & Music Fest	2017 Community Assets Grant	-8,199.00
09/15/2017	2233	Erie Contemporary Ballet Theatre	2017 Community Assets Grant	-5,886.00
09/15/2017	2234	Erie PAL	2017 Community Assets Grant	-10,791.00
09/15/2017	2235	Erie Yesterday	2017 Community Assets Grant	-8,064.00
09/15/2017	2236	Fort LeBoeuf Historical Society	2017 Community Assets Grant	-8,797.00
09/15/2017	2237	Gannon University	2017 Community Assets Grant	-8,829.00
09/15/2017	2238	Greater Erie Alliance for Equality	2017 Community Assets Grant	-3,474.00
09/15/2017	2239	Humane Society of NWPA	2017 Community Assets Grant	-5,326.00
09/15/2017	2240	Lake Erie Fanfare, Inc.	2017 Community Assets Grant	-7,988.00
09/15/2017	2241	Martin Luther King Center	2017 Community Assets Grant	-9,320.00
09/15/2017	2242	North East Little League	2017 Community Assets Grant	-6,105.00
09/15/2017	2243	PACA	2017 Community Assets Grant	-10,161.00
09/15/2017	2244	Union City Area School Dist. Foundation	2017 Community Assets Grant	-10,091.00
09/15/2017	2245	Waterford Community Fair Association	2017 Community Assets Grant	-5,466.00
09/15/2017	2246	Wesleyville Area Museum	2017 Community Assets Grant	-1,654.00
09/15/2017	2247	Woman's Club of Erie	2017 Community Assets Grant	-6,522.00
09/18/2017	2248	Foundant Technologies, Inc.	2017-2019 Grant Management Software	-9,200.00
09/21/2017	EFT	ECCA, Inc.	09/02/2017 to 09/15/2017 Payroll	-7,228.28
09/21/2017	EFT	Fidelity Investments	09/02/2017 to 09/15/2017 Retirement	-439.02
09/21/2017	2249	Grise Audio Visual Center, Inc	Grant Reception	-202.50
09/26/2017	2250	Greater Erie Community Action Committee	2017 Summer Jobs Program	-61,051.66
09/26/2017	2251	MaherDuessel, CPA	Auditing Fees - final payment	-1,534.00
09/28/2017	EFT	VISA	August 2017 Visa - Tammi	-925.17
09/28/2017	EFT	VISA	August 2017 Visa - Pery	-2,737.85
09/29/2017	2252	Dale Barney	Quarter 3 2017 Travel	-25.30
09/29/2017	2253	Dave Sample	Quarter 3 2017 Travel	-208.15
09/29/2017	2254	Mike Paris	Quarter 3 2017 Travel	-70.73
09/29/2017	2255	Perry Wood	Quarter 3 2017 Travel/Expense	-250.00
09/29/2017	2256	Tammi Michali	Quarter 3 2017 Travel/Expense	-183.76
09/29/2017	2257	Tom M. Maggio	Quarter 3 2017 Expense	-120.00





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

**EXECUTIVE
DIRECTOR'S
REPORT
FOR
OCTOBER 2017**





BEAST FUNDRAISERS SET RECORD

2017 was a record-breaking year for Beast on the Bay fundraisers – participants who sign up to raise donations to benefit the Barber National Institute. Collectively, the group raised more than \$13,000, the largest amount raised in the five-year history of the event.

The top fundraiser for the fifth consecutive year, Patrick Eller, also set a personal record by raising \$7,500. The Erie native, who is on active duty with the U.S. Army in *inia*, has raised a total of nearly \$20,000 in support of the Barber National Institute.

The second-place fundraiser, for the second year in a row, is Emily Smeltz from Indiana, Pennsylvania, with \$1,500 in donations, followed by Jim Dobrich of Erie, who raised \$1,000.

Any participant can become a fundraiser, and receive a free registration by raising \$500 in donations. More information is available at BarberBeast.org/fundraise

THANK YOU SPONSORS!

Getting in the Beat



A group of lucky students and adults followed the beat of their own drummer—with some help from a renowned percussionist and inspirational teacher. Jim Donovan, right, a founding member of Rusted Root who now leads the Sun King Warriors, held a drumming circle at the Barber National Institute for adults in the ESO camp and students in this summer's extended school year program. The visit was organized by Band Together Pittsburgh, a non-profit that uses music to engage, inspire and enrich the lives of youth on the autism spectrum and their families.





Ten mile and adapted course participants shared an obstacle before going on to cross the finish line together.



John Barber, third from left, congratulates Beast winners during an awards presentation. Joining him, from left, are first-place female finisher KoreyAnne Smith of Belle Vernon, Pennsylvania; first-place male finisher Andrew Hellman from Erie; Patrick Eller and his daughter, Braelynn; Jim Dobrich; Emily Smeltz; and Colleen Schaffer from PNC Bank, the fundraising awards sponsor.



WHY I VOLUNTEER

Early on event day, while it is still dark outside, Nancy Zill is already at her post. She's waiting for Barber Beast on the Bay participants to arrive at Waldameer Park and is all set to hand over their packets that will get them on their way.

Even on years that it has been cold and raining, Nancy has been there. While many people volunteer to have fun and be part of an exciting event, Nancy has another reason.

"This is my way of honoring the memory of my son, Michael," the Fairview resident says.

Michael attended the day program on the Girard campus for many years, enjoying bowling, arts and crafts, and working on math and reading skills.

Michael's family have been dedicated benefactors to the Girard campus and Nancy believes that supporting the Beast on the Bay is a way to express her appreciation for the services that enriched his life.

"Michael really enjoyed everything that he did in the Girard program, and I am very grateful to the Barber National Institute."



Adapted Course Brings Smiles



New program to market region's workforce advancing

By Matthew Rink
matthew.rink@timesnews.com

Plans to create a program that would promote the region's "high quality" workforce to prospective employers could be advanced by Erie County Council next week.

Erie County Executive Kathy Dahlkemper on Thursday asked council to appropriate \$50,000 for the "Up for the Job" initiative when it meets at 7 p.m. Tuesday. The money would be used to hire consulting firm Parker Phillips. Other sources of funding, including the Erie County Gaming Revenue Authority and the Erie Regional Chamber & Growth Partnership, would bring the total to \$102,000.

Additional funding

will be sought both locally and through the state, Dahlkemper told council's Finance Committee Thursday.

The idea was born a year ago when leaders from Local 506 of the United Electrical, Radio and Machine Workers at GE Transportation approached the county. The union said companies from across the country had asked the union to send them the names of laid-off workers.

"They said, 'Can't we find a way to let the world know about the workforce we have in Erie County?'" Dahlkemper said.

In addition to the union, ECGRA and the chamber, officials from Gov. Tom Wolf's office, the state's Rapid Response unit and United Way created the "Up for the Job" program. The program would market Erie's workforce and other assets unknown to the "rest of the world," Dahlkemper said, in an effort to encourage businesses to expand, locate or relocate here.

"Up for the Job" would be more than just a "feel-good campaign," she added. It will entail research. Already compiled is a spreadsheet listing all of the local workforce's skill sets.

"We know we have one of the most highly skilled workforces in the country and we think they can help support further growth in this area," Dahlkemper said.

"We think it's imperative to look at what the hit to our economy would be if these individuals were enticed to leave Erie County and take their skill set

elsewhere." One challenge Erie faces is dispelling negative perceptions, said Barbara Chaffee, president and CEO of the Regional Chamber & Growth Partnership.

"It's really important that we work to counter the social-media negative side because that's the first place companies go to look for a location," she said.

Councilwoman Kathy Fatica said the program has already created a buzz.

"Organized labor is talking about this, excited about it and encouraging us to do this," she said. "They want to stay here."

Matthew Rink can be reached at 870-1884 or by email. Follow him on Twitter at twitter.com/ETNRink.

ECGRA awards \$9,530 downtown building survey

BY KIM LUX
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The Erie County Gaming Revenue Authority awarded \$150,518 to about 20 county-based nonprofit organizations on Thursday, through the authority's Community Assets Grant program.

The Corry Area Historical Society was awarded \$9,530 from ECGRA for a historic building survey. The survey is a collaborative project between the historical society and Impact Corry.

Earlier this year, Impact Corry was awarded a \$12,000 "Keystone Historic Preservation Project Grant" from the Pennsylvania Historical & Museum Commission for the same project.

The grants are for an intensive level survey Impact Corry would like to do on about 345 commercial and residential buildings and homes in Corry, consisting largely of the downtown commercial district on Center and Main streets, as well as some of the adjacent streets and neighborhoods.

A consultant would be hired to undertake the survey, in which he or she would determine the historic integrity of the buildings, homes and structures, combine that information with Corry's "historical story," and make a determination as to whether Corry would likely qualify for a National Register of Historic Places designation. If it is determined that Corry has a historical significance, then a separate application would be drafted.

However, the \$12,000 grant represented only half of the total cost of the survey, and Impact Corry was seeking a \$12,000 match. Because the organization previously

received a Mission Ma Grant through ECGRA in 2016, they were not eligible to apply for the Community Assets Grants, so the society stepped in.

"Impact Corry is grateful to ECGRA for the potential economic development opportunity come from securing historic designation, as that to attract tourists to Corry."

Loretta Beckerink, of the Corry Area Historical Society, said the society is happy to help Impact Corry secure the funding.

"We are so glad could help them, be think this survey potential historic designation could be great for Beckerink said. "C such a deep history people need to be and we're happy to that any way we can"

Beckerink added feels ECGRA is a great organization that does a lot for the community.

"It's really nice to be around to help our area," Beckerink lot of the work that done to better Corry have been possible them."

Impact Corry is a grant application. The Corry Area Historical Society Foundation for the \$2,470 that's needed to match the PHMC grant are expected to hear they'll receive the October.

Authority awards \$150,518

By Kevin Flowers
kevin.flowers@timesnews.com

The Erie County Gaming Revenue Authority has awarded a collective \$150,518 to 20 local organizations and events, including the Albion Fair, Gannon University, the Erie Bureau of Police's Athletic League and the AmeriMasala multicultural festival, as part of its 2017 Community Assets Grant program.

The grants were announced Thursday morning during a news conference at the Erie Zoo.

Community asset grants are awarded to organizations that increase tourism, enhance

Online

See a list of Community Asset Grant recipients: GoErie.com

places, and/or develop culture across Erie County. The funding is part of more than \$45 million the Gaming Revenue Authority has invested in grants and loans to nonprofits, local governments and economic development agencies in Erie County since 2008.

"We have worked for years to ensure that every organization that can benefit from local share gaming revenue knows that funds are available and how to access those funds," said David

Sample, chairman of the Gaming Revenue Authority's board of directors.

The Police Athletic League received the largest grant, for \$10,791. That money will be used on tutoring, mentoring and recreational programs that build positive relationships between city youth and police officers.

Four of the recipients have been awarded community asset grants for the first time: The Union City Area School District, which received \$10,091 for a greenhouse project; Community Access Television, awarded \$9,039 for studio and truck equipment to produce high-definition programming; The Performing Artists Collective

Alliance, which received \$10,161 to for facade repairs to its building at 1505 State St.; and The Woman's Club of Erie, awarded a \$6,522 grant to help restore the Galbraith Mansion at 259 W. Sixth St.

The Gaming Revenue Authority was created by Erie County government to help distribute a portion of the millions of dollars in gambling revenues the county receives each year from Presque Isle Downs & Casino.

For more information, visit www.ecgra.org.

Kevin Flowers can be reached at 870-1693 or by email. Follow him on Twitter at twitter.com/ETNflowers.

Gaming grant will help fund Corry historical survey

By Valerie Myers
valerie.myers@timesnews.com

CORRY - Gaming revenues from Presque Isle Downs & Casino may help preserve Corry's past.

The Erie County Gaming Revenue Authority has awarded a \$9,530 grant to the Corry Area Historical Society to help pay for a survey of downtown buildings and neighboring homes to determine their historical significance to the city.

The grant will provide the lion's share of local money needed to match a \$12,000 Keystone Historic Preservation Grant for the project from the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission.

"I think it's important for downtown Corry because we have a lot of old buildings, and I think that might be of some interest to the people who come to Corry to shop," May said.

Impact Corry has applied for a Corry Community Foundation grant to cover the \$2,470 still needed to match the state grant.

But until the 2017-18 state grant is approved, the survey has no signed agreement yet for the state grant awarded in June, there's some fear that the state funds could be in jeopardy.

"We have some consternation regarding whether the money is going to be there after the legislature gets a budget," Impact Corry President Steve Bishop said.

Valerie Myers can be reached at 878-1913 or by email. Follow her on Twitter at twitter.com/ETNmyers.

Or before one more state building's gone, Beckerink said. "So many buildings already are gone. It's sad. Corry had so much history," she said. "Every time we go to the museum we find another building or person we didn't know about or whose importance we didn't realize."



CITY & REGION

Sen. hopes gaming funds stay in place

Laughlin seeks amendment to save Erie County Gaming Revenue Authority

By Kevin Flowers
kflowers@timesnews.com



Laughlin

The Erie County Gaming Revenue Authority's future is still in doubt — and it's unclear when Pennsylvania legislators will settle the issue as part of ongoing deliberations over the state budget.

State Sen. Dan Laughlin, of Mill Creek Township, R-49th Dist., said Monday that a legislative proposal that would defund the Gaming Revenue Authority likely won't be resolved "until there's a final budget vote. That's what I've been told. Everything is going to come down to the last minute."

Laughlin also said he plans to introduce a "draft amendment" to legislators soon "that keeps ECGRA intact." Legislators in both the House and Senate must still deal with House Bill 271, which includes language that would defund the authority and give Erie County government sole authority over the distribution of the county's multimillion-dollar annual share of revenues from Presque Isle Downs & Casino in Summit Township.

Republicans in the House and Senate are trying to work with Gov. Tom Wolf on a compromise that would end the month-long state budget deadlock. Wolf has said that he wants the budget finished by Oct. 1, but no deal is imminent.

Since 2008, the county and the Gaming Revenue Authority have split roughly \$11 million a year in casino revenues. The Gaming Revenue Authority has invested about \$43 million into the region from its share of gaming revenues since 2009, said Perry Wood, the authority's executive director.

That is when the authority began distributing grants and loans to various agencies, nonprofits and municipalities to improve public spaces; create jobs via small businesses; expand education and training; and help fund local festivals and

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FUNDS

Continued from B1

other community events. However, the authority has faced criticism from some members of Erie County's state House delegation over its operating costs, including covering litigation costs for a practitioner's doctorate that Wood is pursuing. The Gaming Revenue Authority's board of directors eventually cut nearly \$180,000 in expenses from its 2017-18 budget.

"I'm probably the only local legislator standing up for ECGRA right now," Laughlin said. "I'm trying to make sure ECGRA stays intact."

"It's one thing if the citizens wanted to get rid of ECGRA, then you have that conversation," said Laughlin, who believes the authority has been effective in distributing

should decide that," said Sen. Michele Brookes, of Mercer County, R-50th Dist. She said she wants to amend House Bill 271 so that it preserves ECGRA's role in distributing gaming funds.

"We will introduce the amendment when it is appropriate to do so," Laughlin said.

"It is my intention to keep politics out of how the local share (of gaming funds) is distributed and keeping ECGRA in place is how you do that. In my opinion," Laughlin said, "Senate leadership is aware of how I feel about this issue."

Wood said Monday that "the only way for ECGRA to continue is to amend that House bill. We hope they make those amendments, on behalf of over 100 organizations that receive ECGRA contributions," Wood said.

Kevin Flowers can be reached at kflowers@timesnews.com

ECGRA grants \$10,091 to Union City Area School District

BY KIM LUX
klux@thecorryjournal.com

UNION CITY — Students in the Union City Area School District will soon have the opportunity to expand their knowledge of agriculture as the district recently received a \$10,091 grant from Erie County Gaming Revenue Authority.

The grant will go toward the purchase of an outdoor greenhouse, which will be incorporated into the new Agriculture Education Program at the middle/high school.

"We are absolutely thrilled to receive this funding," said Joan Quicke, director of curriculum and special programs for UCASD.

ECGRA awarded \$150,518 to about 20 county-based nonprofit organizations this month, through the authority's Community Assets Grant program.

Quicke added the greenhouse will become the focal point of the agriculture program and she anticipates students will learn about topics such as seed germination,



Contributed Photo

The Erie County Gaming Revenue Authority recently awarded \$10,091 to the Union City Area School District for a new outdoor greenhouse. From left are, Gary Lee, director of administration for the Erie County Executive Office; David Sample, chair, ECGRA board of directors; Melissa Tomcho, Union City Middle/High School principal; Mitchell Paris, vice-chair, ECGRA board of directors; Joan Quicke, UCASD director of curriculum and special programs; Perry Wood, ECGRA executive director; and Ashley Lawson, a grant reviewer with ECGRA.

also develop a business plan and make decisions about accounting procedures, ordering processes, job responsibilities, publicity, etc.

← See ECGRA, P2

ECGRA

(Continued from front page)

school district has received through ECGRA.

"We've been trying to come up with funding for an outdoor greenhouse for about nine months," Quicke said. "We were looking for some new and out-of-the-box opportunities, and we sought out the ECGRA grant. And then, we were lucky enough to receive it."

Quicke added she and other district officials are eager to pursue more funding from the authority.

"We definitely will apply for more grants in the future and we'll keep exploring the opportunities ECGRA has to offer."

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Wednesday, September 27, 2017

Meeting student needs



Joe Komorek teaches in an empty classroom at Gannon University's Palumbo Center in Erie on Monday. Komorek is an adjunct professor of mathematics. Currently, he's teaching an algebra course via teleconference to six sites in northeastern Pennsylvania as part of the curriculum for the Rural Regional College of Northern Pennsylvania. Those sites are: Warren, Meadville, Olean, St. Marys, Tidioute and Couduersport. (CHRISTOPHER MILLETTE/ERIE TIMES-NEWS)

Community college began classes this fall but is still a work in progress

By Valerie Myers
valerie.myers@timesnews.com

Students aren't the only ones getting an education this fall at the new Rural Regional College of Northern Pennsylvania.

Community college instructors and administrators are learning, too. It's the college's first full semester. And because it's

not a traditional brick-and-mortar school, or an online college, but something in between, it's breaking educational ground.

Instructors in Erie and elsewhere in the region teach students seated in front of them, plus others in classrooms miles away. Students interact with instructors and each other via live television.

What I'm used to, I usually make my way around the room so I can do eye contact with everyone and make sure they're engaged," said Joe Komorek, a Gannon University adjunct professor of math who's teaching college algebra for the Rural Regional College this semester. "With this, I stand here

Online
See video of the teleconferencing class. www.timesnews.com/education. Find more education-related stories: go.erie.com/news/education

See COLLEGE, A4

COLLEGE

Continued from A1

and talk to the camera."

Komorek teaches from an otherwise empty classroom in Gannon's Palumbo Academic Center, where he writes problems on a whiteboard for 15 students in Girard, Meadville, Warren, St. Marys, Couduersport and Tidioute. Komorek remotely controls the camera televising the course to zoom in or shift position so students can see the full equations as he explains how to solve them.

Students in each location — in classrooms and around conference tables in public libraries, high school libraries, technical schools and other facilities — are shown in separate grids on Komorek's television screen at Gannon. When a student asks or answers a question, the student's segment of Komorek's screen is enlarged so that Komorek can clearly see the student as they interact.

Students see Komorek in the largest grid on their screens and distant classrooms in smaller grids.

Komorek shares class materials and grades work via email.

"Another difference," said Komorek, who taught math in the Erie School District for 32 years, "is that in high school, I know the math background of the students, what they know and what they don't know. With these students, I'm not



Joseph Schreckengost, 17, of St. Marys, is shown in the upper left of a teleconference screen. He joined 14 other students in an algebra course via teleconference. (CHRISTOPHER MILLETTE/ERIE TIMES-NEWS)

exactly sure who they are and where they're at in math."

Students in Komorek's college algebra class range from teenagers to adults — "the whole gamut," he said.

Still, Komorek shrugs off the differences from traditional teaching.

"Math is math and teaching is teaching," he said.

College administrators have had their own learning curve this fall.

"We're working with something that is a startup, literally from bare bone. It's exciting, but it's also very challenging. We're building infrastructure as well as putting everything together," said Joseph Nairn, who was hired as president of the Rural Regional College in June.

"Instead of being bricks and mortar or building it and they will come, we bring

and the skills needed to do them as they create career training programs for students.

"We have two obligations, to provide career and technical education to prepare people to go into jobs," Nairn said, "and the transfer mission for students who are not sure where they want to go in life, to give them a broad educational experience that they can build on and create a path from there."

The Rural Region College began operations this fall with those broader academic offerings. It will begin offering career training certificate programs as early as January, possibly in partnership Pennsylvania College of Technology, of Williamsport.

Programs will include the face-to-face, hands-on training as required, Nairn said, possibly in weekend labs at a career and technical school or local industry.

"Students will be told that, if they want to do this program, they will need to be in Erie or Warren or St. Marys these three weekends through the semester," he said.

Administrators additionally are working through the process of earning accreditation for the school from the Middle States Association Commission on Higher Education so that students will be eligible for government financial aid.

As work continues on multiple fronts, Nairn bristles at comparisons of Rural Regional College courses with online learning.

"Our classes are still in a classroom. Teachers can call on a student at another site to answer a question, and students can share in the discussion," he said. "Students also are required to exercise the kind of discipline you have in a traditional classroom. They have to be in class, and they have to show up on time."

In online classes, students typically work at their own schedule.

"You're not working in real time online," Nairn said. "Your comments and what you contribute may (be scrolled) far enough back that they're not read in detail, or missed. And if you're sending emails or texts and I, as the teacher, am responding when I get them, it's a much more disjointed conversation."

The only disconnect in the conversation during Komorek's college algebra class Monday night was due to a technical difficulty.

"Tidioute cannot hear," a proctor at the Tidioute Community Charter school said at the beginning of the class.

On a technician's advice, the proctor disconnected and redialed to reconnect with the conversation.

"We've had some snafus along the way," Komorek said. "We had to cancel one class because we couldn't get the technology working. Otherwise, it's been good."

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Erin Paestgen/The Corry Journal
Twenty-three Erie County residents, who are members of this year's Jefferson Civic Leadership Academy, visited Corry Thursday. In an effort to educate the participants about events and government happenings in communities outside the city of Erie, the group travels periodically throughout the nine-month academy. Steve Bishop, executive director of the Corry Higher Education Council, was one of two speakers the group heard from during the Corry visit.

Civic leadership academy focuses on Corry community

BY ERIN PAESTGEN
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Corry government, community projects and public issues were the topics of a presentation to 23 Erie County leaders who visited the city Thursday afternoon.

The individuals, who were between the ages of 25 and 45, were members of the most recent cohort of the Jefferson Civic Leadership Academy, a "think tank" based in Erie that aims to promote civic enlightenment and community progress for the Erie region through study, research and discussion of local ideas and events.

"Local civic education is not strongly present as it used

to be," said Ben Speegren, program director for JCLIA. Change happens at the local level. We want to help our cohort better understand how government works."

Throughout the nine-month academy, cohort members visit different areas of Erie County to get a better feel of what happens outside the city of Erie and their own communities.

In addition to Corry, Thursday's visit included stops in Union City and North East.

Steve Bishop, executive director of the Corry Higher Education Council and president of Impact Corry, along with Alex Genovitch, city of Corry councilman, spoke to

the group at the H-Bld building, 221 N. Center St.

Bishop discussed his role at the hotel and presented an overall view of the community and what it has to offer. He also discussed past and present projects Impact Corry has been working on, including the recent purchase of three parcels of railroad property, located at Center and Main streets in the downtown.

Genovitch highlighted how the city's government functions and some of the history of Corry.

Both men fielded several questions from audience members.

See Academy, P.3

Dahlkemper to present 2018 budget Friday

By Matthew Bink
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Erie County Council Chairman Jay Bretneman said he expects a lean budget when Erie County Executive Kathy Dahlkemper presents her 2018 spending plan during a Friday morning news conference.

He said he also anticipates that Dahlkemper, who is running for reelection in November, will not seek a property tax increase.

"The county has done very well with managing our costs, even with some of the major projects that

we've been pushing on," said Bretneman, who ran unsuccessfully for Erie mayor in May instead of seeking re-election. "I anticipate the county executive to propose a lean budget that won't put any added burden on taxpayers, while at the same time sustaining the critical services we provide."

Dahlkemper is not expected to comment on her proposal before Friday's presentation. Council has the authority to adjust the spending plan, but must approve

See BUDGET, B3

BUDGET

Continued from B1

the budget before Dec. 1. Council members will

gather at 10:30 a.m. in Dahlkemper's fifth floor office at the Erie County Courthouse, 140 W. Sixth St., to receive copies of the proposal and listen to a presentation.

Joe Maloney, a certified public accountant who advises Erie County Council on financial matters, said he expects the county to be in good shape heading into 2018.

"We had put some money into the fund

balance last year so that should help fund forward into next year," Maloney said. "You're able to manage your budget without too much of a requirement of increasing taxes or anything."

The current-year budget of \$99.1 million was approved by County Council in November 2016. It included the use of \$1.73 million in reserve funds to cover increased expenses at Pleasant Ridge Manor, the 300-bed nursing home operated by the county. Dahlkemper did not seek a tax increase for the 2017 budget, as she did the previous year when she asked for a 9

percent increase (Council approved a smaller tax hike of 4.6 percent).

Bretneman, who will not return to council next year, said Pleasant Ridge Manor will continue to remain a concern for the county, but he does not see any immediate concern regarding the operation.

Maloney also believes Pleasant Ridge Manor does not pose as much of a problem for county finances as it did a year ago. "I've been looking at the monthly financial statements and they've been doing good at staying within the budget," he said. "I don't anticipate

having the same issues with (Pleasant Ridge) that we had last year."

One wild card, though, is how state lawmakers will resolve casino gaming revenue for host communities like Erie.

Last year, The Pennsylvania Supreme Court ruled that the method used for determining a host community's share of gaming revenue was unconstitutional. Legislators have discussed fixing the formula so that host communities are held harmless from the ruling.

Erie County receives about \$11 million annually from slot machine revenues from Presque Isle Downs & Casino, Half, or

many change it," Maloney said. "I don't think the administration or county council knows how it's going to come down at this point. They're hoping (lawmakers) keep it the way it was."

\$5.5 million, goes to pay down long-term debt, fund libraries and award grants to local agencies. The other \$5.5 million is distributed to community and economic development projects via grants and loans from the Erie County Gaming Revenue Authority.

"There are a couple of ideas being floated out there as to how the state

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West

County Recycling Day

'went well'

By Maryann Meek
Editor

The number of tires and electronic waste collected during the West County Recycling/Cleanup Day was up from last year, but the dollar amount of cash donations was down.

The annual cleanup event was held Saturday, Sept. 23, at the Franklin Township grounds, Route 98 and New Road. This is the first year the event was held at that location. The site was moved from the former SKAT station on Route 18, Plaza, due to semi tractor-trailers parked on the lot.

The event was possible because of volunteers from municipalities, local fire police and a grant from the Erie County Gaming Revenue Authority and several business sponsors.

See WdL, p. 6



Photos by Maryann Meek

West County Recycling/Cleanup Day was held Saturday, Sept. 23, at the Franklin Township grounds, Route 98 and New Road. Residents from seven municipalities could drop off recyclables from cardboard to refrigerators to tires. From left, Justin Laseck of Albion Borough, Gary Wdilis of Albion Borough and Bill Vasson of Cranestville get ready to unload recyclables from a truck.

Well

Continued from Page 1

sons, including Waste Management. Bill Taylor of Elk Creek Township is president of the West County Recycling Committee. He said, overall the event went well, considering it was held at a new site.

"We had a lot more room we could utilize," Taylor said. "We had a little issue with traffic control, but we got that straightened out."

Taylor said the volunteers were working in hot temperatures, and he thinks traffic would have moved faster if there had been more volunteers.

"We could have used some more help," Taylor said.

Seven West County municipalities participated this year, dropping off everything from computers to refrigerators. Most items could be dropped off for no charge, but there was a minimal fee to dispose of electronics waste, tires and anything containing fluorine. As a service to their residents, participating boroughs and townships also pay a fee based on the num-

ber of people who participate from those municipalities. Participating municipalities are Albion and Cranestville boroughs and Elk Creek, Franklin, Grand, McKean and Springfield townships. This is the first year Albion has participated in the event.

Here are the results of the day for 2017 compared with 2016:

- Tires - 1,836; 1,629
- From units - 173; 167
- E-waste - 1,292; 977
- Cash donations - \$578; \$795
- Individual municipal participation:
 - Albion Borough - 55; 0
 - Cranestville Borough - 33; 42
 - Elk Creek Twp. - 104; 110
 - Franklin Twp. - 102; 89
 - Grand Twp. - 137; 182
 - McKean Twp. - 92; 77
 - Springfield Twp. - 106; 147
 - Total households - 629; 647

Erie Times 10-4-17 County approves funds for jobs plan

Appropriates \$36,000 for 'Up for the Job' Initiative

By Matthew Rhink
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An initiative aimed at marketing the region's workforce in an effort to retain displaced workers now has the money needed to get started.

Erie County Council voted 6-1 Tuesday to appropriate \$36,000 for the "Up for the Job" initiative. The county will use the funding to pay consulting firm Ten 53 Newton LLC for six months. The firm will develop a plan that includes creation of a brand and marketing efforts on social media, television and print.

Councilman Edward Dikaitto Jr. opposed the ordinance, saying he hopes it is successful but that he could not support it because he does not believe there is a plan behind it.

"All of us in this room know that people have talked for numerous years about how we need to be doing things for economic development in Erie County," he said. "We have had failed proposal after failed proposal. ... There are 17 or 18 groups that do economic development in Erie County. We tend to trip over our toes. I need to see a plan. I want to see this work, but I need to see a plan before I can personally appropriate the money." Council amended the ordinance to reduce the

amount from \$102,000 for a year's worth of work to \$36,000 for six months.

Last week, Controller Mary Schaeff and Solicitor Tom Talarico told council and County Executive Kathy Dahlkemper's administration that the change in the amount and the scope of proposed services was done after the county sought bids for the project.

Schaef called the proposed ordinance in its original form "unlawful" and "unethical" and said it would serve to undermine the integrity of the county's public bidding process. Talarico, too, said it would have been a violation of the Erie County Purchasing Code.

The concept for "Up for the Job" arose a year ago when Local 506 of the United Electrical, Radio and Machine Workers of America, which represents GE Transportation workers, told Dahlkemper that companies had been calling in search of the types of skills possessed by laid-off workers. The Erie County Gaming Revenue Authority, the Erie Regional Chamber & Growth Partnership, the United Way of Erie County and the Northwest Pennsylvania Workforce Development Board are among the groups that formed a coalition to create "Up for the Job."

Gary Lee, director of administration for Dahlkemper, who was not present at Tuesday's meeting because she was participating in

an election forum, apologized to council for the "confusion." He said coalition members listened to proposals from three consulting firms, graded each presentation separately and then combined their scores. Ten 53 Newton LLC had the highest score.

A subsequent meeting with the consultant is where the confusion over the budget for the project occurred, Lee said.

"I regret that confusion surrounding the issue," he said. Lee refuted Dikaitto's assertion that no plan exists.

"It's really developing a marketing plan and placing the county of Erie in the best position to sell its workers and to attract companies from the outside," he said.

Councilman Kyle Foust said the process was "not as clean as we would have liked," noting the need to amend the ordinance. However, the county can seek additional funding partners to extend the project beyond just six months, he said. "Certainly this is an initiative that its goals are laudable enough that we need to go forward with it," he said. "This is a tough time for workers that have been laid off."

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Game inventor to appear on TV show

By DAVID BRUCE
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Monster Dice began almost four years ago when Brian Edwards' son asked him to create a werewolf. On Sunday, the Harborcreek Township man will

demonstrate his dice game, based on famous monsters, on ABC-TV's competition show "The Toy Box."

"I just wanted to create a game I could play with my family," said Edwards, 34. "To be able to show it on national television is

incredible."

Edwards has been working on Monster Dice between 8 and 20 hours a week since the day Jace Edwards, now 10, asked for

See EDWARDS, A6

Tune In

The ABC-TV competition show "The Toy Box," featuring Harborcreek Township game inventor Brian Edwards, will be broadcast Sunday at 7 p.m.

A6 Saturday, October 7, 2017 | Erie Times-News | GoErie.com



Harborcreek Township inventor Brian Edwards, right, demonstrates his game, "Monster Dice," on the ABC-TV show "The Toy Box" as host Eric Stonestreet watches. The show will be broadcast locally Sunday at 7 p.m. on WJET. (CONTRIBUTED PHOTO)



Harborcreek Township resident Brian Edwards, 34, displays a prototype of the Monster Dice game he has invented, along with oversized replicas of the dice in the game. Edwards and his game will be featured on ABC-TV's The Toy Box show Sunday at 7 p.m. (DAVID BRUCE/ERIE TIMES-NEWS)

EDWARDS

Continued from A1

the werewolf. Since Edwards uses a computer program to sculpt toy figures for McFarlane Toys, he knew how to design what his son wanted.

He had a few 3-D monster heads printed, and realized the nearly square figures felt more like game pieces than toys. That's when Edwards came up with Monster Dice.

"The initial game was kind of complicated with a lot of rules," Edwards said. "As I played it with my son and his friends, it didn't have the energetic feeling I wanted. So I re-created the game."

Monster Dice is actually seven games in one, most of which use eight cartoonlike monster heads as dice and a deck of cards with pictures of candy on them. The monsters portray the children of famous monsters: Frankenstein, a vampire, a ghost, a mummy, a boogeyman, a

yeti, an alien and, of course, a werewolf.

The most basic Monster Dice game is called "Sugar Rush." Players repeatedly roll their four dice as quickly as possible, picking out the ones that are face up and placing them on a candy card until there are no dice left to roll.

The winner of each round gets the candy card, and the player with the most candy cards at the end is the winner.

"There's no board. You can put the game in your pocket and play it almost anywhere," Edwards said. "My son even designed one of the games, 'Swipe Out,' where you stack the dice with cards between them and try to knock out the cards."

Edwards credited two Erie universities with helping him market the game. He participated in Gannon University's Small Business Development Center's competition based on the TV show "Shark Tank."

"I didn't win but they showed me how to pitch my

game," Edwards said. "I was focused on the customer and they taught me that investors want to see a business plan and how I was going to make the game profitable."

The inventor then met with Mercyhurst University professor Kristan Wheaton, who has helped local entrepreneurs raise money through crowdfunding. Wheaton arranged for Mercyhurst students to create a promotional video of the game and get the project ready for a Kickstarter fundraising campaign that started Monday.

"Brian's game has a clever, clear set of rules, a clear demographic he focused on, and the game is more active than the original version," Wheaton said. "It's simple and it works."

The Kickstarter campaign, which is available through www.toymonsterdice.com, has raised more than \$3,500 of its \$12,200 goal. Those who pledge \$24 receive a copy of the game when it is mass produced, and those who pledge \$48 receive both

a standard and glow-in-the-dark version.

"We have a deal in place with a manufacturer, we just need the \$12,200 to pay for the first run," Edwards said.

Besides inventing Monster Dice and managing Lakeview on the Lake resort, Edwards also coaches parkour, which involves running through an urban environment and jumping or climbing over obstacles.

Edwards had applied to be a contestant on the ABC-TV show "Wipeout," but instead received an email asking him to apply to be a contestant on "The Toy Box."

"They must have sent it to everyone who applied for their shows, because I didn't tell them about the game," Edwards said. "I applied, of course, and did a phone interview, a Skype interview and went up the chain."

He was selected as a contestant and flew to Los Angeles in May to tape the show.

Each episode showcases new toys and games with a

panel of child judges determining the finalist, who receives \$10,000 and competes for the season's top prize: to have their toy or game produced and distributed by Mattel and sold at Toys 'R Us stores.

"We were there for two days of taping and stayed in the bungalows originally used by 'The Golden Girls,'" Edwards said. "The only time I met the judges or the host was when I walked down the hallway of famous toys and pitched my game."

Edwards isn't allowed to say if he was named the episode's finalist. He plans to watch the show Sunday evening with family and friends at Lakeview on the Lake.

"I've spent almost all of my free time developing and showing this game," Edwards said. "I'm excited to get it out there and show people."

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Universities abuzz about business 'beehives'

Grants help Behrend,
Gannon, Mercyhurst,
Edinboro establish
business support labs

By Matthew Rink
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Erie County's four universities have formed a collaborative to help entrepreneurs and small business start-ups make their dreams reality.

A \$200,000 grant from the Appalachian Regional Commission and another \$200,000 of matching funds provided by Ignite Erie Industry+University Business Acceleration Collaborative will help establish a support network for business ventures.

The project is being coordinated by Penn State Behrend, but involves three other Erie-area universities: Gannon, Mercyhurst and Edinboro. Together they will create the Northwest Pennsylvania Innovation Beehive Network.

Each will host entrepreneurial or 'beehive' labs that will focus on different stages of business development. Behrend's Innovation

BEEHIVES

Continued from A1

beehive opened in 2016 with the assistance of the Invention Penn State Institute, which has funded 17 such hubs across the Penn State school system.

Called the Innovation Commons, the site offers engineering and design expertise to prospective start-ups, 3D printing and product design, CAD assistance and consulting is also offered at Innovation Commons through Gannon University's Small Business Development Center, which thus far has assisted on more than 50 projects, according to a news release from Penn State Behrend. Students staff the lab.

The \$400,000 of grant money allows the vision of establishing a network of beehive sites to take shape.

That vision began forming in 2014, when the Erie County Gaming Revenue Authority established Ignite Erie Industry, an initiative to nurture an entrepreneurial culture and spark job creation and business

growth. ECCRA set aside \$750,000 to distribute over three years to the local universities. Then came Ignite Erie Industry+University Business Acceleration Collaborative, a partnership of ECCRA, and Behrend and Mercyhurst, two applicants that applied for funding. Gannon and Edinboro were brought aboard in an advisory capacity.

"When you look at the number of students graduating and the faculty expertise, to leverage all of that into kind of a standalone but also integrated system means that all of those rise together," said Amy Bridger, the senior director of corporate strategy and external relations at Behrend. "We're leveraging the strengths of all four universities. We're also coordinating our efforts."

ECCRA continues to provide funding for the initiative today. Mercyhurst Provost and Executive Vice President David Dansey, the university's representative on the Ignite Erie Industry board, said it's typically difficult to bring universities and other organizations together. However, officials from each

school have worked hard to find their niche and capitalize on their strengths to avoid overlapping services. This type of collaborative is indicative of where the business world is moving, he said.

"For every 10 good ideas maybe one of them will be successful, so you have to give entrepreneurs an environment where they can grow and thrive."

The other labs will open within three to six months. Here's how they'll work:

• Edinboro University's lab, which will be located in Baron-Ferriss Library, will focus on advertising, marketing and public relations.

• Gannon University's lab will focus on business development and analysis. Located in the Center for Business Ingenuity, Gannon's lab will also offer access to its Small Business Development Center and the Erie Technology Incubator.

• Mercyhurst University's lab, which will be located in the Ridge College of Intelligence Studies, will help developers commercialize their ideas by providing business intelligence services. Teams of faculty members and students will

use high-end computers and plotters, for example, to assist entrepreneurs, according to a news release. Brid Gleason, director of operations at the Ridge College of Intelligence Studies at Mercyhurst, said the program is "all about the students." While entrepreneurs will gain the valuable insight of students and faculty members, students will receive hands-on, real-world experience in their fields of study.

"We're blending teams so we can do a multi-disciplinary, multi-university effort when supporting local businesses," he said.

These "beehives" can function independently to cater to specific needs of an entrepreneur, or they can operate as a larger network. Blasco Library, which will open the Idea Lab later this month, will also have a role. It will feed projects into the universities' network.

The business support network is the first of its kind in the region.

"It's important for this region to act like this," Gleason said. "In order to attract business and in order to change the profile of what the capabilities are of our

universities we have to come together and do these things. We just have to. If not we'll have the same old university that's not talking to another university that's not talking to another university. We need to highlight how we can do things differently, together, to make our workforce and our students more attractive so businesses will come here."

Dansey said it is an exciting time for the region. The Northwest Pennsylvania Innovation Beehive Network will complement other agencies charged with business development, such as the Innovation Collaborative, the Erie Innovation District, the Erie Technology Incubator, Radius CoWork and the Erie Downtown Development Corporation.

"I've really starting to see a nucleus of activity, which really to me is suggestive that bigger things are about to happen for Erie," Dansey said. "I'm incredibly optimistic about Erie's future, and I'm delighted to see this collaboration among the universities."

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See BEEHIVES, A3



'Beehives' aim to aid business creation

By Kevin Flowers
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Gannon University has been successful over the years in helping local entrepreneurs when it comes to business development.

But as Stephen Mauro sees it, a new collaborative between Gannon and the Erie area's three other universities will allow Gannon to continue that work in a "more coordinated" fashion.

"Small business development is really the engine that drives commerce in cities our size," said Mauro, Gannon's vice president for academic administration, after a Monday morning news conference regarding the new Northwest Pennsylvania Innovation Beehive Network on the Penn State Behrend campus.

Founded by a \$200,000 grant from the Appalachian Regional Commission and another \$200,000

of matching funds provided by Ignite Erie Industry+University Business Acceleration Collaborative, the new project will help establish a support network for various business ventures.

The project is being coordinated by Behrend, but also involves Gannon, Mercyhurst University and Edinboro University. The initiative was the subject of a story in Monday's Erie Times-News.

"To be able to have a resource that individuals can tap into ... is going to just be huge," Mauro said. "Businesses will be put in a position to succeed."

Each school will host entrepreneurial or "beehive" labs that will focus on different stages of business development. Behrend's innovation beehive, which offers engineering and design expertise to prospective startups, 3D printing, product design and consulting, opened in

2016. Edinboro's lab will focus on advertising, marketing and public relations; Gannon University's lab will focus on business development and analysis; and Mercyhurst's lab will focus on business intelligence services.

The Erie County Gaming Revenue Authority established Ignite Erie Industry in 2014 to foster entrepreneurship, job creation and business growth. Perry Wood, the gaming authority's executive director, said the Ignite Erie funding contribution which helped establish the beehive labs was the largest of its kind that has been awarded by the Gaming Revenue Authority.

Erie County government created the authority to help distribute a portion of the millions of dollars in gaming revenues the county receives each year from Presque Isle Downs & Casino.

"You're seeing firsthand the reinvention of our economic development system," Wood said. "This brings together all of these important players to help build new companies."

"We tend to focus on the big layoffs from manufacturers," Wood said. "These beehives are where the future of manufacturing is, and it's absolutely key. If we sit back and do nothing, then nothing will happen."

The Northwest Pennsylvania Innovation Beehive Network is expected to complement other local business development efforts such as the Innovation Collaborative, the Erie Innovation District, the Erie Technology Incubator, Radius CoWork and the Erie Downtown Development Corporation.

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Tuesday, October 10, 2017

Workers we have; jobs, we don't

Erie group looks to draw companies to region's available workforce

By Jim Martin
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Jake Rouch, vice president of economic development for the Erie Regional Chamber and Growth Partnership, knows this for sure: In the world of business attraction, Erie doesn't turn a lot of heads based on name recognition alone.

Send him into battle armed with Pennsylvania's brand of tax incentives and he's likely to be forced to retreat.

But a coalition that includes the chamber, Erie County government, Local 506 of the United Electrical, Radio and Machine Workers of America at GE Transportation, the United Way of Erie County, the Erie County Gaming Revenue Authority and the Northwest Pennsylvania Workforce Development Board think Erie County has a job-winning tool that could be used to its advantage.

It's the availability of skilled workers, hundreds of whom happen to be out of work, thanks in large part to a mass layoff of 1,500 workers at GE

would lead to the formation of a coalition and eventually launch what's now called the "Up for the Job" initiative, which Erie County Council voted 6-1 last week to spend \$36,000 to develop a plan that includes the creation of a brand and marketing efforts on social media, television and print.

At a meeting last week, representatives of that coalition stressed that Erie has the sort of skilled, experienced workforce that's becoming more valuable all the time.

Janet Anderson, of the Pennsylvania Workforce Investment Board, said she received a telephone call moments after an appearance on a National Public Radio program a few months ago. A New Jersey company was on the line, and they wanted the names of the available workers, she said. Virtually every

marketplace says one of their biggest challenges is a plentiful and skilled workforce, said Barbara Chaffee, CEO of the Erie Regional Chamber and Growth Partnership.

The good news is it might not be hard to find jobs for many of Erie's workers — one or a few at a time if they wanted to pull up stakes and move around the country.

The coalition's goal is to bring the companies here. But there are challenges.

The \$36,000 that's being paid to a consulting firm isn't going to fully fund an ambitious effort to bring jobs to Erie, Dahlkemper said. She's hopeful that other partners, including grants being sought by the chamber and possible money from the Erie County Gaming Revenue Authority can help expand the scope of the



Scott Slawson, at microphone, addressed hundreds of union workers at a rally at Perry Square on Sept. 4 following the third annual Labor Day parade in downtown Erie on Sept. 4. Slawson is the president of UE Local 506, which represents many workers at GE Transportation. (CHRISTOPHER MILLETTE/ERIE TIMES-NEWS)

project.

For now, "We are going to prioritize," said Gary Lee, the county's director of administration. "We want to make sure this gets launched properly and in a timely manner." Slawson said he's

optimistic about the possibilities of bringing more resources to bear.

"We can give a guy like Jake an understanding of what we can provide," Slawson said, referring to precise numbers of workers available with

particular skill sets.

But that inventory of workers and what they can do is only part of the equation.

Erie needs land, buildings and a marketing plan — and all of that's going to cost money.

"Selling the labor force is just one piece," Rouch said.

Even that piece presents a challenge: time.

Slawson said a few former GE Transportation workers have left the area in search of jobs. It's possible that others will do the same as they graduate from educational programs.

"Time isn't on our side," Rouch said. "Most companies take a couple years to make these decisions."

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JOBS

Continued from A1

Transportation in early 2016.

The number of available workers is only expected to grow in the months ahead as GE Transportation cuts another 570 jobs.

Scott Slawson, president of UE Local 506, knows all about the demand for skilled workers. When news of a mass layoff makes the news, Slawson gets phone calls from companies eager to recruit those workers.

Recent layoffs brought calls from defense contractors Northrop Grumman and General Dynamics, he said.

Those calls prompted Slawson to make a call of his own — to County Executive Kathy Dahlkemper. That call



VIEWPOINT

OUR VIEW

New 'hives' are smart move for Erie

The issue: Schools unite around innovation
Our view: Collaboration, resources welcome

Atired narrative distorts understanding of Erie. While it is true the city's manufacturing base has been decimated over the past half century, that fails to account for all of the work being done to forge a future based on new enterprise, innovation and technology.

An announcement this week underscores cause for action and hope.

Four institutions of higher learning, Penn State Behrend, Gannon University, Mercyhurst University and Edinboro University of Pennsylvania, announced a forward-looking and collaborative plan to create a resource network for innovation and business development in the region. The new Northwest Pennsylvania Innovation Beehive Network will help establish labs or "hives" on each campus to support different dimensions of business development, as detailed by Erie Times-News reporters Kevin Flowers and Matthew Rink.

Behrend's "hive," open since 2016, offers engineering and design expertise, 3D printing and consulting to startups. Gannon's will focus on business development and analysis, and Mercyhurst's on business intelligence services. Edinboro's lab will specialize in advertising, marketing and public relations.

The project is being funded by a \$200,000 grant from the Appalachian Regional Commission and an additional \$200,000 from the Ignite Erie Industry + University Business Acceleration Collaborative. The Erie County Gaming Revenue Authority established Ignite Erie Industry in 2014 to foster enterprise and job growth.

Perry Wood, ECGRA's executive director, told Flowers the region too often focuses on the jobs lost and not on opportunities that exist in the creation of resources such as the beehive network.

"These beehives are where the future of manufacturing is," Wood said.

The schools engaging in this project deserve credit for their willingness to collaborate and offer complementary resources, rather than operate in silos or shortsightedly compete with one another.

This project also smartly dovetails with a host of other initiatives that look to reinvent economic development in the region, including the Innovation Collaborative, the Downtown Erie Innovation District and the Erie Technology Incubator.

There is no minimizing the losses sustained by the region, including the recent gut punch of 570 jobs to be lost at GE Transportation as the company shuts down locomotive manufacturing in Erie.

There is also no time to look back. We all know Erie is a great place to live. It must become a great place in which to do business again. That means educating a workforce to meet the needs of today's high-tech industries, a demand that could be met with the creation of an Erie County community college.

But it also means generating and supporting the ideas and new businesses needed to refocus this economy. This new, generous concentration of local expertise on every facet of business development promises to lend vital brainpower and clout to that effort.



RESOLUTION NUMBER 12, 2017

Resolution to Adopt the 2017 ECGRA Regional Asset Guidelines & Application for Mission Main Street

Whereas, ECGRA’s mission of economic and community development recognizes the importance of commercial corridors we know as “main streets” in developing a strong economy and community; and

Whereas, ECGRA seeks to catalyze projects driven by nonprofits and municipalities that are responsible for the revitalization and renewal of their respective “main streets”;

Whereas, ECGRA formed a Mission Main Street Committee in 2013 comprised of nonprofit leaders, main street board members, main street businesses and local elected officials that are active in community development;

Whereas, the Mission Main Street Committee discussed the grant’s purpose, applicant eligibility, eligible projects and cooperation amongst the stakeholders that led to the formation of an application and guidelines now in its third year;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Directors of the Erie County Gaming Revenue Authority, pursuant to the Economic Development Financing Law and the Erie County Gaming Revenue Authority Bylaws, resolves to adopt guidelines and an application for the Mission Main Street Grant funding in the amount of \$150,000 for Erie County, Pennsylvania. Organizations that are eligible to apply will follow the guidelines and application outlined in the attached Exhibit “A”.

On the motion of _____, seconded by _____.

This resolution was passed on the 12th day of October, 2017 by a vote of ____ - ____.

ERIE COUNTY GAMING REVENUE AUTHORITY

Dave Sample, Chairman
Erie County Gaming Revenue Authority

October 12, 2017

ATTEST:

Dave Yapple, Secretary
ECGRA





Mission Main Street Grants

Grant Guidelines | October 2017



IMPACT
NEIGHBORHOODS &
LOCAL COMMUNITIES

Section I. Introduction

About ECGRA

An impact investor, ECGRA's mission is to elevate Erie County by galvanizing nonprofits and small business toward economic and community development. Since February 2008, ECGRA has invested more than \$46 million in Erie County.

The Erie County Gaming Revenue Authority was incorporated in February 2008 in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania for the purpose of creating and administering a grantmaking process for gaming funds that come from the Pennsylvania Department of Revenue. Our mission is to elevate Erie County by galvanizing nonprofits and small business toward economic and community development.

Purpose of the Funding

A maximum of \$15,000 per application

Main streets across the country have fallen into disrepair because of the diaspora of retail from business districts to malls. In communities where main streets are well-maintained, there is a sense of vibrancy and civic pride. Mission Main Street Grants improve Erie County's primary commercial corridors – geographically distinct “main streets” that serve to incubate and host small businesses, events, historic structures, and the community's central parks. Main street revitalization is an economic and community development strategy that creates jobs, promotes tourism, impacts the region's economy, and improves surrounding neighborhoods.

Impact Area: Neighborhoods & Local Communities



IMPACT
NEIGHBORHOODS &
LOCAL COMMUNITIES

To reinvigorate neighborhoods and main corridors, boost buy-local efforts, and combat blight.

Section II. Eligibility

Eligibility Criteria

- 🌳 Applicant is an IRS-designated 501c3, a municipal authority, or a municipality
- 🌳 Applicant shall be dedicated to the revitalization of a main street or commercial corridor in Erie County
- 🌳 Applicant's headquarters is located in Erie County
- 🌳 Applicant is in good standing with the IRS and state and local taxing bodies
- 🌳 Applicant is in good standing with ECGRA's reporting requirements to date

Ineligible Organizations

- 🌳 An airport or transportation facility
- 🌳 A healthcare or long-term care facility
- 🌳 A public safety organization or facility, including volunteer fire departments
- 🌳 An institution that predominantly provides primary or secondary education/training
- 🌳 Any organization that was part of the settlement agreement with ECGRA, entered into 12/13/10

Eligible Uses of Funds

- 🌳 Personnel (15% maximum of the requested amount from ECGRA)
- 🌳 Marketing
- 🌳 Facility expense
- 🌳 Insurance
- 🌳 Equipment and supplies
- 🌳 Contracted services
- 🌳 Construction – see Appendix for policy on prevailing wage
- 🌳 Outcomes measurement and impact tracking

Ineligible Uses of Funds

- 🌳 Advocacy
- 🌳 Conference attendance
- 🌳 Debt service
- 🌳 Memberships/subscriptions
- 🌳 Research

Section III. Budget Form & Cash Match

Each application shall be complete in its entirety in order to be eligible. It will also demonstrate the following in the form of a budget:

- 🌱 Requested amount from ECGRA (a maximum of \$15,000)
- 🌱 Your agency contribution in the form of cash (do not list in-kind)
- 🌱 Other agency or funder contribution – include source; cash only
- 🌱 Total project cost – cash only
- 🌱 A 1:1 cash match. Existence of an endowment does not count toward match. Fundraising for a previous year's project does not count toward match.

The following are generally considered cash-match contributions:

- 🌱 Cash contributed by your organization
- 🌱 Equipment or supplies to be purchased by your organization for project activities
- 🌱 Paying for a project brochure and/or its dissemination
- 🌱 Grants from other government agencies or foundations (not gaming funds)

The following are generally considered in-kind contributions:

- 🌱 Personnel time given to the project
- 🌱 Person on loan from another organization
- 🌱 Use of existing equipment or supplies
- 🌱 Use of existing laboratory equipment or facilities
- 🌱 Waived or unrecovered indirect cost amount
- 🌱 Office space

Section IV. Approval Process & Terms

Application Assistance

Application for ECGRA Mission Main Street Grants shall be completed online at bit.ly/ECGRAgrants.

Program inquiries should be directed to:

Tom Maggio
ECGRA Grants Manager
(814) 897-2694
tmaggio@ECGRA.org

Pre-approval Process

Receipt: Upon submission of the application and required supporting material, ECGRA staff, working with the ECGRA board of directors' review committee, will determine eligibility.

Review: The review committee will evaluate the application and determine if it meets the required parameters outlined by the board.

Approval: ECGRA's board of directors will receive funding recommendations from the review committee.

Notification: ECGRA will notify all applicants via email.

Post-approval Process

Following approval by the ECGRA board of directors, the executive director will issue a letter of agreement to the grantee, which must be signed by an officer of the organization and returned within 30 days of the date of said letter. The agreement may detail additional requirements with which the grantee must comply, including but not limited to: project audit, financial grant closeout report, maintenance of records, public relations, and any other information the board or staff deem relevant.

The grant contract agreement and any subsequent amendments will not be executed until all of the following have been resolved to the satisfaction of the executive director:

- 🌳 The grantee must be in compliance with ECGRA's policies on audits relative to the submission of closeout reports on any previous contracts with ECGRA, regardless of the program or funding source.
- 🌳 The grantee must provide all supplemental documentation requested by ECGRA.
- 🌳 The grantee must be in compliance with IRS reporting standards.
- 🌳 The grantee must be current in payment of all federal, state, and local taxes unless it has entered into an agreement satisfactory to the respective taxing authority and is fully in compliance with the terms thereof.
- 🌳 The grantee must not discriminate against any employee or against any applicant for employment because of race, religion, color, handicap, national origin, age, or sex.

After the grant agreement has been fully executed and the proper documentation provided to ECGRA, the payment to the grantee will be made by an electronic funds transfer or by check.

ECGRA will monitor the activities of the applicant and the grant contract agreement to ensure that the grantee fulfills the conditions of the grant. This may include a site visit or random audit of income and expenses. Upon request and as required by the agreement, the grantee must furnish ECGRA with all data, reports, contracts, documents, and other information relevant to the activities of the applicant.

Contract Terms

- 🌳 Grant contracts for Mission Main Street Grants funding shall be for a period of 12 months.
- 🌳 One (1) option to extend the terms of the contract for a period of six (6) months may be granted by ECGRA. Detailed, written justification for the contract extension shall be submitted to ECGRA for review and consideration.
- 🌳 If the funds allocated to the applicant are not expended on or before the expiration of the grant contract, including the extension period, the unused portion of funds shall be returned to ECGRA.

Closeout Requirements

- 🌳 All recipients of funds are required to submit an online closeout report at bit.ly/ECGRAgrants quantifying the progress toward accomplishing approved deliverables.
- 🌳 Closeout reports are due no later than January 31, 2019.
- 🌳 All grant recipients will be required to submit financial documentation as part of the online closeout report.
- 🌳 **Non-compliance** with these requirements may prevent the grantee from obtaining funding or payment from any ECGRA grant program and/or funding from ECGRA's programmatic partners.
- 🌳 If it is determined that the grantee provided any material misrepresentations or that funds were used for activities not permitted under the terms of the grant contract agreement, the grant contract agreement will be considered in default and immediate repayment will be demanded. In addition, the matter may be referred to the appropriate authorities for investigation.

Section V. 2017 Grant Schedule

- 📅 Monday, October 16, 2017 – ECGRA releases the Mission Main Street Grants Application and Guidelines and posts to bit.ly/ECGRAgrants.
- 📅 Friday, December 1, 2017 – Applications must be submitted by midnight.
- 📅 Thursday, January 11, 2018 – ECGRA’s board of directors will make the final review and approve funding recommendations.
- 📅 Thursday, January 25, 2018 – last day to submit signed agreement letter.
- 📅 Thursday, January 31, 2019, last day to submit a closeout report online at bit.ly/ECGRAgrants.

Revised October 3, 2017

Appendix

Summary of Applicable Provisions of the

PREVAILING WAGE ACT

43 P.S. §§ 165-1 et seq

34 Pa. Code §§ 9.101 et seq

1. The Prevailing Wage Act (the "Act"), 43 P.S. §§ 165-1 et seq., and the various laws and regulations governing the Act apply to Public Works projects funded by the Erie County Gaming Revenue Authority ("ECGRA"). A Public Work is defined as including construction, reconstruction, demolition, alteration and/or repair work other than maintenance work, done under contract and paid for in whole or in part out of the funds of a public body where the estimated costs of the entire project exceed \$100,000.
2. ECGRA fund recipients shall require their contractor, if any, and contractors shall agree to require their subcontractors, to comply with the Act and the associated laws and regulations issued pursuant thereto.
3. Wage rates paid workmen employed in the Work shall not be less than the rates determined in the applicable wage rate determination by the Secretary of Labor and Industry for the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and no workmen may be employed in the Work except in accordance with the classifications in Secretary's determination.
4. The recipient of ECGRA funds shall be required to obtain the aforementioned public wage minimum rate determination prior to drafting project specifications or engaging in a contract with a contractor on a Public Work project.
5. Workmen employed or working in the Work shall be paid unconditionally, regardless of whether a contractual relationship exists or the nature of the contractual relationship. Payments shall be at least once a week and be the full amounts due at the time of payment, computed at the rates applicable to the time worked in the appropriate classification, without deduction or rebate, on any account, either directly or indirectly, except authorized deductions.
6. The contractor and each subcontractor shall post, for the entire period of construction, the wage determination decisions of the Secretary, including the effective date of changes thereof, in a prominent and easily accessible place or places at the site of the Work and at the places used by them to pay workmen their wages. The posted notice of wage rates shall comply with the requirements of the Pennsylvania Code, Title 34.
7. The contractor and subcontractor shall keep an accurate record showing the name, craft or classification, number of hours worked per day and the actual hourly rate of wage paid, including employee benefits, to each workman employed by him in connection with the Public Work. The record shall include deductions from each workman. The record shall be preserved for two (2) years from the date of payment and shall be open at reasonable hours to the inspection of ECGRA and to the Secretary of the Department of Labor and Industry or his authorized representatives.
8. Apprentices shall be limited to the numbers in accordance with a bona fide apprenticeship program registered with and approved by The Pennsylvania Apprenticeship and Training Council and only apprentices whose training and employment are in full compliance with

the Apprenticeship and Training Act (43 P.S. §§ 90.1 – 90.10), as approved July 14, 1961, and the regulations issued thereto, shall be employed on the Public Work project. A workman using the tools of a craft who does not qualify as an apprentice shall be paid the rate predetermined for journeymen in that particular craft or classification.

9. Payment of compensation to workmen for work performed on a Public Work in a lump sum basis, or a piece work system, or a price certain for the completion of a certain amount of work, or the production of a certain result shall be deemed a violation of the Act and associated regulations, regardless of the resulting average hourly wage.

10. Each contractor and subcontractor shall file a statement each week and a final statement at the conclusion of the work with the recipient of ECGRA funds, under oath and in a form satisfactory to the Secretary of the Department of Labor and Industry, certifying that workmen have been paid wages pursuant to the contract and the Act, or if wages remain unpaid, to set forth the amount of wages due and owing to each workman respectively.

11. The provisions of the Act, and its associated regulations shall be incorporated by reference in each contract.

This document is provided solely for informational purposes only and is not for the purpose of providing legal advice. You should contact your attorney to obtain advice with respect to compliance with the Prevailing Wage Act. Use of this document does not create an attorney-client relationship between the user and legal counsel to ECGRA.

