



100 Dayton Street, Yellow Springs, Ohio 45387

YSDC@YSDC.org

www.YSDC.org

Board Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, May 6, 2025 | 4:30–6:00 PM
Miami Township Conference Room

Voting Members: Will Foster (President), Kevin McGruder (Secretary), Marilan Moir (Treasurer), Lisa Abel, Trish Gustafson, Joanne Lakomski, Michael Slaughter,

Ex-Officio: Jeannamarie Cox, Phillip O'Rourke

Staff: Meg Leatherman, Aaron Arellano

Guest: Allison Moody

Invited: YS News Reporter

Absent: Johnnie Burns, Jane Fernandes, Terri Holden, Brian Housh, Rebecca Potter, Steve Wirrig

President's report:

Will noted that we would not review during the meeting the strategy documents that he had distributed previously by email. He noted that he met with Jeannamarie Cox and Phillip O'Rourke, regarding concerns about the downtown business district. He explained that he would like to get a sense of how YSDC Board members use the YSDC, and wants to understand what assets we see that the YSDC has. He then asked Meg to facilitate a discussion on this top.

Meg noted that she would like to move the meeting location to the Village office to avoid inconveniencing the Township staff to open the building for YSDC Board members. Marilan noted that in a perfect world she would come over to open the room. Lisa noted that the Township location was meant for organizational balance, to avoid the appearance that YSDC is a Village entity. Marilan agreed to explore getting a keycard for Meg to use.

Meg then began an exercise that she described as Collaborative Community Feedback by asking the members How would you finish this statement: *"Today YSDC's role is _____"*

- Michael: to find new businesses that fit in the Village and find new technology businesses, and residences to support those businesses;
- Lisa: noted that other area CICs (Community Investment Corporations) have focused on reviving their downtown areas, something that luckily, we haven't had to focus on; but we may not be able to skirt that any longer; as a CIC we have the authority to do many things;

- Joanne: the metaphor is a basket, with a loose weave with the smoke leaking out; the group is interested in capturing the smoke to benefit the community;
- KM: a platform for major contributors to economic development in Yellow Springs to YSDC member institutions; he noted the value for Antioch College having an opportunity to share its challenges and opportunities with community leaders that can counter the public narrative about Antioch that is often not based on facts;
- Allison: noted that she has worked with CICs, and sees YSDC's role in holding property as one that is very valuable; she added that YSDC has an opportunity to control the economic narrative in Yellow Springs based on gaining a better understanding about economic development in town.

Meg then asked: *"What assets are you aware that YSDC has, if any?"*

- Michael: a knowledge base, diversity; he noted that he is interested in promoting high tech businesses, and observed that we've lost some steam in promoting ourselves; he suggested that we can't rely totally on the downtown businesses, since this is a new economy.
- Phillip: asked to return to the "role" question, and noted that Jeannamarie consistently brought together the key organizations in the community, and stated that it is the only place that the organizations represented on YSDC come together;
- Lisa: noted that there have been some painful lessons learned: facilitated the sale of the old fire station; she noted that we missed some things monetarily in the legal documents: she added that YSDC went far down the road with Antioch on the sale of building and spent money which was a mistake; as an asset she noted that YSCF is able to do impact investing;

Meg asked: *What are the active YSDC initiatives right now?*

- Lisa: noted the work on solar; Will asked what actions are we taking on that now? Lisa noted that the Village legal team is reviewing the initiative, and that they need to develop a process to move forward; she noted that the time delay will mean we have less impact;

Meg asked: *What new initiative should we tackle next, and what assets do we have to contribute?*

- Michael: move forward on the slide deck promotions; invite Intel to town; make YS information packets for businesses interested in YS; Will asked Where do the materials live? Michael noted that they are on a Google drive; Allison noted that we haven't really publicized YS widely, and suggested that the promotional information should be on the Village's website.
- Marilan asked about the next open house for businesses; Phillip explained that Brian had discussed planning an annual meeting [that could be attended by interested

businesses] but that we felt we weren't ready yet for an annual meeting; Will agreed, noting that for the community event we need to have our identity clarified; Marilan noted that she met people who are running businesses from their homes and doesn't have a sense of who is doing what in the Village or whether it's valuable. She suggested that we need to know who might be planning to leave because they don't have enough space; Meg noted that we have become a part of an economic development collaboration called Business First; she explained that the YSPD has the database and that we can use it to track our contacts with businesses; Aaron noted that he will be the point person for Business First database, and we should let him know what contacts we're making; Will noted that he would love us to be a metrics-driven organization, and that he wanted to keep a cadence going by inviting local business speakers;

Meg next asked: *How do you prefer to receive information on YSDC so that you can stay updated? What types of information would be helpful?*

- Email was the consensus;
- Michael noted that the Village newsletter is informative;
- Joanne suggested that undertaking scenario planning with quadrants can keep us aligned similar to a SWOT analysis; Aaron asked whether the information would be: updated once a month? Joanne agreed; she noted that she is also curious about the idea of applying the Maximum Input/Minimum Accountability framework to YSDC's work, noting that it reveals who acts on ideas.
- Will noted that he has been helping with organizational work for the short-term, and after that it will be the team that carries it forward;
- Jeannamarie stated that the downtown continues to concern her, adding that since we are selling the vibrancy of the downtown, we have to figure out how to maintain that as well as to ensure that the downtown is still a place for residents to go and feel a part of and that our neighbors come to spend their dollars at restaurants, etc.; Alison noted that the hardware store is closing.

Consent Agenda

Lisa suggested revising the April minutes with the title indicating Meeting Minutes [rather than Meeting Agenda]; Jeannamarie noted that she and Joanne were away at a conference during the April meeting; it was suggested in the future to indicate who is not there;

Motion: Joanne made a motion to approve the minutes with the suggested revisions, which was seconded by Michael, and approved unanimously.

Develop Local

- Deanna Nesbitt, a human resources professional was the guest; she explained that she is native of Indiana and graduated from the weekend program at Antioch in 1997; she indicated that now owns a recruiting company, and previously had had HR career in manufacturing for Fortune 500 companies, and family companies; she noted that she

is currently seeking a sales manager for Electroshield and has placed a couple of other positions for them; she asked: Is YS is changing its no-growth perspective? What are you willing to change? She indicated that she would like to have an introduction to Intel and would like to offer what she has to YSDC; Diane noted that she met Will through the Goldman Sachs Foundation's Business program which is offered for free; at the end of the program you have to develop a growth strategy; that led her to shift her perspective from sole practitioner; it has accelerated her business in that she's already exceeded her year to date income from last year. Had 30 grads; was held at Sinclair; they rotate from there to Cincinnati State and Columbus State; Very selective program. Hundreds of alumni across the U.S. now who collaborate. Many businesses don't know about the HR resources available. Dept. of Defense Skillbridge program which is available for military personnel for up to six months they stay on the pay of the military pay and benefits while they work at no cost to them. Tech Cred up to \$2,500 per training per person reimburse them.

- Diane noted that Sinclair is one of eight community colleges in the state registered for apprenticeship programs. At the end the individual has a journeyman's card, e.g. electricians, etc. Marilan asked how a HVAC local would do this. Tech Cred/Sinclair would connect them and do the administrative work; Meg asked whether this is of value for YSDC.

Community Feedback

- Allison noted that there are two potential buyers for 3.7 acres at the CBE; she noted that a letter has been presented to Council; She noted that Millworks' Nook Overland is planning to build a 9,000 sq.ft building on the north field to accommodate their growth; they have 3 full-time employees; this goes along with the Comprehensive Plan. She noted that Tweeledee's and their marijuana attorneys would like to speak at a future YSDC meeting;
- Lisa noted that: MVCA is merging with MVCC and will take the remaining space at 888 Dayton Street;
- Joanne noted that she spent time with the Director of the YS Children's Center who was not aware of YSDC; would like to invite them;
- Philip stated that the Chamber program Keep It Vibrant, QR scan helps create community; pairing the results with the offerings of the downtown businesses; Chamber is creating landing pages for the Chamber and YellowSprings.org, creating new wayfinding map with a QR code hoping to finalize by May 29th. MSlaughter, invite YSI? They are building a Dayton location. How will EPA changes impact them?
- Marilan suggested that Deanna be at our annual meeting;
- Philip: Street fair vendor closing this Friday; should be noticeably more community-centric. Reduced the price for vendors because of the economy and that attracted more and some who hadn't been here in a while. There is a service vendor category now in addition to craft and retail. Spirit of Yellow Springs.

Lisa offered a motion to adjourn which was seconded by Marilan and approved unanimously
The meeting was adjourned at 6:02

Kevin McGruder, Secretary

