

**SOUTHWEST ILLINOIS TRADE & INVESTMENT COUNCIL**

**Thursday, January 23, 2020**

**St. Clair County Grants Department**

**MINUTES**

**I. Roll Call**

President Craig Eversmann opened the meeting at 9:00 A.M. A roll call was taken, and the following members were present. It was stated that a quorum was present.

Board of Directors

Elmore, Bob (proxy Koch)	Eversmann, Craig
Miller, Dave	Wondolowski, Bobby
Weilbacher, Ed	Cantwell, Tim
Li, Al (proxy Roberta)	Kern, Mark (proxy Stubblefield)

Ex-Officios

Silvia Torres

**II. Intros and Welcome**

President Eversmann did quick introductions of any newcomers at the meeting: Michael Fazio, Export Finance Manager, Office of International Trade, U.S. Small Business Administration; and Roberta Gibson, Commercial Banking Relationship Manager, Regions Bank. He then asked St. Clair County IGD Director, Rick Stubblefield, to give an update on Grants Department activities.

**III. Approval of 10/24/2019 Minutes.**

President Eversmann asked if there were any corrections to the minutes. With none being offered, a motion was made by Dave Miller and seconded Bobby Wondolowski to approve. The motion carried.

**IV. Officers Reports:**

**A. Executive.**

President Eversmann indicated that the Executive Committee met on January 15, 2020 to assemble the agenda and to address any other issues and concerns. The Executive Committee members that participated were Craig Eversmann, Trudy Bodenbach, Silvia Torres, Bobby Wondolowski, and Edie Koch. Craig went on to say that there would be an election of officers at the next quarterly meeting in April. President Eversmann stated that anyone interested in being considered for an office in 2020, should communicate that interest to Edie Koch before the next meeting. Edie offered to send officer descriptions to everyone.

**B. Financial.**

In the absence of Treasurer, Paul 'Toskin, President Eversman offered the quarterly financial report. He reported that the balance stood at \$4,411.16. In the next month, Council's registration with the State tax forms required to maintain our non-profit status, would be submitted. Koch asked Rick Stubblefield to check on St. Clair County's contribution status to SWITIC. Koch also added that the Council received a \$1,000 contribution recently from Mid America Airport that needs to be added to future financial reports.

**V. Committee Reports:**

**A. Marketing/Communication**

Vice President Bobby Wondolowski, Committee Chair, reported that he continues to work on a letter that could be used to recruit more exporters into SWITIC. He also reported on some updates being made to the website and reached out to members for assistance in developing the outreach letter and other website updates. He suggested that meeting announcements need to be added and we should look at creating a Linked In page. Definitely need to get more committee members involved.

## **B. Out-Bound Trade Missions:**

Silvia Torres, Committee Chair, reported that the Council needs to continue looking at countries that would be a good match for our area. To get a better idea of what countries would garner the most interest and participation from SWIL Exporters, Torres has developed for distribution an "Export Needs Assessment Survey" (enclosed in meeting packet). Survey will be sent to the SWITIC Board, contacts, and partners. She asked for everyone to get the word out to optimize response to enable better decision making on market selection.

## **C. In-Bound Trade Missions:**

Select USA Spin-Off Event. Edie Koch, Chair for this committee, reported that she had submitted an application for SWITIC to host a "Select USA Spin-Off Event" Southwest Illinois. Event would allow us to provide foreign investors who are registered to attend the Select USA Investment Summit in June 1-3, 2020, with an experience of SWIL. The projected 1,200 foreign investors participating will be encouraged by Summit Spin-off staff to extend their stay and take full advantage of a Spin-off event to connect with the state and local government representatives, business leaders, and local expertise; and to explore promising investment opportunities in other areas in the U.S.

*Proposed "Discover SWIL" Spin-off event:*

June 4-5, 2020

Day 1 structured, Day 2 customized to individual needs

Event organized primarily around two industries: Distribution & Logistics; Food and Beverage.

Select USA staff will help to market event to Foreign Investors registered for Summit

Markets: Open to All; no guarantee on being selected or number of participants

Peruvian Delegation Visit Postponed. Koch referred stated that a copy of a letter sent to SWITIC in November, from the Executive Director for the American Chamber of Commerce of Peru, that apologizes for their cancellation and discusses continued interest in a trade mission to SWIL in 2020. In response, SWITIC sent a formal invitation to them in December, to visit the SWIL region in 2020. Silvia Torres continues to stay in communication with her contact at AMCHAM Peru and had the following update. SWITIC's letter sent to Executive Director of AMCHAM was presented to AMCHAM's Trade Facilitation Committee at a meeting on December 12<sup>th</sup> and will again be presented to the Peruvian Tax and Customs Authority (SUNAT) in March of 2020 with a plan to propose Southwest Illinois as the destination to visit in 2020. The Director of International Business Programs at the University of Lima in Peru, who visited SIUE in December, will be instrumental in recruitment for this Peruvian delegation. Aug to Sept seems to be the most likely time frame for the rescheduled visit.

## **D. Education Committee**

In the absence of Paul Jarzombek, Chair for this Committee, Craig referred members to Paul's email update provided for the meeting. Paul notes that he met with the Education committee to discuss an educational program that SWITIC could be the sponsor of for our region. Idea is to build the program like the Expotech program that is offered in 38 states in the USA. This requires a 3-meeting commitment (over a 3 month period) by the participating companies and the focus is to get them to focus their export efforts and choose 3 countries to really focus on to get measurable increases in their export sales. This could be for new to export companies as well to learn from scratch. Typical topics are:

How to choose target countries

How to find distributors in those countries

Legal implications

Finance issues and options to making sure you get paid for your export sales

Logistics and supply chain management

Working with the State and Federal Government to get assistance

Incoterms

Export compliance- staying out of trouble with the U.S. Federal Government

Cultural differences and protocols when dealing with people from other countries

Tom Hulseman of Metro Chicago Exports is the group that "owns" Expotech for the State of Illinois and seems to be open to SWITIC taking the lead on Expotech downstate because his group does not have the band width to offer it outside of the 7 county region near Chicago. Fortunately, if Tom approves, we will have the curriculum and all of the marketing material. We just have to sell this to companies in the downstate region and staff the sessions with presenters... probably from our Board of Directors whenever possible. Paul is on the Illinois District Export Council with Tom Hulseman and plans to meet with him soon to discuss this further. Once we get the endorsement of Metro Chicago Exports, doing the program and selling it will be much easier. Paul added that we will have to cut Metro Chicago exports into any revenue we collect. Details will be further discussed with Tom. If all goes well, Paul predicted one session a year, in April/May or September/Oct. Paul promised a follow-up report after his planned meeting with Tom Hulseman.

## **VI. Old Business**

### **A. SWIL Exporter Data Base.**

Eversmann reported that this is still a work in progress. The summer intern made a good start on the database but work still remains to make it as comprehensive as possible. President Eversmann has solicited the help of other SWITIC members to review the database and help gather more data to make it as useful as possible. Al Li and staff have been providing assistance.

### **B. Leadership Council's Japanese Delegation Initiative.**

Edie reported that this initiative is still moving forward. A recent meeting with Ronda Sauget, Executive Director for the Leadership Council, revealed that she and her organization are open to SWITIC's involvement in any subsequent events. As things evolve, we will regroup with Ronda on SWITIC's collaboration, participation in events, and/or sponsorship, as appropriate. Things are already in motion as there is an upcoming visit to Japan for the Midwest U.S. community and business leaders in March where the Leadership Council can make recommendations and solicit applicants. I, along with several others in SWIL, have been asked to apply, but competition will be tough. Final selection of participants will be made by the Japanese Foundation in late January to early February.

## **VII: New Business**

### **A. SWIL Marketing Materials**

Lastly, Koch added that the Leadership Council was working on a marketing piece and video for Southwest Illinois which could be helpful to SWITIC's needs. Craig asked Edie to see if the video was available to be played at the meeting on the 23<sup>rd</sup>.

## **VIII. Public Comment and Announcements.**

None.

## **IX. Next meeting confirmation and adjournment.**

President Eversmann reminded everyone that the next quarterly meeting would be on April at the St. Louis Regional Airport. And West would be hosting a tour. With no other items to discuss, a motion was made and seconded. To adjourn. A vote was taken, and the motion passed. The meeting adjourned at 11:00 A.M.