

City of Jennings
Business Watch Meeting Minutes
June 24, 2022-11:00 a.m.
Via Zoom

ATTENDEES

The Honorable Mayor	Yolanda Austin
Kellie Shelton	Economic Development Coordinator
Irvetta Williams	City of Jennings Consultant
Verna Charles	Mayor Administrative Assistant
Myra Randle	Economic Development Specialist
Annie Dineen	Intern Economic Development Department
Jane Brown	Councilwoman Ward 2
Willie Brandon	Director of Parks Recreation
Rebecca Zoll	President/CEO North County Inc
Evan Maxwell	Special Project Manager North County Inc
Rita Dawson	Family Pre-Need Councilor
Stacie James	Local Taxpayer Advocate (IRS) St. Louis, Mo
Steve Pokorney	Owner STS Automotive
Anthony Francis	CEO of CTE Executive Group LLC
Moses Dickson	Lodge #187 Prince Hall Masons of Missouri
Rev. Trevor Barnes	Northside SDA Church
Joseph Campbell	
Charles Kirkwood	Midwestern CDC
Karen Harvey	
Lola Nash	President Senior Commission
Carma Henderson	
William Wooten	
Captain Norman Mann	St. Louis County Police Department
Lt Luis Perez	St. Louis County Police Department

Meeting Called to order at 11:00 A.M via Zoom.

Introductions were made by Kellie Shelton

Rebecca Zoll - President/CEO North County Inc. (NCI)

Rebecca Zoll has been with the company for over 20 years. She is the CEO and President of the organization. Maxwell is their Special Project Manager and has been with the company for over six years. Evan Maxwell works with small businesses in the north St. Louis County community. NCI is a regional development association that acts as a catalyst to define and advocate economic and community development for North St. Louis County. They service all the municipalities that boarder the city. Their focus is to unite business and community leadership, promote business expansion and retention, support job creation and enhance quality of life. They focus on Economic Community Development, Education, Marketing, Transportation &

Infrastructure, and Healthcare. Investors include businesses, municipalities in St. Louis County, Chamber of Commerce, healthcare providers, schools (public and private), neighborhood associations, faith-based organizations, and residents. One of their campaigns is True North it is for businesses and residents. This campaign is accessible through social media on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram (TrueNorthCounty). The website is www.truenorthcounty.org. True North is the authentic story of many diverse communities and people that make up the northern part of the St. Louis metro region.

Evan Maxwell – Special Project Manager

Spoke on the Equity Connect program which connects people together to share ideas. The program offers educational opportunities for businesses in the community that were initially offered to their Board of Directors and a second training program that is offered to their Board of Director employees. The goal is to educate people on the cost of inequity in our communities as well as the benefits of racial equity in our communities. The approach is the Equity Connect which is a quarterly publication. If anyone is interested in receiving this publication or have any articles that you feel would be interesting to publish in the publication, please reach out to Evan Maxwell at emaxwell@northcountyinc.com.

The North County Small Business Accelerator is designed to help Retail and Restaurant businesses with a Six-week small business workshop. One of the things they teach is how to walk into a bank and secure funding for their business.

The Small Business Navigator Programs mission is to expand access to resources and opportunities by connecting North County small businesses with a direct contact person who is knowledgeable about available resources and can help them navigate and tap into the resource landscape in our region.

Some available resources:

- Missouri Small Business Development Center: www.sbdc.missouri.edu/
- MOSourceLink: www.mosourcelink.com/
- Missouri Small Business Association: www.sba.gov/
- SCORE: www.stlouis.score.org/
- St. Louis Economic Development Partnership: www.stlpartnership.com/
- Urban League Womens Business Center: www.ulstlwbc.com/

If anyone has questions or needs assistance our contact information is Rebecca Zoll, rzoll@northcountyinc.com and Evan Maxwell, emaxwell@northcountyinc.com. Their website is www.northstlouiscounty.com. They are located at 8225 Florissant Road, Ste. 11, St. Louis, MO 63121.

Charles Kirkwood wanted to know how he can get start-up cost for businesses through government funds.

They are not part of the government but will try to help point him in the right direction.

Rita Dawson – Family Pre-Need Counselor

She has been working with families for over 18 years to help them put their funeral plans together before the time of need. She works with several funeral homes in St. Louis City and County. It is stressful for family when they must make funeral arrangements at the last minute. Pre-arranging takes the stress away and allows you to know what will happen after you are deceased. Funeral costs are going up at about 5% each year. Pre-planning freezes the cost so that the price remains the same for as long as you live. Funeral plans are transferrable to any state including Canada. If you move, you can take it with you and you can also switch funeral homes if needed. The money is secure and held in a trust company. If anyone is interested in a funeral plan, Rita Dawson can be reached by text at (314) 359-5252.

Stacie James – Local Taxpayer Advocate – St. Louis, Missouri

This is an independent organization within the IRS. They offer free service to all eligible taxpayer's individuals, non-profit organizations, and businesses. There are no income limitations for their services and the services are free. They came into existence from the Restructuring and Reform Act of 1998 and they are your voice with the IRS. Their goal is to go into the community and identify problems that exist for underserved populations. If someone has been having problems with the IRS, they are more than happy to see if they can help. There are many different outreaches to help a variety of different situations. Stacie James can be reached at (314) 339-1680, or by email at stacie.d.james@irs.gov. The website is www.taxpayeradvocate.irs.gov 1 (877) 777-4778.

Lt. Luis Perez – Diversity & Inclusion Unit

Lt. Luis Perez was promoted to the Diversity & Inclusion Unit May 27th, 2022. In January of 2020, the St. Louis County Police Department introduced the Diversity and Inclusion Unit. The unit is responsible for developing and reinforcing an inclusive work environment for employees and for ensuring that the practices of the Department, both front-facing and internal, are fair, impartial, and inclusive to all members of the Department and community. In May 2021, the Diversity and Inclusion Unit coordinated and facilitated ABLE (Active Bystandership for Law Enforcement) training which focuses on officer health & wellness preventing misconduct and reducing mistakes amongst their ranks. This is an intervention support system for officers.

Kellie Shelton – Economic Development Specialist City of Jennings

Ms. Shelton thanked everyone for their participation.

Meeting adjourned at 12:00 P.M.