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Barren County Economic Authority and Glasgow-Barren County Chamber of Commerce Announce Plans to Consolidate

GLASGOW, KY. – June 30, 2021 – The Barren County Economic Authority (BCEA) and Glasgow-Barren County Chamber of Commerce (GBCCC) boards of directors unanimously voted to create a consolidated, streamlined organization to better serve their members and the Barren County area.

The announcement comes after months of intensive conversations about how the nonprofits could strengthen and expand services to better meet the economic and community development needs of businesses and residents.

“We applaud BCEA and the Chamber for doing the difficult work of reimagining what has been in place for decades to create a more efficient and dynamic one-stop-shop for business development in Barren County,” said Micheal Hale, Barren County Judge Executive. “This is the kind of thinking we all should be doing to ensure the best possible outcomes for our area.”

A Consolidation Review Committee was formed with members of both organizations and tasked with finding the most viable path forward for a partnership or consolidation among the entities. The committee was responsible for the analysis, evaluation of the potential pros and cons of a consolidation and to provide the boards with a recommendation and implementation plan. In addition to the review committee, five working groups were also established to evaluate specific operational details.

“We couldn’t be more thrilled to join forces with such a dynamic organization,” says Treva Shirley, GBCCC President. “This is the culmination of the direction we have been moving in and now we can truly maximize our strategic alliance by providing consolidated resources to our members and continue to positively impact Barren County.”

“The planned consolidation will allow us to respond quickly to our local businesses needs and solve issues with a wide variety of solutions that benefit the business community,” said

Maureen Carpenter, Executive Director of the BCEA. “We will create two-way relationships with our members, offer diverse opportunities for our team, promote open communication with all of our stakeholders, and focus on strengthening our economy and growing our community as one.”

Carpenter, who started with the BCEA in January 2020 has been selected as the President & CEO, taking on the leadership role for both the Chamber of Commerce and Economic Development.

The Chamber and Economic Authority will remain intact, funding sources will remain independent, and no jobs will be cut in the consolidation, rather it offers an opportunity to add a full-time membership and programs coordinator. The consolidation creates an organized system to achieve goals through one vision and mission, creates an inclusive environment and a single point of contact for all business services.

“We found compelling evidence that this consolidation would be beneficial.” said David Peterson, chair of the Barren County Economic Authority. “Aligning the strategic resources of these organizations will better position our efforts to attract new jobs and grow existing companies.”

There were several key advantages identified by the Consolidation Review Committee, including one vision for the community; joint efforts to reach organizational goals for the business community; shared resources, all staff will be housed under one roof, share technology, contacts, and expertise; one team with common leadership and cross-trained staff and the power to influence change through catalytic leadership.

“This consolidation is about supporting our businesses,” said Glasgow Mayor, Harold Armstrong. “We need to be as efficient as possible, highlight our strengths to recruit new business and people to the community, and protect and preserve what we love, our businesses, families and futures.”

The desired outcomes for the consolidation are business growth, more new businesses opening and expanding throughout the county; population growth, attract new residents to the community while enticing those that have left to come back, and revenue growth driven by goal achievement.

Ernie Myers, who has served as the Glasgow-Barren County Chamber of Commerce Executive Vice President since 2012 will be retiring when the consolidation is completed in January. “With a vested interest and passion for this organization and community, having a solid succession plan is integral to our continued success,” said Myers. “We have highly talented staff and board of directors dedicated to the success of this organization and will greatly assist with this process.”

All involved are appreciative of Ernie’s commitment and insights and being a part of this process.

The group will work over the next several months to finalize the necessary legal work and prepare for the consolidation that is planned to go into effect January 1, 2022. The chamber and economic development team will temporarily be housed at 126 E Public Square until a plan for a more permanent home can be developed.

You can review the Consolidation Questions & Answers by visiting website: www.barrencoea.com/About or www.glasgowbarrenchamber.com

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About the Barren County Economic Authority:

Established in 1984, the Barren County Economic Authority is the lead economic development organization in Barren County to attract new business and industry, retain and support existing business expansion and support infrastructure development that meets the needs of business and industry and advance the overall well-being of the community.

BCEA Investors in Economic Development: *Champion:* T.J. Regional Health *Visionary:* American Engineers, Inc. *Advocates:* German American Bank, Edmonson State Bank, Green Mechanical Construction, Inc., and Kelley Construction. *Supporters:* The Peoples Bank; The Murphy Construction Group, Alliance Corporation, ATM Media Solutions and US Bank Contributor: Gray Construction/Gray Ohio Valley

Glasgow-Barren County Chamber of Commerce:

The Chamber plays many roles in the community and remains strong due to its members. The Chamber promotes business & community growth and development by offering programs designed to strengthen and expand the income potential of all businesses within their trade area.