



MINUTES
Region Nine Development Commission
FULL COMMISSION MEETING
January 10, 2007

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chair James Broich called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. in the Nichols Office Center in Mankato.

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

III. ROLL CALL

MEMBERS PRESENT: Leo Bauer, James Berg, Jerry Boler, Eldo Brandenburg, James Broich, Alvin Dietz, Candace Fenske, Ron Fleischmann, Janie Flores, Terry Genelin, Harlan Gorath, Ken Hanson, Janet Holicky, Charlie Hurd, Matt Johansen, Frederick Juni, Norbert Kaufmann, Dwayne Krenz, Tom Loveall, Brian Lynch, Lance Mikkelson, Alvis More, Roger Oldfather, Bob Roesler, Mary Jean Rohlfing, Bob Schabert, William Stangler, Patricia Steckman, James Stenson

MEMBERS EXCUSED: Kip Bruender, Jack Fitzsimmons, Mick McGuire, Brenda Pautsch, James Stangler, Tim Strand

OTHERS PRESENT: Maria Bautsch, Troy Bonkowske, Linda Giersdorf, Tim Krohn, Paul Murphy, LuAnn Vanderwerf, Cheryl Weston, Greg Young

Chair James Broich requested approval for two new commissioners. (1) Maria Bartsch from Rapidan Township, Good Thunder. She will represent townships in Blue Earth County and replaces David Lynch. (2) Greg Young from Verona Township, Winnebago. He will represent townships in Faribault County and replaces Dennis Nelson. Fred Juni moved approval of Bartsch and Young, Ron Fleischmann seconded. Motion carried.

IV. GUEST SPEAKER

Paul Vogel, Community Development Director from the city of Mankato, gave a presentation on the new Wal-Mart Distribution Center that will be built in Mankato. Construction will begin on the center in 2007 or 2008 and the size of the building will be 880,000 square foot on a 150-acre lot. It will be built in the Northeast Industrial Service District of Mankato. The center will provide food products to Wal-Mart Super Centers and grocery stores in the five state areas of Minnesota, North and South Dakota and parts of Iowa and Wisconsin. The expected employment is 500 full-time jobs initially with up to 700 jobs within three years of operation.

V. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

James Stenson moved to approve the September 13, 2006 minutes as presented. Ron Fleischmann seconded. Motion carried.

VI. APPROVAL OF TREASURER'S REPORT

Alvis More moved to approve the treasurer's report as presented. Fred Juni seconded. Motion carried.

VII. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Chair James Broich noted meetings he attended in the past month. He attended a R9 Revolving Loan Fund meeting in Mankato and a Minnesota Regional Development Organization (MRDO) meeting in St. Paul where they met with the new commissioner from the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development and Minnesota Department of Transportation officials. Prior to the full Commission meeting, Broich attended the R9 Budget / Personnel and Area Agency on Aging committee meetings.

VIII. R9 SHARING & OPPORTUNITIES

Tom Loveall, Faribault County commissioner, reported that Faribault County commissioners have been consumed with constructing a new law enforcement center. Next month it is hoped that there will be a purchase agreement announced, then in March will start the bidding process and by July or August will be the groundbreaking. The facility is capped at \$10,000,000. The facility will be a 36-bed capacity jail that will also house the sheriff's office, emergency management offices, storage, etc. All of the planning for the jail is overseen with mandatory statutes and the Minnesota Department of Corrections. Proposals to construct windmills have been received from the southwest corner of the county, Corn Plus and the city of Blue Earth. There is interest in constructing a bio-diesel plant near the city of Winnebago. Loveall said the Faribault County EDA continue to assist small cities. At present, their focus is housing needs. Loveall said that he has been working with R9 staff, Brent O'Neil, on transit needs jointly with Prairieland Express who is their local bus company. Loveall said that approximately half of rural areas are in compliance with the septic ordinance. The state is going to further enforce the ordinance. Also, Loveall said that county officials noted that it seems there is an increase of garbage in rural ditches.

Roger Oldfather, Faribault County cities under 10,00 representative, and specifically the city of Kiester of which he is mayor, reported that after the local bowling alley was vacant for three years, the city purchased it and refurnished it. The bowling alley is now up and running and doing very well. Many thanks go to people that donated money and labor to make it happen. The school in Kiester that is part of the United South Central School District was voted on to close this year, but after challenging the decision; it was decided not to close the school until 2008. Enrollment was expected to drop in that year anyway, so it was expected. Oldfather said the city of Kiester will have a vacant building to fill.

Greg Young, Faribault County townships representative reported that the incorporated village of Huntley is putting in a sewer system that will be connected to the city of Winnebago.

IX. COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. Area Agency on Aging Committee

Committee Chair, James Berg, reported that R9 Transportation Coordinator, Brent O'Neil, presented the Human Service and Public Transportation Coordination Plan document for review. Title III grants that were recently awarded was presented for review. In the next six months committee members will look at demographics – to see what the future holds for our aging population. Then to learn how it will affect services to the elderly. Berg said that Robin Thompson, Minnesota River Area Agency on Aging senior outreach specialist, will be invited back to talk about the Medicare Part D topic. The committee will also focus on education and information gathering to further inform themselves.

B. Budget / Personnel Committee

Committee Co-Chair, Fred Juni, reported that Finance Director, LuAnn Vanderwerf, was in attendance and presented agenda items for review. A committee meeting will be scheduled in the next couple of weeks to review the employee handbook to clarify some of the grey areas, which include employee comp time, employment and health care packages.

Juni said that an item that was brought to the committee's attention was the need for commissioners to correctly fill out their expense vouchers for auditing purposes. Juni presented the recommendation of the Budget / Personnel Committee that the per diem be set at \$50.00 plus mileage with the exception of Commission, Committee and Board meetings. These will have a per diem of \$40.00 plus mileage. If a commissioner attends more than one of the exception meetings in the same day they will receive an additional \$10.00 for the second meeting, not to exceed the \$50.00 per diem. James Stenson moved to approve the recommendation of the Budget / Personnel Committee regarding per diems. Bob Roesler seconded. Discussion followed. Motion carried. (Added Note – exception meetings refer to Commission, Committee or Board meetings only.)

C. Economic & Community Development Committee

Committee Chair, Jerry Boler, reported that their committee had not met very often in 2006, but plans to meet on a regular basis in 2007. The committee's first agenda item will be reviewing the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) document. By federal law the CEDS document needs to be updated every year and the deadline is March 31. The committee plans to send out a letter to all small cities in the Region Nine area saying they need their comprehensive plan updated, if they have not done so already. Many cities have not updated their plans for many, many years and by having an updated plan it will include the new terms and makes the city more eligible to apply for state or federal grants.

Boler also informed Commissioners that their committee has four non-commissioners as members. They represent businesses.

X. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Executive Director, Reggie Edwards, was not present. He was attending a Meadowlark work session in Nebraska.

Commissioners reviewed his monthly activities report.

XI. PROGRAM REPORTS

A. Minnesota River Area Agency on Aging

Minnesota River Area Agency on Aging (MNRAAA) executive director, Linda Giersdorf, reported that at the R9 Board of Directors meeting in December they appointed members to the R9 Advisory Council on Aging (ACA). The next day the nursing home representative that was appointed had to resign. Giersdorf requested approval to appoint Renee' Solomon-Wise who also interviewed for the nursing home position. Ron Fleischmann moved approval of the appointment, William Stangler seconded. Motion carried.

Giersdorf informed Commissioners that the new chair of the MNRAAA Joint Powers Board is Gene Short who is a county commissioner from Redwood County. MNRAAA area executive directors continue to meet on issues. They will meet again January 25.

XII. OTHER BUSINESS

Chair of the Strategic Planning Committee, James Stenson, asked committee members to meet following the full Commission meeting to schedule a meeting.

Chair Broich reminded Commissioners that the next full Commission meeting is April 11 and that the Board of Directors will be meeting monthly and committees meeting as needed.

XIII. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 8:10 p.m.

James J. Broich, Chairman

Roger Oldfather, Secretary