

MINUTES
Region Nine Development Commission
FULL COMMISSION MEETING
March 8, 2006

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: Wendell Armstrong, Leo Bauer, James Berg, Jerry Boler, Eldo Brandenburg, James Broich, Kip Bruender, Susan Devens, Alvin Dietz, Janie Flores, Terry Genelin, Harlan Gorath, Ken Hanson, Janet Holicky, Matt Johansen, Frederick Juni, Norbert Kaufmann, Dwayne Krenz, Tom Loveall, Brian Lynch, Terri McGee, Mick McGuire, Lance Mikkelson, Alvis More, Dennis Nelson, Roger Oldfather, Brenda Pautsch, Bob Roesler, Mary Jean Rohlfing, Bob Schabert, James Stangler, Tim Strand

MEMBERS EXCUSED: Candace Fenske, Ron Fleischmann, David Lynch, Patricia Steckman, James Stenson

MEMBERS ABSENT: John Brady, Jack Fitzsimmons, William Stangler

OTHERS PRESENT: Troy Bonkowske, Reggie Edwards, Judy Hanson, Bob Klanderud, Loren Lien, Brent O'Neil, Mark Scheidel, Lou Schwartzkopf, Cheryl Weston

IV. GUEST INTRODUCTIONS

Chair James Broich introduced Martin County commissioner, Jerry Boler, who was approved at the January meeting. He replaces Dan Schmidtke. Chair Broich requested approval of the city of Mankato mayor, John Brady (not present). He replaces Jeff Kagermeier. Wendell Armstrong moved approval, Bob Schabert seconded. Motion carried.

Community & Economic Development director, Troy Bonkowske, introduced Brent O'Neil, who was recently hired as the transportation planner.

Executive director, Reggie Edwards, introduced Nicollet County commissioner, Judy Hanson and Mankato State University-Mankato faculty member, Lou Schwartzkopf. They are members of the R9 Renewable Energy Task Force that also includes Edwards who represents the RNDC. Edwards explained the history of the task force and its members. Hanson and Schwartzkopf introduced Resolution 2006-3 that requested RNDC's support of renewable energy fuels and encouraging the use of 25% renewable fuels for transportation use by 2025. Alvis More moved approval, James Berg seconded. Resolution unanimously passed. Edwards said that the resolution will be mailed to all jurisdictions in the region nine area requesting their support.

Collectively, the resolution will be used as a regionwide tool for legislative purposes. Fred Juni noted that, if possible, the resolution should be mailed before the township annual meeting March 14.

V. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Fred Juni moved to approve the January 11, 2006 minutes as presented. Bob Roesler seconded. Motion carried.

VI. APPROVAL OF TREASURER'S REPORT

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

VII. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Chair James Broich noted meetings he attended in the past month. They included an Aging Program's Joint Powers Board meeting in Redwood Falls; a R9 Transportation Advisory Committee meeting; a R9 Budget / Personnel Committee meeting; an Area Transportation Partnership (ATP) meeting. Prior to the full Commission meeting, Broich met with staff, Brent O'Neil, to discuss enhancement projects and the ATP and said a R9 Strategic Planning, Budget & Personnel and Legislative committees were held.

VIII. R9 SHARING & OPPORTUNITIES

Sibley County commissioner, Leo Bauer, reported that the city of Gaylord is having a series of educational programs; about 90% of the criminals in the county jail are there because of drugs; the MNCAM pipeline will be entering Sibley County near Belle Plaine which will add an additional \$200,000 in taxes paid. Bauer noted that with the mild winter, roads are hard to keep in good repair. Funds for road repair continue to be a concern; the demand for corn is great because of the ethanol plants; he attended a meeting with county public health nurses regarding an ordinance.

Sibley County township representative, Norb Kaufmann, noted that there would be a public hearing on the crude oil pipeline that is coming to parts of Sibley County. Incidentally, the pipeline will use fifty acres of his land. Kaufmann noted that townships recently received a grant to assist with the HAVA (Help America Vote Act), which will assist with equipment and disability accessibility to provide statewide voter equality. The township is working with the county on funding for a county ditch.

Sibley County cities under 10,000 representative, Brenda Pautsch, said she contacted the cities she represents and received no pressing issues. She did mention that the city of Gaylord is exploring the possibility of assuming the administration of the local nursing home.

IX. COMMITTEE REPORTS

R9 Legislative Committee chair, Wendell Armstrong, said the Legislative Committee has met three times. Commissioners reviewed the response issues from a survey that was sent to all

jurisdictions in the nine county area. Armstrong also presented a summary of supplemental supportive legislative items. They included Medicare reimbursement for ambulance services; local government aid; funding local infrastructure and regulations; a student entrepreneur center; transit; school funding; early childhood education; unfunded mandates and jail funding. Brent O'Neil presented the 2006 Legislative priorities for transportation. They included Highway 14 expansion; transportation funding; rural and urban funding equity; a gas tax increase and indexing; rural transit; 10-ton road system; Highway 15 study; motor vehicle sales tax dedication and support the League of Minnesota Cities transportation proposal to provide road funding for cities under 5,000. Discussion followed. Armstrong said a date for commissioners to visit legislators at the capitol is being considered.

R9 Strategic Planning Committee chair, Bob Roesler, said the committee has met several times to discuss the implementation of the Strategic Plan. Roesler said that commissioners will be caucusing by county and signing up for at least one committee, but not more than two committees. The committees included Budget / Personnel; Strategic Planning; Legislative & Communications; Transportation Advisory; Area Agency on Aging and Economic & Community Development. The Board of Directors is not included as a committee. Roesler further instructed that after they have made their committee selections, a chair must be appointed.

X. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Reggie Edwards presented his monthly activities report. Highlighted from the report was his availability to work with communities to conduct a community-wide vision and establish a core set of values that would help guide community decisions. Edwards said he is attending countywide township meetings to discuss website development. The idea is to see the region have a virtual community center where all jurisdictions, citizens and visitors can view and share information.

Edwards noted the book that was available to all commissioners – Rural Minnesota Journal provided by the Center for Rural Policy and Development.

Edwards requested approval for an out-of-state travel request for Troy Bonkowske to travel to Chicago, April 9-12 to attend a bioscience conference. The cost is \$1,500 which is allotted in the economic development administration budget. Alvin Dietz moved approval, Bob Roesler seconded. Motion carried.

Edwards noted the memo that was mailed to Commissioners and staff regarding his suspension of all political activities pertaining to the Office of State Auditor.

XI. APPROVAL OF FISCAL YEAR '05 AUDIT

Reggie Edwards presented the RNDC audit report for year ended June 30, 2005. He reminded Commissioners of staff transitions in the finance department. Edwards noted the legality of expenditures of Commissioners and staff both paying their own holiday event meals; fund balance increase of 3.7%; Small Business Development Center audit adjustment; Revolving Loan Fund loan write-offs and that the RNDC audit does not include the Minnesota River Area Agency on Aging (MNRAAA) funding. The MNRAAA is mandated to have a separate audit. Bob Schabert moved approval of the audit as presented, Dennis Nelson seconded. Motion carried.

XII. CAUCUS OF COUNTIES

Commissioners caucused by county; then selected their committees and appointed a chairperson for each committee. Bob Roesler said a meeting of the chairs of committee would be scheduled soon.

XIII. PROGRAM REPORTS

A. Community & Economic Development

1. Deobligation of Unused Funds

Troy Bonkowske presented Resolution 2006-1 that stated the RNDC agrees to execute the offer for termination of grant agreement award #06-06-04851 and to the deobligation of \$5,188 in unused grant funds for a technical assistance project to complete a recovery strategy related to the closure of the ADC manufacturing operation in the city of LeSueur. James Stangler moved approval of the resolution as presented, Fred Juni seconded. Motion carried.

2. Regional Transportation Ratings

Brent O'Neil presented the recommendations of the Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) regional ratings of local transportation projects that will be submitted to MnDOT and the Area Transportation Partnership (ATP). O'Neil mentioned one project was for purchasing right-of-way and the ATP has a policy against using federal funds for right-of-way purchases. Terry Genelin, member of the TAC, noted that during discussion at the meeting, members questioned the policy, but no action was taken. Genelin asked if the Commission was interested in sending a letter to the ATP asking them to reconsider the policy. After discussion, Matt Johansen moved approval of the TAC recommendations be submitted to MnDOT and the ATP without a letter requesting a review of the policy, Alvis More seconded. Motion carried.

XIV. OTHER BUSINESS

Chair Broich announced that there is no full Commission meeting in April, only a Board of Directors meeting.

XV. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 8:20 p.m.

James J. Broich, Chairman

Roger Oldfather, Secretary