

**MINUTES**  
**Region Nine Development Commission**  
**FULL COMMISSION MEETING**  
**September 14, 2005**

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

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

**II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

**III. ROLL CALL**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Leo Bauer, James Berg, Eldo Brandenburg, James Broich, Kip Bruender, Susan Devens, Alvin Dietz, Candace Fenske, Jack Fitzsimmons, Ron Fleischmann, Janie Flores, Terry Genelin, Harlan Gorath, Ken Hanson, Jerry Hawbaker, Matt Johansen, Fred Juni, Mike Laven, Norbert Kaufmann, 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, Dan Schmidtke, James Stangler, Pat Steckman, James Stenson

MEMBERS EXCUSED: Wendell Armstrong, Janet Holicky, William Stangler

MEMBERS ABSENT: Dwayne Krenz, David Lynch, Lynette Martin

OTHERS PRESENT: Troy Bonkowske, Reggie Edwards, Linda Giersdorf, Bob Klanderud, Paul Murphy, LuAnn Vanderwerf, Cheryl Weston

**IV. GUEST INTRODUCTIONS**

Executive Director, Reggie Edwards, introduced consultant, Paul Murphy, who has been working with the Strategic Planning Committee.

**V. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Fred Juni moved to approve the July 13, 2005 minutes as presented. Mike Laven seconded. Motion carried.

**VI. APPROVAL OF TREASURER'S REPORT**

Jack Fitzsimmons moved to approve the treasurer's report as presented. Leo Bauer seconded. Consultant fees were questioned by Harlan Gorath. Motion carried.

**VII. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT**

Chair James Broich informed Commissioners of meetings he recently attended. For the Minnesota River Area Agency on Aging (MNRAAA) program, he attended a meeting in

Willmar regarding budgets and a Joint Powers Board policy meeting in Redwood Falls. Chair Broich also attended R9 Strategic Planning Committee meetings – work group and full committee.

Chair Broich reported on the National Association of Development Organizations (NADO) conference he attended in Seattle, Washington. Many excellent seminars were presented that focused on economic development, hiring and firing, homeland security; GIS, regional networking, revolving loan funds, transportation, etc. Broich said that some regions are very concerned about the economic development administration funding which may be in jeopardy because of federal politics.

## **VIII. R9 STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE REPORT**

Bob Roesler, chair of the Strategic Planning Committee, presented the draft 2005-2008 Strategic Plan that was mailed to Commissioners for their review. The plan focuses on the organization's purpose and direction, its programs, and operational procedures for staff and the Commission. A survey that was mailed to Commissioners and staff was also incorporated into the plan. Roesler said that a work group that included himself, Chair James Broich, Mick McGuire, Jim Stenson and executive director, Reggie Edwards met several times to compile the plan. Consultant, Paul Murphy, was also involved. The work group met with the full Committee (Ron Fleischmann, Matt Johansen, Norb Kaufmann, Brian Lynch, Lance Mikkelson and Roger Oldfather) to further prepare the plan. All Committee members with the assistance of the consultant, Paul Murphy, were present to explain the plan. Roesler put forth the question – does the full Commission endorse the plan? A lengthy discussion followed with many comments on the plan. Jim Stenson asked Commissioners, by a hand vote, if the Plan should be returned to the Committee for minor revisions and tweaking of some language. The hand vote was in favor of returning the Plan to the Committee. Roesler thanked Commissioners for their ideas and comments.

## **IX. R9 SHARING & OPPORTUNITIES**

### **A. LeSueur County Area Representatives**

Mick McGuire is the mayor of the city of Montgomery and represents cities under 10,000 population in LeSueur County on the full Commission. McGuire said that since the improvements of Highway 169, the cities of LeCenter, LeSueur, Montgomery and New Prague are experiencing an increase in traffic volume. The city of Montgomery recently completed its new wastewater treatment and water plant. The City is experiencing an increase in population, which is producing many new houses and annexation issues. McGuire said the area cities are now in the metro telephone directory system, which residents at first resisted, but now find it is a plus.

James Stangler represents townships in LeSueur County on the full Commission. Stangler added that the city of Kilkenny is also on the metro telephone directory system. He reported that he serves on the task force that is developing a land use plan for LeSueur County. Stangler stated that there is tremendous residential growth around area lakes. Jurisdictions are looking at different approaches for installing septic systems and the issue of hooking up to the nearest town is being researched. Jurisdictions continue to work on the HAVA (Help America Vote Act) project that mandates handicapped accessibility at the voting site. Stangler noted that two bridges will be built by next year.

Mary Jean Rohlfing represents school districts on the full Commission. Rohlfing reported the Cleveland area school district is having a referendum that ups the per pupil unit from \$350 to \$700 per pupil unit. The extra funds will go for a new science lab, new school boilers, removal of a wall containing asbestos and school buses. The Negotiations Committee is working on a Quality Compensation for Teachers Project. It would bring in about \$104,000 per year for the school. Rohlfing said the city of Cleveland is planning for a new water tower on the west end of town that should be completed in the fall of 2006. The city is meeting with a developer who is building a 45-unit town home complex on the east side of Cleveland.

## **X. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

Executive Director, Reggie Edwards, presented his monthly report for review. He highlighted the issue of the EDA Administration's efforts to eliminate the local EDA program. The EDA Administration continues to cut all of the staff to a level where it cannot operate and has proposed rules and regulations that would side track the direction of Congress. Congress reauthorized the Federal EDA program, which includes local project grant funding and the Community Economic Development Grant program. Edwards said letters need to be sent to Congress with a request to stop the efforts of the EDA Administration. On September 19, Edwards will be meeting with other regional development commission directors to discuss the issue.

The R9 Saludando Salud program has been discontinued at Region Nine, which impacted 4.5 staff positions (Gina Borchardt, Evelyn Carrasco, Ellen De la Torre, Rosanna Balboa and Sylvia Pena). Watonwan County will be establishing a smaller version of the program. Through the Tony Downs Company, Madelia Community Hospital, the county and others, it is very likely that three former R9 employees will be providing the same services within the county.

Edwards presented the Resolution for Appropriated Levies Payable 2006 document that lists the levy amounts owed by each county with a total of \$410,243. Jim Stenson moved approval, Mike Laven seconded. Motion carried.

Edwards presented Resolution 2005-3 appointing 'Special Interest' commission members and establishment of terms of office. Noted was a correction for the Commerce position – the date was changed from July 2009 to July 2006. Mike Laven moved approval, Pat Steckman seconded. Motion carried.

Edwards introduced newly hired Finance Director, LuAnn Vanderwerf. Noted was that she comes very highly qualified for the position. Vanderwerf addressed Commissioners on her background. Fred Juni moved approval of the hiring of LuAnn Vanderwerf, Jim Stenson seconded. Motion carried.

Edwards said the Legislative Farm Forum will be held December 9 at the South Central College. The focus will be on alternative energy. More information will be forthcoming.

## **XI. PROGRAM REPORTS**

### **A. Minnesota River Area Agency on Aging**

Minnesota River Area Agency on Aging executive director, Linda Giersdorf, said that she and staff are currently developing the 2006 area plan and budget for the 27-county area. There will be a public hearing on the plan October 5 in Olivia at 9:30 a.m. at the Renville County Courthouse Annex.

## **B. Community and Economic Development**

Community & Economic Development Coordinator, Troy Bonkowske, presented his report of activities. He highlighted that the draft hazard mitigation plans have been sent to the state emergency management officials for their review. Once the state has completed reviewing them, the plans will be sent to the FEMA officials for approval. Bonkowske said the R9 Transportation Advisory Committee would be meeting soon to discuss regional issues and develop a strategy for the area. The Area Transportation Partnership has scheduled a meeting for September 15 where area legislators and Mn/DOT staff will discuss topics that are important for future funding of transportation projects in the area. Also highlighted, was that two revolving loan fund applications from the cities of LeCenter and Blue Earth were approved in July, and that currently, two more requests from the cities of Fairmont and Blue Earth are being processed.

Bonkowske said he is researching the offer from Minnesota State University-Mankato's Urban & Regional Studies Department, the availability of internships at RNDC.

## **XII. OTHER BUSINESS**

Finance Director, LuAnn Vanderwerf, informed Commissioners as of September 12, the mileage rate reimbursement for federal and state entities which includes RNDC, will change from 40.5 cents to 48.5 cents. The rate change is retroactive to September 1 and is in effect through December 31.

Jack Fitzsimmons questioned the discharge of Wes Judkins and whether he could be reinstated by the full Commission. R9 Budget & Personnel Committee Chairman, Fred Juni, said there is a hearing on the facts of Judkins' dismissal September 28 and that there should be no further discussion, therefore the issue was tabled.

Chair Broich distributed coaster sets to Commissioners. The coasters depict the Sleepy Eye Mills' flour barrel labels from 1893 to 1921. He said as mayor of the city of Sleepy Eye, he was recently in a parade and instead of throwing candy to bystanders, he gave the coasters away.

Bob Roesler requested the R9 Strategic Planning Committee members convene after adjournment to schedule a meeting.

## **XIII. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 9:05 p.m.

---

James J. Broich, Chairman

---

Roger Oldfather, Secretary