



MINUTES
Region Nine Development Commission
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
October 15, 2008

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Tim Strand called the meeting to order at 4:30 p.m. at the Nichols Building in Mankato.

II. ROLL CALL

MEMBERS PRESENT: James Broich, Charlie Hurd, Dwayne Krenz, Alvis More, Roger Oldfather, Bob Roesler, Bob Schabert, James Stangler, Tim Strand

MEMBERS EXCUSED: Leo Bauer

MEMBERS ABSENT: Dan Kuhns

OTHERS PRESENT: Troy Bonkowske, Reggie Edwards, Bob Klanderud, Elaine Spain, LuAnn Vanderwerf, Cheryl Weston

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

James Broich moved to approve the August 13, 2008 minutes as presented. James Stangler seconded. Motion carried.

IV. APPROVAL OF TREASURER'S REPORT

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

V. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Chair Tim Strand said that he and Executive Director, Reggie Edwards, attended the annual National Association of Development Organization's (NADO) training conference in Anchorage, Alaska. He said the conference was well attended and informative. One of the topics discussed was holding to the Roberts Rules of Order for a meeting is not necessarily a good thing for all development organization meetings. The main purpose at a full Commission meeting is to encourage discussion among members. Presenters at meetings should distribute an outline of what they are going to present to help them stay on track. They also attended several mobile workshops that the conference organized.

Chair Strand said the Highway 169 Coalition has held three meetings. The goal of the coalition is to have no stoplights from the Twin Cities to the Iowa border. Members of the coalition are cities that are along the highway. Concern has arisen of metro area entities becoming involved and not wanting to contributing any funding. He noted the success of the Highway 14 Coalition.

VI. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Reggie Edwards said that at the NADO conference several key issues were discussed, with one of the significant issues being that of transportation which is expected to run out of money by September 2009. It is becoming a common strategy across the country and nation that communities that fair well in a global economy are working collectively in a regional manner. Edwards added that 30% of Alaska's population does not have water and sewer, they pay no state or income taxes and every person including children received \$3,000 from the state because of the oil industry. To address out-migration the state gives scholarships to all young people if they will stay in the community.

VII. PROGRAM REPORTS

A. Caregiver Support & Respite Project Update

Project ROSE (Reaching Out to Support Elders) coordinator, Elaine Spain, said the project is the Caregiver Support & Respite Initiative of the Minnesota River Area Agency on Aging®, Inc. and is a collaboration of ten non-profit organizations. Their purpose is to support development and/or enhancement of community-based volunteer respite care and caregiver support services for caregivers. According to the Minnesota Board on Aging (MBA), there are approximately 500,000 Minnesotans, 18 and older, who provide unpaid help for older adults or people with disabilities. She explained some of the activities of the partners. The partners have received state funding since 1999 from the Minnesota Department of Human Services (DHS) – Aging & Adult Services Division.

Elaine Spain said the MBA and DHS, together with other partnering organizations are developing and funding a group of innovative programs collectively referred to as the Minnesota Memory Care Initiative. The goal of the initiative is that every clinic, social service agency, Faith-in-Action or Living at Home/Block Nurse Project has the capacity to recognize the signs and symptoms of possible significant memory loss and have the connections within their community to ensure that an assessment leading to a diagnosis and treatment is made. Spain said in 2004 the Waseca Medical Center-Volunteers in Action Program in collaboration with Project ROSE participated in a pilot project to develop a Caregiver Coach position within the medical clinic setting. It has proved to be very successful. Other clinics in the area have shown interest in implementation of the Caregiver Coach model.

B. Economic Development Update

Economic Development Director, Troy Bonkowske, said the R9 Revolving Loan Fund Committee met to review a loan request to expand an existing business in the city of Mankato. The Committee also approved a final copy of the Strategic Plan that will be submitted to the Chicago EDA office. Bonkowske said he met with a small business owner about expansion plans. He was referred to the Small Business Development Center for writing a business plan and financial projections assistance.

Bonkowske said staff is continuing to work with the city of Gaylord on their new municipal Capital Improvement Plan; the city of Amboy on discussing planning for a Visioning Session for downtown projects; and the city of Sleepy Eye with a grant application presentation at the State Capitol for historical society funds to restore an old vacant hotel building.

James Broich said that with the workload of the Economic Development Department, is there a possibility of additional funding becoming available. Reggie Edwards explained that there needs to be stable funding in place within the department before a person can be hired and the high level of expertise needed of the person, requires a higher pay range.

C. Finance Department Update

Finance Director, LuAnn Vanderwerf, distributed a document that listed the health insurance premium changes beginning January 2009. The overall increase is 6.5% that will be shared equally by R9 and employees. She noted that R9 belongs to the South Central Service Cooperative that has a school pool and government pool.

Vanderwerf distributed a summary of R9 program budgets as of September 2008.

Vanderwerf said the 2007 audit books would be available for review at the December meeting. The report looks good with the total assets decreasing \$21,000 and the general fund increasing by \$34,000.

VIII. OTHER BUSINESS

SBDC Director, Bob Klanderud, said that they have had an increase in inquiries because of the current economy. There are some area manufacturers that are struggling. They are having positive results from their production, but they have cash flow problems. He noted because there have been layoffs; it brings people to the SBDC with new ideas for a business. Klanderud said there are many success stories, also. Since, July 2008, the SBDC has met with over 200 clients.

Chair Strand reported that the R9 Strategic Planning and Budget/Personnel Committees have been meeting. The Strategic Planning Committee is reviewing the results from the

internal survey that went to Commissioners and staff and a two-part external survey is being compiled. The results are positive, suggesting the Commission is moving forward. The Budget/Personnel Committee is meeting on the results of a personnel survey of the executive director and updating the Personnel Policy Manual.

Chair Strand said that he would be excused from the November 12 meeting. Vice-Chair James Stangler will preside over the meeting.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 5:45 p.m.

Timothy Strand, Chairman

Roger Oldfather, Secretary