

**MINUTES**  
**Region Nine Development Commission**  
**FULL COMMISSION MEETING**  
**October 12, 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: Wendell Armstrong, Leo Bauer, Jim Berg, Eldo Brandenburg, James Broich, Kip Bruender, Sue Devens, Alvin Dietz, Jack Fitzsimmons, Janie Flores, Terry Genelin, Harlan Gorath, Ken Hanson, Janet Holicky, Matt Johansen, Fred Juni, Mike Laven, Norbert Kaufmann, Dwayne Krenz, Tom Loveall, Brian Lynch, David Lynch, Terri McGee, Lance Mikkelson, Alvis More, Dennis Nelson, Roger Oldfather, Brenda Pautsch, Bob Roesler, Mary Jean Rohlfing, Bob Schabert, Dan Schmidtke, James Stangler, William Stangler, James Stenson

MEMBERS EXCUSED: Candace Fenske, Ron Fleischmann, Jerry Hawbaker, Pat Steckman

MEMBERS ABSENT: Lynette Martin, Mick McGuire

OTHERS PRESENT: Troy Bonkowske, Reggie Edwards, Linda Giersdorf, Robin Thompson, Cheryl Weston

**IV. GUEST INTRODUCTIONS**

No guest introductions.

**V. GUEST SPEAKER**

Minnesota River Area Agency on Aging Senior Outreach Specialist, Robin Thompson, gave a presentation on the Medicare Prescription Drug Program. She emphasized that Part D is available to all people on Medicare and is a voluntary benefit. The coverage begins January 1, 2006 and to understand there may be a higher premium for those who wait to apply. Thompson distributed a list of sites where she is giving presentations on the program or if someone has questions to call the Senior LinkAge Line® at 1-800-333-2433.

**VI. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Leo Bauer moved to approve the September 14, 2005 minutes as presented. Dennis Nelson seconded. Motion carried.

## **VII. APPROVAL OF TREASURER'S REPORT**

Jack Fitzsimmons moved approval of the treasurer's report as presented. Fred Juni seconded. James Stenson questioned the fee paid to Friedrichs Law Office. Motion carried.

## **VIII. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT**

Chair James Broich informed Commissioners of meetings he recently attended. They included: an Area Transportation Partnership meeting where area legislators were present to discuss future funding of transportation projects in the area; a Minnesota Regional Development Organizations (MRDO) monthly meeting where restructuring its membership is moving forward. MRDO is planning to meet with county, township and city organizations; the Public Hearing in Olivia and a Joint Powers Board meeting for the Minnesota River Area Agency on Aging; a R9 Strategic Planning Committee meeting to clarify items on the plan that was presented at the September meeting.

Alvis More said the R9 Communications / Marketing Committee met prior to the full Commission meeting to discuss the holiday event December 14. He reported the Committee looked at different site options and recommend the Applewood Restaurant. More asked for a show of hands in favor of having the holiday event at the restaurant and it was unanimously in favor. Matt Johansen moved for RNDC to pay for staffs' meals. Dan Schmidtke seconded. Motion carried. Commissioners will pay for their own meals.

Chair of the R9 Legislative Committee, Wendell Armstrong, said the committee met prior to the meeting to discuss the upcoming legislative session. A mailing will be sent to jurisdictions requesting input on legislative issues.

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

Chair of the R9 Strategic Planning Committee, Bob Roesler, reported that the Committee met to review comments made by Commissioners at the last full Commission meeting regarding the plan. Commissioners received a revised and edited plan in their meeting notice packet. Roesler moved to approve the updated plan, James Stenson seconded. After discussion, the motion carried. Executive Director, Reggie Edwards, said the next phase is implementation of the plan, which will entail specific steps that will be developed. All of the steps will be brought to the full Commission for approval. Edwards asked Commissioners to contact him with any specific concerns they might have so they can be addressed. The Committee was commended on their work in developing the Strategic Plan.

## **X. R9 SHARING & OPPORTUNITIES**

### **A. Martin County Area Representatives**

Harlan Gorath, who represents the city of Fairmont, said the city will be losing more Local Government Aid (LGA) dollars. Groundbreaking has begun on an ethanol plant. The city will be getting a Wendy's, Starbucks and a Wal-Mart. There is an expansion of 35 more units at the nursing home and a \$450,000 park / trails improvement project. Gorath said an old church was remodeled by volunteers into a Center for the Arts. The city of Fairmont bought the administration building of a school that closed and there is interest from Minnesota State

University-Mankato, South Central College and others regarding offering higher education classes, particularly, nursing.

Ken Hanson, who represents townships in Martin County, reported that townships have been meeting to discuss voting machines and consolidating the township precincts. He said FEMA staff has met with township officials to inform them of assistance available for when the area had the 8-10 inches of rain recently. Hanson said the area crops are doing well.

Bob Roesler, who represents cities under 10,000 in Martin County and is on the Sherburn city council, reported that construction was recently completed on assisted living units. The units are all filled, with a waiting list. The city of Sherburn is partnering with the city of Welcome on a cooperative police department. With the collaboration, there are more funds available which provides a more qualified staff with more hours covered. There is still assistance from the county sheriff department. There is a noted increase in youth crime. The city has had discussions on reducing the number of voting precincts. The increasing costs of street repair, etc. continue to be a challenge for small cities.

Dan Schmidtke, who is a county commissioner, reported that there would be an 8.9% increase in the levy. There is a huge wind turbine project in progress. He said Martin County is the first county to have two ethanol plants four miles apart.

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

Executive director, Reggie Edwards, presented his monthly activities report. Highlighted from the report was his participation in the InterCity Leadership visit to Bellingham, Washington. They included eighty-seven local government, private business, and non-profit and religious leaders. Specific issues that were applicable to Region Nine include efforts with Small Business Development Center, transit and regional cooperation. Commissioners Bob Schabert and Mike Laven also attended the event. Schabert reported that Bellingham is the third fastest growing city in the nation and is a very picturesque city. Laven added in 1928 the state abolished townships, but have instead fire districts and also have more than 400 school districts.

Edwards noted in his report the document from the League of Minnesota Cities regarding a court decision dealing with liability under joint powers agreements.

## **XII. PROGRAM REPORTS**

### **A. Community & Economic Development**

Community and Economic Coordinator, Troy Bonkowske, said the Economic Development Administration provides RNDC with an annual planning grant to provide economic development planning and assistance to local units of government and businesses. An annual Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) report is required by the EDA. Bonkowske said the R9 Development Committee met prior to the meeting to review the CEDS 2005 Update Report. He emphasized that the report is an ongoing document that changes with the needs of the region. Chair of the Development Committee, Mike Laven, gave a brief outline of the report. Laven moved approval of Resolution 2005-4 that the RNDC approves the 2005 CEDS plan update. Dan Schmidtke seconded. Motion carried.

### **XIII. OTHER BUSINESS**

Alvin Dietz represents environmental quality on the full Commission. He reported that he lives near the city of New Prague, which includes the coverage of both LeSueur and Scott counties. Dietz noted that the counties work well together collaborating and partnering. Dietz said a new addition has been added to the Queen of Peace Hospital. With a huge increase in population, two elementary schools are being built – one school in New Prague and one school in the city of New Market. The \$14,000,000 schools will be identical in building structure. A referendum will be held November 8 requesting \$17,000,000 to expand the high school. Dietz said he is involved with the Soil & Water Conservation project, which is involved with a writing campaign to Congress regarding the closing of some U.S.D.A. offices and the consolidation of other offices.

Tom Loveall expressed concern of the executive director's possible run for the office of state auditor, how the executive director will have time to campaign and how it will affect RNDC. The executive director explained that he would be campaigning after hours and on weekends. If he does decide to file as a candidate this spring, he would take a leave of absence.

### **XIV. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

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James J. Broich, Chairman

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Roger Oldfather, Secretary

