



MINUTES
Region Nine Development Commission
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
November 14, 2007

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: Leo Bauer, James Broich, Dwayne Krenz, Dan Kuhns, Roger Oldfather, Bob Schabert, James Stangler, Tim Strand

MEMBERS EXCUSED: Bob Roesler

MEMBERS ABSENT: Charlie Hurd, Alvis More

OTHERS PRESENT: Reggie Edwards, Linda Giersdorf, Bob Klanderud, LuAnn Vanderwerf, Cheryl Weston

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

James Broich moved to approve the minutes from the October 10, 2007 meeting as presented. Leo Bauer seconded. Motion carried.

IV. APPROVAL OF TREASURER'S REPORT

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

V. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Chair Tim Strand thanked Vice Chair James Stangler for filling in for him at the October Board of Directors meeting.

Chair Strand said he attended the annual Minnesota Regional Development Organization (MRDO) conference that was held October 30-31 at Cragun's Resort near Brainerd. He said the conference was well attended and he felt the conference presented good information. He also became acquainted with other regional development commission chairs plus others around the state.

VI. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Reggie Edwards presented his monthly activities report. Highlighted from the report was his message encouraging commissioners to contemplate, strategize and take action on the issue of the age boom. He asks that we all gear up and prepare the region for taking advantage of the opportunities of change from an aging population.

He reported that the Legislative Committee has met to begin strategizing for the upcoming legislative session. Chair Tim Strand said that he is second vice chair of the Coalition of Minnesota Cities. They held their annual conference last week. At the conference they announced their goals for the upcoming legislative session – Local Government Aid (LGA), Transportation – how the collapse of the 35W bridge will affect funding, the environment and annexation.

Edwards noted that staff has been meeting with cities regarding the new Main Street development program, comprehensive planning and housing studies. The city of Gaylord has scheduled a visioning session, which is a step forward in preparing an application to the Minnesota Design Team. Staff is working with several partners to respond to a grant to conduct and integrate a regional economic development plan that includes issues of workforce, education/skill development and emerging industry and cluster industry identification.

Reggie Edwards said that Blue Earth County Commissioners have been in discussion regarding the future of the Nichols Building, where R9's office houses its administration, aging, some economic development and the site for the full Commission meetings. The County said they would know more in the early part of 2008. Edwards said staff has started to explore office location options. Those options will be presented to the Budget & Personnel Committee for their review.

Edwards presented the City Council Visits by Commissioners agenda item that was tabled for further discussion at the October meeting. He distributed the packet of information that he uses when he gives presentation to city councils. The presentations are scheduled during the city's regular monthly meeting. Chair Strand added that R9 commissioners who are elected officials might be better received than staff because of their varied positions. It would also create greater visibility. Also, it is a way for R9 commissioners to experience what is happening in the region and to inform jurisdictions of RNDC activities. After further discussion, the consensus is to present to the full Commission at the January meeting for their review. A process to follow will be developed to present to the commissioners.

Reggie Edwards asked commissioners their thoughts on having an annual regional conference where local legislators would be invited. Staff and other state agency people would share information. This event would be instead of inviting legislators to the July full Commission meeting.

Edwards requested approval for him to travel to Boston for the continuation of his leadership sessions at a cost of \$1,750, which includes travel, food and registration. Bob Schabert gave authorization for Reggie Edwards to attend the training, James Stangler seconded. Motion carried.

VII. PROGRAM REPORTS

A. Minnesota River Area Agency on Aging® Update

Minnesota River Area Agency on Aging (MNRAAA) executive director, Linda Giersdorf, gave an update on the status of the MNRAAA. Giersdorf said that they did submit an application for designation to serve the 27-county area to the Minnesota Board on Aging (MBA). They were the only applicant. A decision will be made by the MBA on December 7. They do have the option of not awarding the designation and re-advertising for applications. On November 19 there is a Joint Powers Board meeting. On the agenda are the nutrition contracts for 2008.

B. Small Business Development Center Update

Bob Klanderud, director of the Small Business Development Center, presented a summary document of the SBDC activities. It listed the partners of the SBDC, its mission and the services they provide. He noted that they have vacancies on the Board for a Brown and LeSueur County representative. He asked Commissioners if they know of anyone interested in small businesses to contact their office. Year to date the SBDC has served 230 clients and held 22 business seminars with 340 attendees. There has been \$5,562,865 in the form of loans and equity invested in the Region Nine area. Upcoming events include a Crafting Employment Handbooks seminar November 27 and a Developing & Growing Entrepreneurs seminar December 10. The summary also included their draft Strategic Plan for the SBDC that listed the goals, strategies and timelines.

Commissioners commented on how well received it was when Bob Klanderud had some of their clients at the full Commission meeting to talk about their business. It was very interesting. It was suggested that it be done again.

VIII. OTHER BUSINESS

Reggie Edwards said that the next Board of Directors meeting is December 12. Also, he announced that the Legislative Committee met in October and recommended that the annual holiday event be held during the regular scheduled full Commission meeting in January. The event will be held at the Applewood Restaurant in Mankato.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 5:40 p.m.

Timothy Strand, Chairman

Roger Oldfather, Secretary