



MINUTES
Region Nine Development Commission
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
December 12, 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, Charlie Hurd, Alvis More, Roger Oldfather, Bob Roesler, Bob Schabert, James Stangler, Tim Strand

MEMBERS EXCUSED: Dwayne Krenz

MEMBERS ABSENT: Dan Kuhns

OTHERS PRESENT: Troy Bonkowske, Linda Giersdorf, Bob Klanderud, LuAnn Vanderwerf, Cheryl Weston

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

James Broich moved approval of the November 14, 2007 minutes as presented. Charlie Hurd seconded. Motion carried.

IV. APPROVAL OF TREASURER'S REPORT

James Broich moved approval of the treasurer's report as presented. James Stangler seconded. Motion carried.

V. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Chair Tim Strand said he attended the 25th annual Rural Legislative Forum December 7 that RNDC co-hosted. He said it was very well attended and was well represented with RNDC commissioners. During the morning session, State Demographer, Tom Gillaspy, gave a presentation and during lunch U.S. Congressman Tim Walz gave a speech, then during the afternoon session there was a panel of area legislators.

VI. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Chair Tim Strand announced that Executive Director, Reggie Edwards, is excused from the meeting. He is out-of-state attending a leadership session. Commissioners reviewed his activities report. Highlights from the report included an overview of the annual Legislative Rural Forum that was held December 7. The R9 Strategic Planning Committee met December 5 to continue draft revisions of the R9 Commission official by-laws. The Committee is designing Phase II of the Strategic Plan, which will focus on the external outcomes envisioned by the Commission. Phase I of the Strategic Plan focused on the structure of the Commission and

internal operations of the organization. The R9 Legislative Committee will be meeting soon to discuss its proposed legislative agenda to be presented to the full Commission at their January meeting. In the report it was noted that Blue Earth County Commissioners have been in discussion regarding the future of the Nichols Building where R9 has offices. Currently, staff has started to explore office location options. All options would be presented to the R9 Budget / Personnel Committee for discussion and direction. Commissioner, Charlie Hurd, added that the downtown area of the city of Mankato has several good office space sites.

VII. PROGRAM REPORTS

A. Minnesota River Area Agency on Aging®, Inc. Update

Executive Director of the Minnesota River Area Agency on Aging®, Inc. (MNRAAA), Linda Giersdorf, said that last week she presented the 2008 Area Plan to the Program Operations Committee of the Minnesota Board on Aging (MBA). The presentation went very well with conditional approval given to MNRAAA, Inc. to serve as the AAA for the 27 county area. The designation status will be received by the MBA in April. A transfer of \$38,148 from the MNRAAA budget to support a staff position at Region 6W was approved by the MBA. Authorization was approved that the MBA will be the liaison between MNRAAA and Region 6W in the transfer of funds. Region 6W wants to join the Land of the Dancing Sky planning and service area. For this to happen, the MBA will be holding statewide public hearings in January to gather input about the possibility of realigning the planning and service areas. In July the MBA will decide whether to open up the service areas for realigning. Budget revisions and by-laws will be reviewed at the January 14 MNRAAA, Inc. Board meeting.

B. Finance Development Update

Finance Director, LuAnn Vanderwerf, gave an update of happenings in the Finance Department. A computer server is being installed that will enable both office locations (Nichols and Technology Plus buildings) to network. It will also include nightly backups of computers and the sharing of documents and meeting schedules. The total cost to lease the technology was \$26,000. With a 2001 vehicle trade-in, a 2008 Impala was recently purchased by state bid. The winning bid was from Pine City. The funds for the vehicle were included in the budget. The ACH (Automatic Clearing House) debit accounts were implemented for the R9 Revolving Loan Fund Program. It will be mandatory for all new loans to have payments withdrawn from their bank account and it is voluntary for the existing loans. LuAnn noted that she is reviewing cleaning services for the offices at the Nichols Building. The cleaning service will need to have their own workman's compensation coverage, which our current service did not have.

C. Community Development Update

Community Development Director, Troy Bonkowske, thanked LuAnn Vanderwerf and the Finance Department for setting up the automatic payment plans. It will enable the R9 Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) Program to be more efficient and a timesaver. The RLF Loan Review Committee recently approved three loans for businesses in the cities of Madison Lake, Mankato and North Mankato. The Committee is also updating their Strategic Plan for the RLF Program. Bonkowske said that a former intern, Joshua Aul, was hired for 30 hours per week to work on establishing the Main Street Program in the city of Gaylord. Staff has been working to secure a

USDA no-interest loan for the city of Pemberton's new community center. Commissioner Alvis More mentioned that the city is very appreciative of the assistance RNDC has given them. After holding several public hearings to discuss issues to develop a Comprehensive Guild Plan for the city of Truman, a draft of the plan will be submitted to the city council by the end of the year.

Small Business Development Center Director, Bob Klanderud, reported that he attended a Greater Mankato Growth meeting that was hosted by the engineering firm, Bolton and Menk. He was able to network with several leaders of small cities. He noted that the city of Mapleton, tentatively, has sold their city-owned restaurant to a private buyer. Two weeks ago the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED) held a regional meeting in the city of New Ulm to announce the Governor's new initiative - SEED (Strategic Entrepreneurial Economic Development "Cultivating Business Growth in Rural Minnesota"). Klanderud then said last week the SBDC hosted a listening post for people that work with small businesses and entrepreneurs. The purpose of the listening post was to gather input from people on how best the SEED initiative can benefit businesses. Klanderud said he participated in the Martin County EDA open house in the city of Fairmont. It was well attended and was good exposure for the EDA and the SBDC.

VIII. OTHER BUSINESS

Chair Strand requested preliminary approval for the executive director and himself to attend the 2008 National Association of Development Organizations (NADO) Washington Policy Conference that will be held February 25-27. The projected cost is \$1,537 per person, but does not include confirmed flight tickets, food, parking, etc. The conference cost is included in the budget. At the February meeting a confirmed amount will be presented for approval. Bob Roesler moved to continue with plans to attend the conference, James Broich seconded.
Motion carried.

Chair Strand said the next Board of Directors meeting is February 13. There is a full Commission meeting January 9. The meeting will be held prior to the R9 holiday gathering that will be held at the Applewood Restaurant in Mankato. The cost for the banquet is \$13.00. Invitations will be mailed next week.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 5:20 p.m.

Timothy Strand, Chairman

Roger Oldfather, Secretary