



I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Ahrenstorff called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. at the Intergovernmental Center in Mankato.

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

III. ROLL CALL

MEMBERS PRESENT: Brad Ahrenstorff, Eric Anderson, Daren Arndt, Elliot Belgard, James Berg, Robert Broeder, Jim Broich, Drew Campbell, Steven Cooling, Terry Genelin, Jim Grabowska, Brian Gramentz, Ray Gustafson, Gerri Lienke, Tom Loveall, Paul Menne, Pam Meyer, Blair Nelson, Diane Norland, Darwin Olson, Richard Peterson, Mike Pfeil, Steve Rohlffing, Jeff Ross, Abdi Sabrie, Phil Schafer, Charles Schmitz, Jim Swanson, Chuck Zieman, and Richard Scholtes

MEMBERS EXCUSED: Terry Anderson, Marie Dranttel, Lyle Femrite, Candace Fenske, Doug Munsch, and Gary Sturm

MEMBERS ABSENT: Frederick Juni

OTHERS PRESENT: Phil Keithahn, Nicole Griensewic Mickelson, Lu Vanderwerf, and Ashley Aukes

IV. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Broeder moved to approve the agenda as presented, Grabowska seconded. Motion carried.

V. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Campbell requested a revision to the January 13th, 2016 minutes in section IX. A. i. *Final Audit Approval* to state *Commissioner Campbell requested a report on MNRAAA's effect on the audit and financial impact moving forward.*

Broich moved to approve the January 13th, 2016 minutes with revision of section IX. A. i. Final Audit Approval, Norland seconded. Motion carried.

VI. APPROVAL OF TREASURER'S REPORT

Rohlffing presented the Treasurer's Report highlighting that the disbursements to MNRAAA are complete.

Rohlffing moved to approve the Treasurer's Report as presented, Belgard seconded. Motion carried.

VII. MEDICAL SUPPLY SCHOOL TRAINING

Swanson introduced Phil Keithahn, chairman of ProGrowth Bank. Keithahn is a founding investor and chief financial officer for the proposed Minnesota College of Osteopathic Medicine in Gaylord.

Keithahn presented on the advantages of turning the former school building of Sibley East in Gaylord into a Minnesota College of Osteopathic Medicine. Keithahn gave an overview of the accomplishments to date on this project, as well as the future plans for development and the impact it will have on the region.

Keithahn requested a letter of support for this initiative from the commission.

Border motion to approve a letter of support from Region Nine Development Commission, Menne seconded. Motion carried.

VIII. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

A. Staffing Update

Chair Ahrenstorff reported the part-time administrative assistant, Peggy Jorgenson, is no longer with Region Nine.

Chair Ahrenstorff announced that, as of March 18th, Byron Jost, community development director, retired from Region Nine. Byron's leadership and dedication have been instrumental in Region Nine's success. Ahrenstorff thanked Jost for his service on behalf of the commission. At this time, the community development director position and the part-time administrative assistant will not be refilled.

Chair Ahrenstorff stated the Budget and Personnel Committee has approved the creation of a new position, executive assistant to the executive director. This new position will report directly to the executive director. The executive assistant provides executive support in a one-on-one working relationship. The executive assistant serves as the primary point of contact for internal and external constituencies on all matters pertaining to the executive director. The executive assistant also serves as a liaison to the commission and senior management team; organizes and coordinates executive outreach and external relations efforts; and oversees special projects. Barb Dressen has been hired through Express Personnel to fill the executive assistant position. Dressen's first day will be on May 2nd.

B. Commissioner Update

Chair Ahrenstorff regretfully informed that Peggy Evanson, former Region Nine commissioner, passed away on March 21st. Chair Ahrenstorff expressed his sympathies to the family on behalf of the commission.

Chair Ahrenstorff reported one application has been received for the youth

commissioner position. The Budget and Personnel Committee will review the application and, if approved, will recommend to the commission for appointment. Staff are still actively trying to recruit more applicants.

Chair Ahrenstorff announced Steve Cooling, Madelia Township, has been recommended to fill the vacancy of Watonwan County Townships representative on the commission.

Cooling gave an introduction. Cooling is a banker in Madelia and is a Madelia native. He has served on the Madelia Hospital and Clinic Board for 24 years and is currently the chairman. Cooling has been on the Madelia Township Board for 28 years.

Ross moved appointment of Steve Cooling to the commission as the Watonwan County representative, Gustafson seconded. Motion carried.

IX. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

A. Resolution 2016-03 MnDOT Safe Routes to School

Griensewic Mickelson presented Resolution 2016-03 authorizing Region Nine to enter into an agreement for distribution of MnDOT Safe Routes to School planning funds.

Genelin moved to approve Resolution 2016-03 as presented, Broeder seconded. Motion carried.

B. Federal EDA Conference Update

Griensewic Mickelson explained the U.S. Economic Development Administration's (EDA) Chicago office requested her to present at the Federal EDA Conference in Washington D.C. The presentation was given during the breakout session *Do Economic Resilience and Disaster Recovery Present Opportunities to Sustain Economic Growth* and highlighted the Madelia fire disaster.

Griensewic Mickelson reported that the three year peer review has been completed. A final report has not been released. Griensewic Mickelson thanked those involved. Following the peer review, Lee Shirey, Economic Development Representative, was given a tour of Madelia and discussed with the city and Region Nine staff the resources that may be available through the EDA.

Griensewic Mickelson stated that the City of Madelia and Region Nine will be applying for a Federal EDA Technical Assistance grant. Through this grant, Region Nine will work with the city to create a marketing strategy and business retention and expansion plan.

C. Madelia Update

Griensewic Mickelson reported that she presented an overview of the role Region Nine has played in Madelia to the Madelia City Council. The level of assistance is

decreasing as the city waits for the legislative session to end. Region Nine will continue to work closely on their needs.

D. Projects/Grants Update

Griensewic Mickelson reviewed the Projects, Contracts and Staffing Timeline and noted the St. James Safe Routes to School Plan and the North Mankato Labor Market Information Profile are nearing completion. The ACT on Alzheimer's Mankato/North Mankato team are still meeting and have submitted a pre-application to the Medica Foundation.

X. PROGRAM REPORTS

A. Finance Department

1. MNRAAA Update

Vanderwerf detailed three financial items that were pending with the MNRAAA transition since the January commission meeting. Region Nine has completed payment to MNRAAA for the build out and is invoicing MNRAAA monthly for remaining balances on the books for completed programs.

Vanderwerf explained the third item of payment to MNRAAA of their remaining program funds. This has been paid contingent on MNRAAA's Board passing a resolution agreeing to pay Region Nine for any negative balances when the books are closed at the end of the fiscal year. MNRAAA's Board has passed the resolution.

2. Budget Season Process

Vanderwerf announced the first Budget and Personnel meeting for the budget season will be held on April 20th. There will be a series of meetings following with the budget then being recommended to the Board for approval and recommendation to the commission.

Vanderwerf reminded that the annual meeting has been moved to June 22nd, 2016.

3. Revolving Loan Fund Committee Update

Vanderwerf stated three Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) Committee members were beyond the new term limits. At this time one has been replaced, Bob Roesler with new member Mitch Nelson. Brown and Le Sueur County replacements are still needed.

Vanderwerf reported three loans were approved at the last RLF Committee meeting. The semi-annual report to the EDA is in the process of being completed. Another committee meeting will be held soon for a new loan that needs approval.

Vanderwerf informed Region Nine will have a booth at the Sibley County Business

Expo to promote RLF. This will be held at the high school in Winthrop.

4. Region Nine Area Inc. Committee Update

Vanderwerf reported that Region Nine Area Inc. (RNAI) is the fiscal sponsor for another grant for The 410 Project. RNAI is also the fiscal sponsor for Martin County Veterans Memorial, Dream Closet, Friends of North Mankato, Town Center Inc. and Her Vision.

5. Resolution 2016-04 RNAI Insurance Coverage

Vanderwerf presented Resolution 2016-04 requesting the League of Minnesota Cities Insurance Trust to accept RNAI in its coverage program. This will be retroactive to when the policy was active, December 20th.

Genelin moved to approve the Resolution 2016-04 as presented, Swanson seconded.

Genelin explained the RNAI Board is in the process of reviewing the by-laws. The by-laws currently state RNAI Board must have no more than five Region Nine commissioners.

Motion carried.

XI. OTHER BUSINESS

A. Ideas, Issues, Information Sharing

Genelin stated Region Nine's Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) held a public hearing for area transportation projects. Genelin reminded commissioners it is important for them to take on committee assignments and attend those meetings. The TAC requires a quorum to be able to act. To enhance the committee, other partners may be invited to serve.

Anderson commented on the housing bill at the legislature and encouraged commissioners to contact their legislators.

Campbell gave an update on items in Blue Earth County including the signing of a community solar garden agreement, transit, National Association of Counties Stepping Up program, and retirement of County Engineer Al Forsberg.

Loveall gave an update on the Faribault/Martin county joint transit board.

Campbell announced Femrite was elected chair of the Blue Earth County Association of Townships.

Sabrie commended Griensewic Mickelson's efforts in regards to the Madelia disaster. Region Nine's efforts were prominent in the media and the commission is supportive of this work.

Sabrie explained the issues that exist regarding mental health of school age children in the region.

Gustafson thanked Griensewic Mickelson and Region Nine staff for time spent assisting Madelia at the local, state and federal level. Gustafson also thanked the commission and the communities they represent for their support.

B. Complete Your Meeting Evaluation

Ahrenstorff reminded commissioners to fill out their meeting evaluations.

Griensewic Mickelson stated the Fourth Annual Regional Bus Tour is in the planning stages. Griensewic Mickelson asked commissioners to save the date of June 22nd and let staff know of their availability to attend.

XIV. ADJOURNMENT

Norland moved approval to adjourn the meeting, Grabowska seconded. Motion carried.

The meeting adjourned at 7:44 p.m.



Brad Ahrenstorff, Chairman



Phil Schafer, Vice Chair