



I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Ahrenstorff called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m. at the Intergovernmental Center in Mankato.

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

III. ROLL CALL

Vice Chairman Phil Schafer, serving as Secretary due to the absence of Gary Sturm.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Brad Ahrenstorff, Eric Anderson, James Berg, Elliot Belgard, James Berg, Robert Broeder, James Broich, Drew Campbell, Marie Dranttel, Lyle Femrite, Terry Genelin, Ray Gustafson, Frederick Juni, Gerri Lienke, Tom Loveall, Paul Menne, Pam Meyer, Doug Munsch, Blair Nelson, Richard Peterson, Steve Rohlfig, Jeff Ross, Abdi Sabrie, Phil Schafer, Richard Scholtes, Charles Schmitz, and Jim Swanson

MEMBERS EXCUSED: Terry Anderson, Daren Arndt, Darwin Olson, Tim Strand, and Gary Sturm

MEMBERS ABSENT: Candace Fenske, Jim Grabowska, Brian Gramentz, Diane Norland, Mike Pfeil, and Bill Yock

OTHERS PRESENT: Nicole Griensewic Mickelson, Byron Jost, Lu Vanderwerf, Linda Giersdorf, Peggy Jorgenson, Scott Reiten, Allison Bluhm, Erica Schott, Rhonda Hiller-Fjeldberg, Robin Thompson, Sherry Orth, Joyce Prahm, Robert Prahm, and Bob Roesler

IV. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

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

V. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Campbell moved to approve the October 14, 2015 minutes, Nelson seconded. Motion carried.

VI. APPROVAL OF TREASURER'S REPORT

Rohlfig moved to approve the Treasurer's Report, Belgard seconded. Motion carried.

VII. INTRODUCTIONS

A. New Staff, Sam Parker

Chairman Ahrenstorff introduced the new Community Development Planner with a Transportation emphasis, Sam Parker. Parker has a Master's in Public Administration, and was a Community and Economic Development Planner in Western Iowa before joining Region Nine. His wife is originally from Mankato, and they have an eleven month old daughter.

B. New Intern Allison Bluhm

Chairman Ahrenstorff introduced intern Allison Bluhm to the full commission.

VIII. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

A. Appointment of New Faribault County Cities under 10,000 Commissioner, Richard Scholtes

Chairman Ahrenstorff introduced new commissioner, Richard Scholtes for appointment to represent Faribault County Cities under 10,000. Scholtes is the mayor of the city of Blue Earth, and has been a resident since 1972. He stated that he enjoys living in small towns.

Lovell moved to approve the appointment of Scholtes to the Commission, Broeder seconded. Motion carried.

B. City of St. Peter Representative Update

Chairman Ahrenstorff reported that St. Peter Mayor, Tim Strand lost the November election, and a new appointment will be needed. RNDC will be contacting the City of St. Peter to request a candidate for the position.

C. NADO Conference Recap

Chairman Ahrenstorff reported on his experience at the 10/24-10/27 NADO Conference in New Orleans. The theme of the conference was "Regional Renaissance," and centered on rebuilding. With the MNRAAA transition, Region Nine is also in a rebuilding phase, and he was interested to discuss what the new year will bring to Region Nine, what the focus should be, and how it will look. At the conference, Region Nine received the NADO 2015 Innovation Award for social media and overall communications, and Griensewic Mickelson did a presentation about developing your brand. With sixteen different sessions ranging from effective leadership to alternative funding sources, one of the big takeaways was the importance of communication. Ahrenstorff stated that it is important that each commissioner brings Region Nine's story back to their area and informs them of the different services Region Nine offers.

IX. EMERGENCY SERVICES

Scott Reiten, Regional Emergency Management Planner from Region Nine gave a PowerPoint presentation on the future of volunteer services and ways to fund emergency services. Joint Powers Agreements (JPA) were discussed as well as other methods of shared services. Reiten stated that Region Nine is available to assist communities in applying for grants and emergency services planning.

Commissioner Campbell stated that Region Nine can assist communities with determining funding opportunities for emergency services. There are concerns about response time in rural Minnesota.

Reiten indicated that Region Nine can assist communities with securing emergency services funding and that the recommended response time for emergency calls in rural areas is six minutes on average. With shared services it is not necessary for each responder to arrive together, which means that the closest available responder within the shared services area can assist.

Commissioner Genelin commented on legislation changes that has made shared services easier by letting responders arrive separately. He also stated that volunteers can be compensated with things other than money, so that may be a way for communities that lack funds to recruit and retain more volunteers.

Commissioner Anderson asked Reiten about hazardous materials centers, and with JPA and shared

services in the area, will there be a clearer designation for service areas so responders know where they should go.

Reiten indicated that a hazardous materials center depends on the size and location of the community. Places like Mankato may see a lot of service calls because it is one of the largest populated areas in southern Minnesota. Reiten also reported that right now, it is difficult to determine services areas, but if more communities started shared services programs it may make this easier.

Discussion followed.

X. PROGRAM REPORTS

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

i. MNRAAA Transition Update

Giersdorf reported that the Slayton office move is done. The Mankato office move will begin Wednesday, December 16 through Friday, December 18. They are relocating to 201 N. Broad St. Suite 102. The Senior Linkage Line has been helpful, as it has enabled MNRAAA staff to work from home. Their phone number will be changing in January 2016. Until then, their voicemail on current Region Nine phones informs callers of the new phone number: 507-387-1256. MNRAAA staff will also have new email addresses: the first initial and last full name at MNRAAA.org. MNRAAA will be getting the word out on the changes through contact information and Facebook posts. Giersdorf reported that the MNRAAA Board meeting today went well.

B. Finance / Revolving Loan Fund

i. Resolution for Waiver on 2016 Insurance Renewal

Lu Vanderwerf presented the resolution for waiver on 2016 insurance renewal.

Genelin moved to approve the Waiver on 2016 Insurance Renewal, Juni seconded. Motion carried.

ii. RNAI Update

Vanderwerf reported that the Trimont Town Center had a soft opening and it went very well.

iii. FY15 Draft Audit Presentation

Vanderwerf introduced RNDC auditor Kyle Meyers of Abdo, Eick and Meyers, who gave a PowerPoint presentation on the results of the 2015 draft audit. No findings were noted. Meyers discussed changes to the audit, and noted areas that increased RNDC's liability. The liability did not affect the general fund, which continued to have a strong increase in fund reserves. Currently Region Nine has a reserve of almost two months of operating expenses in the general fund. Available Revolving Loan Fund dollars have also increased. Meyers indicated that some of the influx of dollars in the last three years has come from increased state and federal funding.

Commissioner Broeder asked if MNRAAA was included in the audit.

Meyers and Vanderwerf reported that only payroll expenses and any shared programs between the two organizations are included in the audit.

Vanderwerf stated that once the audit is finalized, the commission will need to formally

approve the audit at the January 2016 meeting.

C. Community Development

i. Projects & Contracts Review

Byron Jost reviewed active Region Nine community development projects and progress and anticipated completion dates.

Safe Routes to Schools Program was a big success, and commissioners should let Region Nine know if they have anyone in their area that is still interested.

Jost spoke about upcoming projects with SMIF to help with a minority owned business project, as well as Project 1590 for the City of Fairmont, and the Blue Earth County Watershed project.

Commissioner Genelin asked Jost how the Community Development Department generates their business. Jost replied that the department relies a lot on word of mouth from partnerships with communities, as well as the commissioners telling their entities about Region Nine.

Discussion followed regarding the importance of communication of the services Region Nine offers and the quality of Region Nine's staff and work.

Commissioner Femrite expressed concerns over the possible perception of Region Nine competing with the private sector.

Jost stated that there is limited availability for the services Region Nine provides and Griensewic Mickelson reported that many areas have reached out to Region Nine specifically because private entities were not meeting their needs or available.

XI. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

i. Rural Legislative Forum Recap

South Central College and Region Nine sponsored and assisted with planning the Rural Legislative Forum which had about 120 attendees. Griensewic Mickelson moderated the first panel discussion which was well received. It was a very well-rounded event.

ii. FEAST Local Foods Recap

Region Nine was one of numerous sponsors for the event at the Rochester Civic Center. Region Nine assisted with communications and marketing for the event. SMIF reported that 2,000 people were in attendance this year compared to 1,200 last year. Exhibitors felt it was a very worthwhile event. Griensewic Mickelson added that part of Region Nine's strategic plan was a focus on supporting local foods.

Griensewic Mickelson added that the MNRAAA transition ends on December 31st. All affected staff have signed letters of intent to become MNRAAA employees. Terms are also expiring for the MNRAAA board in 2016 and will no longer have any representation from RNDC. Region Nine will be having a going away party for MNRAAA on Monday, December 14.

XII. BUDGET AND PERSONNEL MEETING

Commissioner Ray Gustafson stated that the committee meeting held prior to the commission meeting regarded MNRAAA vacation pay and the transition letter to the affected staff.

XIII. Other Business

Chairman Ahrenstorff stated that the Holiday Party RSVPs need to be turned in by December 18 and Faribault and Sibley Counties need to Caucus after the meeting to discuss new committee assignments.

A. Ideas, Issues, Information Sharing

Commissioner Femrite thanked Griensewic Mickelson for moderating the Rural Legislative Forum panel. He stated the event was worthwhile and informative.

Discussion followed regarding diversity in the region and workforce shortfalls present and future.

Commissioner Campbell recognized Commissioner Sabrie on being elected to the Mankato Area School Board.

Griensewic Mickelson congratulated Nicollet County for receiving an award at the AMC conference.

Griensewic Mickelson has also been asked to be one of six executive directors in the nation to serve on the NADO Research Foundation to assist with developing effective peer training.

XIV. ADJOURNMENT

Broeder moved approval to adjourn the meeting, Femrite seconded. Motion carried.

The meeting adjourned at 7:36 p.m.



Brad Ahrenstorff, Chairman



Phil Schafer, Vice Chairman

Acting Secretary in Gary Sturm's absence

