



Board Meeting

Wednesday, December 14, 2022 at 4:30 p.m.



BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

December 14, 2022 at 4:30 p.m. | Region Nine Development Commission

AGENDA

	<u>Time</u>	<u>Page</u>	<u>Action</u>
I. Call to Order	4:30		
II. Roll Call – <i>Secretary Sturm</i>			
III. Approval of Agenda		1	Action
IV. Approval of November 9, 2022 Minutes		2	Action
V. Treasurer's Report – <i>Treasurer Dranttel</i>	4:40	6	Action
VI. Finance Director's Report – <i>Ky Battern</i>	4:45	9	
VII. Chair's Report – <i>Chair Laven</i>	4:55		
A. Germany Delegation Recap			
VIII. Executive Director's Report – <i>Nicole Griensewic</i>	5:05	10	
A. Introduction of New Staff			
B. Annual Performance Report Presentation - CEDS – <i>Leah Petricka</i>			
C. Communications Report – <i>Nate George</i>			
IX. Other Business	5:50		
A. Commissioner Updates			
B. Meeting Evaluation		Handout	
X. Adjournment	6:00		Action

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Laven called the meeting to order at 4:29 p.m. at RNDC in Mankato, MN.

II. ROLL CALL

MEMBERS PRESENT: Andrea Boettger, Marie Dranttel, Mike Laven, Christian Lilienthal, Steve Rohlfing, Phil Schafer, Gary Sturm, Juliann Wiersma

MEMBERS EXCUSED: Tom Loveall, Blair Nelson

MEMBERS ABSENT: None

OTHERS PRESENT: Ky Battern, Leah Petricka, Nicole Griensewic

There was a quorum.

III. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Boettger moved to approve the agenda as presented, Rohlfing seconded. Motion carried.

IV. APPROVAL OF SEPTMEBER 7, 2022 MINUTES

Rohlfing moved to approve the September 7, 2022 minutes as presented, Schafer seconded. Motion carried.

V. TREASURER'S REPORT

Dranttel presented the Treasurer's Report.

Schafer moved to approve the Treasurer's Report. Boettger seconded. Motion carried.

VI. CHAIR'S REPORT

Chair Laven shared November elections took place and there are no changes to the Full Commission.

Chair Laven noted that he participated in the MADDO All Staff Training that took place November 1-3. Laven shared that staff had positive reviews of the training.

VII. FINANCE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Battern shared that the semi-annual reporting has completed and submitted.

Battern shared that RNDC audit is still ongoing.

Battern shared that RNDC has transitioned to FY23 budgets.

Battern shared that he and Frances Long will be visiting loan clients as a part of the RLF program.

Battern noted that he and Frances will also be visiting banks to promote RLF Program.

Battern noted that he has reached out to banker, Julie Baumgartner from Citizens Bank in New Ulm to network and market RNDC's RLF program.

IX. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

A. Strategic Plan, CEDS & APR Update

Leah Petricka updated the Board on the current process of the Strategic Plan. Petricka shared the RNDC action plan that has been drafted. Petricka shared as a result of the commission networking session there is interest in having RNDC become more involved in childcare, housing and environment and sustainability topics. Petricka noted that she and Griensewic have been in the process of interviewing candidates for an environment and sustainability position. Petricka asked the Board for input on the direction of how Board and Commission meetings should be conducted.

- The board noted to have more engagement at Full Commission meetings.
- The board recognized that the Board of Directors meetings are for the "hard work" and Full Commission meetings are generally for presentations.
- The board noted that having network time at the Full Commission meetings is beneficial.
- The board noted to Improve communication and tasks between RNDC Committees.

Petricka did note that she will be looking into different avenues for more engagement with RNDC committees.

Petricka asked the board for input on what metrics are important to the Board.

- The board noted receiving a RLF committee report.
- The board noted that they would be interested in knowing what kinds of phone calls RNDC receives to understand the general public's perception of RNDC's work.

Petricka shared that she is seeking to establish RNDC's main engagement priorities. Discussion followed.

B. MADO All Staff Training

Griensewic noted the November 1st, "Diversity of Thought" event was a positive experience for those who attended. Commissioner Wiersma shared positive reviews of the event and how it highlighted the arts in Mankato.

Griensewic shared the final speaker for the MADO All Staff Training was Dr. Brian Martensen, President, MinnPoly. Dr. Martensen spoke on the topic of how the relationship between RDO's and universities can be beneficial to both parties.

Griensewic asked for Battern's input on the training. Battern shared that the most beneficial aspect for him was the networking with colleagues from around the state.

C. Resolution 2022 – 07 Application to the Federal EDA

Griensewic requested a revised resolution to reflect "cash" vs. "in kind" language change.

Sturm moved to approve Resolution 2022 – 07 Application to the Federal EDA. Dranttel seconded. Motion carried.

D. Resolution 2022 – 08 Application to the Federal EDA

Griensewic requested a revised resolution to reflect "cash" vs. "in kind" language change.

Sturm moved to approve Resolution 2022 – 07 Application to the Federal EDA. Rohlfing seconded. Motion carried.

Griensewic asked Vice Chair Boettger to share any thoughts she had from the NADO Annual Training Conference. Boettger said the conference went well. Boettger reflected that the most beneficial aspect was networking with fellow MN colleagues. Discussion followed.

Griensewic shared that she will no longer be attending ACE in Ecuador due to protesting, civil unrest, and their President's Deceleration State of Emergency, as well as her workload capacity. Griensewic noted that Aaron Pacheco will already be traveling to Ecuador as a part of his research at Indiana University. The ACE Program allowed Pacheco to participate in place of Griensewic.

Griensewic noted that RNDC's 50th Celebration will take place at the January 11, 2023 Full Commission meeting at the Kato Ballroom.

Griensewic shared that Doug Trytten has been re-elected as the Mayor of Kiester. He is excited to rejoin the Full Commission assuming he gets the appointment in January after being sworn in.

X. OTHER BUSINESS

A. Commissioner Updates

Commissioners shared updates from their municipalities.

B. Meeting Evaluation

Chair Laven reminded the members of the Board to fill out the evaluation handout.

XI. ADJOURNMENT

Lilienthal moved to adjourn. Boettger seconded. Motion carried.

The meeting adjourned at 6:10 p.m.

Mike Laven, Chair

Gary Sturm, Secretary

REGION NINE DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
TREASURER'S REPORT
October 31, 2022

CASH BALANCE September 30, 2022 **\$ 2,805,476.36**

Cash Receipts - Checking	45,437.85	
Cash Receipts - Savings	-	
6 County deposits and interest	1,110.20	
9 County deposits and interest	7,259.55	
Tornado deposits and interest	4,273.03	
Cares deposits and interest	9,760.22	
Micro deposits and interest	1,093.45	
Interest	1,157.17	
TOTAL RECEIPTS		\$ 70,091.47
Payroll Disbursements		(88,977.88)
Accounts Payable & Other Disbursements		(82,489.70)

CASH BALANCE October 31, 2022 **\$ 2,704,100.25**

Region Nine Checking and Savings	
Checking	\$ 293,490.36
Savings	19,753.74
Total	\$ 313,244.10

Revolving Loan Funds	
6 County	\$ 155,798.67
9 County	865,218.92
Tornado	410,768.58
Cares Act	145,925.23
Micro	813,144.75
Total	\$ 2,390,856.15

CASH BALANCE October 31, 2022 **\$ 2,704,100.25**

REGION NINE DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
OCTOBER 2022 CASH RECEIPTS
FY23

Description	Amount	
DATE: 10/7/22		
MN State-Mmb ACH	37,500.00	
TOTALS		37,500.00
DATE: 10/12/22		
Principal Life Insurance - #0013979529	2,309.12	
RNAI Reconciliation Learning Journey Transfer - #001906	30.00	
Equifax - #527510	25.00	
Wex USD Refunds - #0694703	186.00	
TOTALS		2,550.12
DATE: 10/17/22		
Renewing the Countryside ACH	643.75	
TOTALS		643.75
DATE: 10/19/22		
Wex Health Inc Repayment ACH	44.07	
TOTALS		44.07
DATE: 10/31/22		
MN State-Mmb ACH	4,699.91	
TOTALS		4,699.91
October 2022 TOTALS		45,437.85

**Region Nine Development Commission
Board Payment Listing - October 2022**

Check#	Check Date	Vendor Name	Check Amount	Description
115469	10/20/2022	Extended Human Resources LLC	(472.50)	HR Support Job Description Updates
115518	10/05/2022	Agboola, Adewale	3,850.00	MADO Presentation Stipend
115519	10/05/2022	RMiller Consulting Global Advisors	6,880.00	Wilfredo Reyes April-June Billing
115520	10/05/2022	RMiller Consulting Global Advisors	8,640.00	Wilfredo Reyes July - September Billing
115521	10/05/2022	Ferrario, Paola	40.00	Conference Reimbursement
115522	10/05/2022	Braun, Stephanie	4,500.00	USDA/NRCS Project - Film/Edit/Release Videos
115523	10/05/2022	Klaseus, Susan	750.00	RLF Consulting for RNDC - August and September
115524	10/05/2022	GMNP	1,000.00	Membership Billing - Invoice # 1240
115525	10/05/2022	Karen Stevenson/Security Storage Systems	100.00	October 2022 Storage
115526	10/05/2022	Spirited Journeys LLC	1,425.00	USDA Consulting 9/1/22 to 9/30/22 - Invoice # 1214
115527	10/05/2022	Vanderberg Cleaning Services LLC	350.60	Janitorial Services October 2022 - Invoice # 14463
115528	10/05/2022	Spectrum	119.98	Business Internet Service 9/23/22 to 10/22/22 - Invoice # 0820665092322
115529	10/05/2022	Metro Sales Inc	377.25	Copier Lease 9/27/22 to 10/26/22 - Invoice # INV2131028
115530	10/05/2022	Thriveon Inc	47.23	October ThrivVoice Phone Basic SLA - Invoice # 166891
115531	10/05/2022	Thriveon Inc	2,702.96	IT Support Billing for October - Invoice # 166892
115532	10/05/2022	Thriveon Inc	5,306.36	Missed Invoices - #162090 (May), #165842 (September), #165843 (September)
115533	10/05/2022	MarksNelson LLC	7,532.10	Final Payment for RNDC Organizational Consulting - Invoice # MN1025530
115534	10/05/2022	Boettger, Andrea S	112.50	September Meetings and Mileage
115535	10/12/2022	Omar, Ayan	58.75	Mileage Reimbursement and Per Diem B&P Meeting 10/5/22
115536	10/12/2022	Belgard, Elliot R	90.00	Mileage Reimbursement and Per Diem B&P Meeting 10/5/22
115537	10/12/2022	Femrite, Lyle	50.00	Mileage Reimbursement and Per Diem B&P Meeting 10/5/22
115538	10/12/2022	Rohlfing, Steve J	26.25	Mileage Reimbursement B7P Meeting 10/5/22
115539	10/12/2022	Lilienthal, Christian	86.25	Mileage Reimbursement and Per Diem B&P Meeting 10/5/22
115540	10/12/2022	Kato Events Center	1,000.00	Deposit for Room Rental 11/1/22 for MADO
115541	10/12/2022	Kruse, David	96.00	MADO Monthly Dashboard Hosting - Invoice # KT2133
115542	10/12/2022	Principal Life Insurance Company	305.02	Life Insurance Premiums 10/15/22 to 11/14/22
115543	10/12/2022	Goodwin, Nancy	3,372.11	BUSH Grant Planning and Support 9/6/22 to 10/3/22
115544	10/12/2022	GMS	1,026.50	Monthly Billing 9/1/22 to 9/30/22 - Invoices 278351, 278352, 278353, 278354, 278840, 278841
115545	10/12/2022	Ferrario, Paola	265.41	Reimbursement for AirBNB for Training 10/16/22 to 10/21/22
115546	10/12/2022	GMS	40.00	Monthly License and Warranty - Invoice # 278732
115547	10/17/2022	Boettger, Andrea S	1,247.18	Germany Flight Reimbursement
115548	10/17/2022	Branstad, Patricia	3,891.54	Germany Flight Reimbursements
115549	10/17/2022	Dalton, Chris	1,497.58	Germany Flight Reimbursement
115550	10/17/2022	Griensewic, Nicole	104.11	Germany Flight Reimbursement
115551	10/17/2022	Harris, Susan	1,497.58	Germany Flight Reimbursement
115552	10/17/2022	Pacheco, Aaron	1,247.88	Germany Flight Reimbursement
115553	10/17/2022	Richter, Gary	1,248.38	Germany Flight Reimbursement
115554	10/19/2022	Absolute Catering	2,359.42	MADO Event Catering 11/2/22
115555	10/19/2022	Auringer, Tim	51.25	Per Diem and Mileage Reimbursement - Full Commission Meeting 10/12/22
115556	10/19/2022	Belgard, Elliot R	90.00	Per Diem and Mileage Reimbursement - Full Commission Meeting 10/12/22
115557	10/19/2022	Bradley Devos	56.25	Per Diem and Mileage Reimbursement - Full Commission Meeting 10/12/22
115558	10/19/2022	Branstad, Jim	88.75	Per Diem and Mileage Reimbursement - Full Commission Meeting 10/12/22
115559	10/19/2022	CenturyLink	146.74	Phone Service 9/8/22 to 10/7/22 - Invoice # 612440401
115560	10/19/2022	Cooling, Steven	71.25	Per Diem and Mileage Reimbursement - Full Commission Meeting 10/12/22
115561	10/19/2022	Femrite, Lyle	50.00	Per Diem and Mileage Reimbursement - Full Commission Meeting 10/12/22
115562	10/19/2022	Griensewic, Nicole	298.60	Air Fare NADO Conference 10/14/22
115563	10/19/2022	Kratzke, Dawn	83.75	Per Diem and Mileage Reimbursement - Full Commission Meeting 10/12/22
115564	10/19/2022	Neubau Holdings LLC	3,115.00	November Lease Payment
115565	10/19/2022	Omar, Ayan	68.72	Per Diem and Mileage Reimbursement - R9 Annual Bus Tour 6/15/22
			40.00	Per Diem - B&P Meeting 3/10/22
115566	10/19/2022	OMG - Otto Media Group	500.00	Staff Headshots 8/16/22 - Invoice # 1058
115567	10/19/2022	Peterson, Richard L	65.00	Per Diem and Mileage Reimbursement - Full Commission Meeting 10/12/22
115568	10/19/2022	Pfeil, Mike	83.75	Per Diem and Mileage Reimbursement - Full Commission Meeting 10/12/22
115569	10/19/2022	Richter, Gary	212.50	Per Diem and Mileage Reimbursement - Commission and B&P Meetings October
115570	10/19/2022	Rohlfing, Steve J	67.50	Per Diem and Mileage Reimbursement - Full Commission Meeting 10/12/22
115571	10/19/2022	Schafer, Philip H	118.13	Per Diem and Mileage Reimbursement - Full Commission Meeting 10/12/22
115572	10/19/2022	Schlueter, Scott A	69.62	Per Diem and Mileage Reimbursement - Full Commission Meeting 10/12/22
115573	10/19/2022	Sturm, Gary L	90.00	Per Diem and Mileage Reimbursement - Full Commission Meeting 10/12/22
115574	10/19/2022	Tuck, Brigid	72.50	Per Diem and Mileage Reimbursement - Full Commission Meeting 10/12/22
115575	10/19/2022	Verizon Wireless	126.07	Cell Phone and Hot Spot Services 9/9/22 to 10/8/22 - Invoice # 9917671155
115576	10/20/2022	Chabelitas Yummy Foods & Fruits, LLC	122.97	Refund for Loan Overpayment
115577	10/20/2022	Chippewa Packaging Inc	44.00	Refund for Loan Overpayment
115578	10/20/2022	Diamond Dust Bakery LLC	301.27	Refund for Loan Overpayment
115579	10/25/2022	Bethany Lutheran College	45.00	Room Rental 10/12/22 Commission Meeting - ID 162371
115580	10/25/2022	Consolidated Communications	749.02	Phone Service 10/15 to 11/14 - Acct # 507-387-7105/0
115581	10/25/2022	GHG Corporation	75.00	Clockwise Timesheet Support October - Invoice # 92358
115582	10/25/2022	Le Sueur County Recorder	46.00	Recording Fee for Release of Collateral Assignment of Lease Chabelita's Yummy Foods and Fruit
115583	10/25/2022	Living Earth Center	1,679.25	USDA Grant Expenditures September 2022 - Invoice # 1008
115584	10/25/2022	Mankato Brewery	593.00	November 2, 2022 MADO Conference Room Rental
115585	10/25/2022	Shred-It, C/O Stericycle Inc	130.52	July 2022 Shredding Service - Invoice # 8001967130
			125.75	September 2022 Shredding Service - Invoice # 8002552004
115586	10/25/2022	Xcel Energy	68.62	Electricity Service 9/13 to 10/12 - Statement # 800441282
Check Total			72,317.22	
Report Total:			72,317.22	

Finance

- Audit is still on going. I'm working to push Abdo to get priority placed on our file to finish it up.
- Thriveon has began work on the 'Modern Workplace' technology conversion. A technician will be working over the next month and into January to bring our server fully onto the cloud as well as to move our phone system to a Microsoft Teams platform.
- Continually working on getting Frances more involved within the month end process. She's been doing a great job in working through and learning these tasks.

Revolving Loan Fund

- Region 9 was accepted to participate in the Equitable Lending Leaders program as sponsored by the EDA. The purpose of the program is to learn about best practices in adopting equitable outcomes in small business lending.
- Successfully installed the ProFx Engagement Software. This software allows us to better maintain loan client files using a virtual binder system. It also comes with an online portal that allows to new and existing clients to upload information securely in a checklist style format.
- Revolving loan committee met on December 1st to discuss an application out of the Waseca area. Discussion was also on the agenda for the makeup of the loan committee as members finish their terms.
- Good discussion is being had with local bankers in our area and we're looking to broaden our networking and marketing.
- Work is being done to create a listing of annual site visits for our loan clients. We want to make sure we make a physical presence at all of our loan client locations on an annual basis.

Region Nine Area, Inc.

- Nothing to report.

Staff Updates – December 2022

Nicole Griensewic

Griensewic met with Ole Janssen, Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy on November 23rd.

Griensewic met with Stephan Heller, DEED Europe Representative on November 30.

Griensewic Met with Jana Liebe, Managing Director at Theen on December 1.

Heather Bartelt

Heather has been working with Leah to facilitate a change to the staff's weekly meetings. The goal is to transition to having one staff member provide a more in-depth recap on each of the projects we are working on.

Heather, on behalf of Nicole, attended the quarterly Community Relations Board meeting on December 7th at the Federal Correctional Institution in Waseca.

Heather has been working with Kristian to learn the process of grant writing.

Alejandra Bejarano

The public comment period for the strategic planning for the City of Eagle Lake has closed. All changes and comments have been addressed and Alejandra will present a final plan to the Eagle Lake City Council.

Alejandra continues to lead a local task force on talent retention with MNSU. Alejandra and Kristian have continued meeting with local colleges and employers to advance the task force objectives.

Alejandra has joined biweekly meetings as part of the “informal to formal project” that HACER is leading with the support of the University of Minnesota Extension and RND. Recent meetings have focused on outreach and engagement.

Alejandra continues to be part of the Workforce Council and attends their regular meetings as well as meetings hosted by the multicultural network, COPAL, and MCLA.

This month, Alejandra is also completing a course from the International Economic Development Council (IEDC) thanks to a professional development scholarship that she received from them.

Kristian Braekkan

Kristian has been working on a series of EDA draft applications in partnership with colleagues. These are intended as possible planning/Technical Assistance grants in alignment with regional partners on issues of “green manufacturing” (with Sabri and Sam),

“workforce resilience” (with Alejandra), and “foreign direct investments readiness” (with Paola). Each of these are in the early stages of development and/or under review by the federal EDA’s representatives for Minnesota (i.e., pre-submission).

Kristian is also working with the Southern Minnesota Initiative Foundation (SMIF) on “Pathway to Prosperity” which is already funded by McKnight Foundation on a proposal where RNDC would be a contractual partner to assess community readiness to support rural entrepreneurship. He is also working on a follow-up to MedTech Connect and Manufacturing Resilience EDA grants with researchers from Redlands University and the University of Minnesota to map supply chain developments and opportunities in Region Nine and across the state.

Kristian is supporting Alejandra’s work with MNSU as it pertains to pathways to the local workforce for their international students and entrepreneurship studies with HACER and U of M Extension. Finally, he is assisting the City of St. James with a federal EDA application in partnership with Corree and Heather.

Sabri Fair

As part of the USDA/NRCS grant, Sabri and Anne Ganey have been working to organize training for members of the Grower’s Network. So far, they have scheduled training on taxes and accounting for diversified farm businesses with a Farm Business Management trainer from SCC, business planning and marketing training with a farmer and consultant from Brown County, and cover crop and soil health training that will be done by a local farmer on behalf of Sustainable Farming Association.

Data collection for Madelia’s Safe Routes to School Plan is almost complete with one final push for the parent surveys happening in early December.

As part of the MBFFA grant, Sabri has been working with Paola to conduct interviews with community leaders and entrepreneurs from underserved communities. The purpose of the interviews is to hear about roadblocks hindering the development of their businesses.

Sabri has also been speaking with communities about an MPCA Climate Resilience Planning Grant and has one community where conversations are progressing. The deadline for those applications is January 12th.

Paola Ferrario

Paola has been working on connecting with the German counterparts for the exchange delegation to Germany on December 2nd. The agenda has been established and worked alongside Corree and Nate to create a social media guide as well as a media kit. The delegation is organized and ready to go with an impressive cohort from Region Nine that aims to bridge more opportunities for collaboration with Germany and the North Rhein

Westphalia area specifically. As a result of a previous outreach effort with the German-American Chamber of Commerce, RNDC has been invited to participate in a matchmaking business-to-business program that will open new doors for local businesses in the region. This is a direct result of the efforts to promote and brand Region Nine internationally and nationally as open to business and a welcoming community (Direct Foreign Investment).

Paola has also been working on interviews along with Sabri to find the needs of entrepreneurs to start businesses in the ag-related sectors. As a result, they have spoken to different stakeholders in the entrepreneurship ecosystem that have given valuable feedback to help the startups and promote new ventures in the region. Paola has also fully onboarded the team, alongside Leah, on monday.com, a project management tool that will help the processes in the organization.

Nate George

Nate has finished the layout for the Strategic Economic Development Plan for Eagle Lake with Alejandra. This report will help the city as it plans for its future. Nate's part of this project included editing the original for grammar and making sure it conforms to the Plain Language Initiative. He also went to Eagle Lake to take photos for the report and designed the layout for readability and aesthetics.

Nate has been preparing for the upcoming trip to Germany. This includes the social media plan, gathering the delegation's photos and biographies, preparing interviews for the presenters, and checking the RNDC equipment for creating the content. He is coordinating with a NADO representative to plan how best to implement his media plan. Nate also created a collage plaque for the German delegation highlighting the region.

He traveled with Ky and Frances to meet with the co-founders of the Rustic Farmer/Revival on Main for an RLF client spotlight. He is working on an article to promote the business and the RNDC RLF program.

Nate, Corree, and Heather are also underway planning the 50th Celebration for RNDC. This will be the same night as the January 11, commission meeting at the Kato Ballroom. He will provide more information as it becomes available.

These tasks were completed along with the day-to-day tasks of website maintenance, social media posts & promotions, and internal & external communications.

Joel Hanif

Madelia's Safe Routes to School continues to progress well. Sabri and Joel are doing a final push for increased parent participation before using the month of December to assemble and analyze all the data gathered from the various exercises conducted during the fall. The Safe Routes to School Committee will reconvene in January to see all of our findings and

begin drafting goals and the plan document itself. Joel also met with Kristen Friedrichs, SHIP Coordinator for Brown, Nicollet, Le Sueur, and Waseca Counties, to discuss a potential Safe Routes to School planning grant for the Waterville-Elysian-Morristown School District

Joel facilitated a Region Nine TAC meeting on November 18. In this meeting, Cory Johnson with MnDOT gave a presentation on autonomous vehicle pilot programs in Rochester and elsewhere in Minnesota. It included successes, unforeseen issues, limitations, and lessons learned. Cory also presented a more rural implementation of the autonomous vehicle pilot in Grand Rapids. In addition to the presentation, current funding opportunities were discussed, and commissioners present reported on the progress of various projects in their communities.

On December 8, Joel held a second virtual planning workshop for the Local Human Services Transit Coordination Plan. The attendees consisted of various human services stakeholders (transit providers, public health, nonprofits working with clients that rely on transit services, etc.) throughout the region along with MnDOT representatives. This workshop was a continuation of the first with the committee and stakeholders further fleshing out goals and projects for the next five years.

On the NRCS project, Joel and Sabri received approval for some modifications to the scope of the project that will allow more flexibility in the stipends offered to historically underserved farmers for conferences. Additionally, NRCS approved reallocating some funds to allow Living Earth Center to keep its community farm manager on for the winter months.

Corree Johnson

Corree Johnson has been working with Paola and Nate to finalize press and media materials for the Germany Delegation including designing a press/media kit, agenda, bios, flyers, and other materials.

She is also regularly attending meetings for the BUSH grant to assist with project planning, developing marketing materials, and completing the final sections of the equity blueprint. Also, she communicates frequently with the City of St. James where she is advising them on how to approach a marketing plan and strategy as well as other promotional materials.

Corree has also been leading efforts to redesign and update the RNDC website. She is thoroughly going through all website content and site map to make sure that it is updated and is confirming new software that will be implemented by Lime Valley. She is also developing new material that will be added to the revised site.

Aaron Pacheco

Aaron has been focusing these weeks on two big events and networking opportunities for economic collaboration and strengthening the region's competitiveness. The first is the Americas Competitive Exchange. This time held in Ecuador, he has connected with members of the EDA, OAS, and leaders from industry, academia, and fellow regional development organizations. From his new connections, he has set up meetings in the coming months to discuss ideas to solve issues shared by our different countries as well as establishing our region as an attractive space for industry growth and economic opportunity. The second event is the delegation's visit to North Rhine-Westphalia as part of the Climate-Smart Municipalities (CSM), an international and intergenerational collaboration between Minnesota and Germany. Aaron has long been collaborating with German partners in government and community planning. As part of the delegation, he continues to work with German counterparts and exchange knowledge through site visits, networking, and presentations from both sides of the world. With the shared common goal of developing climate-friendly and sustainable practices across the different sectors of our organizations, Aaron comes as a social scientist to share his most recent research on labor shortages and sustainable workforce models.

Leah Petricka

Leah has mostly been working on the Annual Performance Report. The report will be a review of the 2022 year and a look forward to the year ahead. Continued engagement is planned in December with the final report due to EDA by the end of January 2023.

Leah has played a support role for the community sessions held in Le Center and Waseca. Final meetings are scheduled for November 30th and December 6th. The sessions will be incorporated in the document created by Kristian and Corree specific to building equity in rural communities.

Finally, Leah has been working with a business to produce an economic impact as part of a USDA grant application for expanding services in their food processing business.

Terms & Abbreviations

AURI – Agricultural Utilization Research Institute

CEDS – Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy

CGMC – Coalition of Greater Minnesota Cities

DEED – Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development

DHS – Minnesota Department of Human Services

EDA – Economic Development Administration

EDD – Economic Development District

GAC – Gustavus Adolphus College

GIS – Geographic Information Systems

GMG – Greater Mankato Growth

GMDC – Greater Mankato Diversity Council

GMNP – Greater Minnesota Partnership

HACER – Hispanic Advocacy and Community Empowerment through Research

HUD – Department of Housing and Urban Development

LCWM – Lake Crystal Welcome Memorial

LGU – Local Government Unit

LMI – Labor Market Information

LMI – Low-to-Moderate Income

MADO – Minnesota Association of Development Organizations

MAPO – Mankato/North Mankato Area Planning Organization

MDH – Minnesota Department of Health

MnDOT – Minnesota Department of Transportation

MnSCU – Minnesota State Colleges and Universities System

MPCA – Minnesota Pollution Control Agency

MSA – Metropolitan Statistical Area

MSU-M – Minnesota State University, Mankato

MYLAP – MN Young America Leaders Program

NRCS – Natural Resources Conservation Services

REDA – Regional Economic Development Alliance

REV – Rural Entrepreneurial Venture

RLF – Revolving Loan Fund

RNAI – Region Nine Area Inc.

RNDC – Region Nine Development Commission

SBDC – Small Business Development Center

SCBDN – South Central Business Development Network

SCC – South Central College

SHIP – Statewide Health Improvement Partnership

SMIF – Southern Minnesota Initiative Foundation

SRTS – Safe Routes to Schools

TAC – Transportation Advisory Committee