



Board of Directors Meeting

Wednesday, December 4, 2024 4:30 p.m.



AGENDA

	<u>Time</u>	<u>Page</u>	<u>Action</u>
1. Call to Order	4:30		
2. Roll Call – Secretary Branstad			
3. Approval Consent Agenda	4:35		Action
A. Approval of November 13, 2024 Minutes		3	
B. Out of State Travel Requests (3)		5	
C. Treasurer’s Report		11	
4. Update on Waseca County EDA Application for Workforce Development Center			
5. Strategic Plan Review – Dan Feehan, Playbook Strategies	4:50		
6. Information/Discussion Items	5:10		
A. Finance Director’s Report – Ky Battern		13	
• Audit Presentation – Layne Kockelman, Abdo			
B. Chair’s Report – Chair Laven			
• January Commission Agenda			
• NADO/NLC/CGMC Recap			
C. Executive Director’s Report – Nicole Griensewic			
• Food Recovery/MAF Update			
7. Other Business	5:45		
A. Commissioner Updates			
B. Meeting Evaluation			Handout
8. Adjournment	6:00		Action

I. CALL TO ORDER

Secretary Branstad, serving as Chair, called the meeting to order at 4:23 p.m. at RNDC.

II. ROLL CALL

MEMBERS PRESENT: Jim Branstad, Marie Dranttel, Lyle Femrite, Christian Lilienthal, Steve Rohlfig, Phil Schafer, Rob Wilkening

MEMBERS EXCUSED: Andrea Boettger, Mike Laven

OTHERS PRESENT: Ky Battern, Jessica Beyer, Nathan George, Nicole Griensewic, Bill Groskreutz, Sarah Janovsky

There was a quorum.

III. APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA

Femrite moved to approve the consent agenda. Dranttel seconded. Motion carried.

IV. INFORMATION/DISCUSSION ITEMS

A. Finance Directors Report

Finance Director Ky Battern provided an update, stating that he is finalizing the succession plan for his position. He also noted that the auditors will attend next month's board meeting to present the final audit figures.

B. Chair's Report

Secretary Branstad will be participating in a delegation with the University of Minnesota to North Rhine-Westphalia, Germany, in December. The delegation's primary focus is on reducing waste sent to landfills.

C. Executive Director's Report

The delegation from the Aachen region of Germany has reached out to RNDC to further develop contacts and continue follow-ups after their recent visit.

Nicole and Jessica will have a follow-up meeting with the Mankato Area Foundation to discuss hiring a position focused on addressing food insecurity and recovery, funded by a private donor. RNDC also plans to hire a full-time transportation position, funded by the Federal Department of Transit's Safe Streets and Roads for All grant.

Nicole and Chair Laven, along with other MADDO Directors, recently attended the NADO Annual Training Conference. Commissioners Borchert and Hilpipe recently participated in a delegation visit to Denmark. RNDC will follow up with them this week and create a plan for them to present to the Commission in January.

Nicole recently appeared alongside Commissioner Borchert on KTOE's *Talk of the Town*, resulting in her securing a recurring monthly segment on the show. Additionally, RNDC will partner with True Facade to create marketing outreach videos.

Sabri Fair was recognized in *Minnesota Valley Business* as part of the "Emerging Leadership: Leaders Under 40" feature.

A recap of the Americas Competitiveness Exchange on Innovation and Entrepreneurship, along with videos, will be shared with commissioners. Nicole updated on her follow-up efforts, including meetings with the Minnesota Department of Agriculture (MDA), President Inch of MSU, the Center for Transportation Studies, and other stakeholders related to the ACE Armenia exchange.

D. Board Portal

Communications Specialist Nathan George presented recent updates he plans to implement to improve the portal's usability and accessibility for RNDC board members.

V. OTHER BUSINESS

A. Commissioner Updates

Commissioners shared updates from their communities. In November's election, Femrite, Hilpipe, and Milbrath were not re-elected as township representatives, an unusual outcome. The board thanked Femrite for his service to RNDC during his tenure.

Reminder: Due to the AMC Conference, the December Board of Directors meeting is a week early, December 4, 2024.

B. Meeting Evaluations

VI. ADJOURNMENT

Schafer moved to adjourn. Femrite seconded. Motion carried.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:46 p.m.

Region Nine Development Commission Out-of-State Travel Request Form

Name:	Nicole Griensewic
Event:	Minnesota Climate Adaptation Partnership Delegation
Travel Destination	Cuba
Date of Departure:	04.06.2025
Date of Return:	04.12.2025

Anticipated Costs:

	Departure Airport		Arrival Airport		Estimate	Funding Source
Airfare (Roundtrip)	MSP	to	Miami		\$ 600.00	McKnight
Registration	Description				Estimate	Funding Source
	Cost per attachment				\$3,900.00	McKnight
Lodging	Total Nights		\$ Per Night		Estimate	Funding Source
	1	x	\$ 175.00		\$ 175.00	McKnight
Meals	Total Days		\$ Per Diem		Cost	Funding Source
	2	x	\$ 75.00		\$ 150.00	McKnight
Mileage	Total Miles		\$ Per Mile		Cost	Funding Source
	156	x	\$ 0.67		\$ 104.52	McKnight
Other	Description				Cost	Funding Source
	Incidentals				\$ 100.00	McKnight
Other	Description				Cost	Funding Source
Total Anticipated Cost of Out-of-State Travel Request					\$5,029.52	

Employee Signature: _____

Executive Director Signature: _____

Notes:



Join us in Cuba for 'Sharing Science for a Healthy Climate, Food, People & Healthy Planet'

You are invited to join MEDICC, the University of Minnesota School of Nursing, and the University of Minnesota Climate Adaptation Partnership for a trip to Havana to engage Cuban scientists and experts in Planetary Health and climate mitigation and adaptation. This customized itinerary is designed for **select University and Extension leaders, climate scientists, social scientists, public health professionals, and community organizers**. You can expect to hear from Cuban scientists on details of their research and innovations, while health, environment and medical professionals share their experiences, strategies, and challenges related to climate change and other planetary health issues. You will see and experience Cuban solidarity, a key ingredient for highly effective mitigation and adaptation efforts. Most importantly, you will have the unique opportunity to learn about and with each other to strengthen our collective climate resilience efforts in our home communities and institutions.

We hope that you will take advantage of this unique opportunity to explore with US colleagues and Cuban colleagues the pivotal roles of science and cooperation in planning for and responding to environmental emergencies that threaten human health and all life on the planet.

WHEN & WHERE April 6-12th 2025, in Havana, Cuba. Plan to arrive in Miami and spend the evening of the 5th. Our flight to Cuba is early in the morning on the 6th. We return to Miami about noon on the 6th so you can return home later that day.

WHO: This professional research travel is organized by MEDICC, a U.S. nonprofit with over 25 years of experience sponsoring travel to Cuba for health professionals, writers, policy makers, foundation leaders, researchers, and others. The trip is **by invitation only** and is intended mainly for **University and Extension leaders, climate scientists, social scientists, public health professionals, and community organizers**. The group will be kept small to ensure more in-depth exchanges in Cuba and with each other.

U.S. LEGAL REQUIREMENTS: This trip abides by US regulations with travelers covered under the general OFAC/Department of the Treasury general license for “professional research.” US law requires each participant to complete a full-time schedule of professional activities.

PROGRAM: The itinerary takes advantage of MEDICC’s experience providing US and international professionals with an inside look at Cuba, and of relationships built with the island’s leaders in health, policy, and research. You’ll be able to engage Cuban scientists and communities, too—and assess for yourself both results and challenges of efforts to harness science for preparation for, and response to, climate change and other planetary health crises. Opportunities include:

- An overview of Cuba's National Plan to Address Climate Change (Tarea Vida or "Responsibility for Life"), approved in 2017 and recently updated, in the context of a Planetary Health approach. See attachment.
- Site visit to programs aimed at coastal protection and renovation of ecosystems in Havana and elsewhere.
- Challenges and responses to major weather events in Cuba, an exchange with leading scientists at the Meteorology Institute of Cuba and Dr. José Betancourt (the latter with decades of experience in design and implementation of disaster mitigation programs).
- Site visit to renewable energy sources in development and use.
- Tarea Vida responsibilities of the health sector. Threats to human health from climate change and implications for both infectious diseases (e.g. vectors) and chronic diseases (e.g. asthma).
- Site visit to the Las Terrazas community, the Sierra del Rosario Biosphere Reserve Ecological Station, an innovative, women-led local agrarian project as an example of resilience, and a family doctor in a rural area.
- Exchange with the national Environmental Agency on the various laws related to environmental protection, climate change adaptation, biodiversity, and social inclusion in efforts to build local resilience.
- Cuban collaboration in disaster response globally: the 2010 earthquake in Haiti, and more recent cooperation such as medical teams facing COVID-19. Lessons gleaned for disaster prevention, preparedness, and mitigation in Cuba. Exchange with physicians and other health personnel who participated in these disaster response operations, in cooperation with health ministries of the countries affected.
- And of course, the Cuban art of solidarity.

Final itinerary will be tailored to the fields of interest represented by attendees.

Your evenings will be free to explore Havana's thriving cultural scene, including concerts, jazz sessions, dance, and the fine arts.

LODGING, COSTS & MORE: You will stay at one of the hotels permitted under US travel regulations and vetted by MEDICC. **Cost will range \$3600–\$4100** depending on numbers of participants, final program and room occupancy chosen. Cost covers: MEDICC program organization, Cuban academic visas, virtual orientation (written tips for travel and background readings), airport transfers in Cuba, six nights lodging with wifi; all breakfasts, lunches, and dinners; five days of full-time programming; expert translation; and an air-conditioned chartered bus to all scheduled activities. A MEDICC Board member will accompany the trip and we'll also be joined by professors from the National School of Public Health and a bilingual guide from AMISTUR, responsible for smooth travel logistics. Costs **do not** include one night stay at a hotel in Miami, airfare, cultural evenings, hotel tips, telephone charges or personal purchases.

HOW to Register: Contact Teddie Potter (tmapotter@umn.edu) **before November 15th** to secure your place. Teddie will send you the registration link. Once you are registered, you will receive the name of the travel agency that will make your r/t Miami-Havana flight arrangements and secure your visa. We all take the same flights to and from Cuba.

You will be responsible for making your r/t flights to Miami. Arrive in Miami on or before April 5th. Plan on a late afternoon or early evening flight from Miami to your home city on April 12th.

This trip is co-led by **Dr. Teddie Potter**, Clinical Professor and Director of the Center for Planetary Health and Environmental Justice for the University of Minnesota School of Nursing and **Dr. Nathan Meyer**, Interim Director of the University of Minnesota Climate Adaptation Partnership. This will be Teddie's eleventh trip and Nathan's second.

To learn more about the work of MEDICC: <https://youtu.be/mCBIPnEKt6g>

Please feel free to contact either of us with any questions:

Teddie (tmpotter@umn.edu) and Nathan (meyer179@umn.edu)

We hope you can join us in Havana for this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity!

Region Nine Development Commission Out-of-State Travel Request Form

Name:	Andrea Boettger
Event:	NADO Policy Conference
Travel Destination	Washington, D.C.
Date of Departure:	03.08.2025
Date of Return:	03.12.2025

Anticipated Costs:

	Departure Airport		Arrival Airport	Estimate	Funding Source
Airfare (Roundtrip)	MSP	to	DCA	\$ 778.96	Commission
Registration	Description			Cost	Funding Source
	NADO Policy Conference			\$ 510.00	Commission
Lodging	Total Nights		\$ Per Night	Cost	Funding Source
	4	x	\$ 286.00	\$ 1,144.00	Commission
Per Diem	Total Days		\$ Per Diem	Cost	Funding Source
	5	x	\$ 50.00	\$ 250.00	Commission
Meals	Total Days		\$ Per Diem	Cost	Funding Source
	5	x	\$ 75.00	\$ 375.00	Commission
Mileage	Total Miles		\$ Per Mile	Cost	Funding Source
	182	x	\$ 0.67	\$ 121.94	Commission
Other	Description			Cost	Funding Source
	Incidentals			\$ 50.00	Commission
	Description Other			Cost	Funding Source
Total Anticipated Cost of Out-of-State Travel Request				\$ 3,229.90	

Approved by Budget & Personnel Committee or RNDC Board of Directors on **[Insert Date]**.

Executive Director Signature: _____

Notes:

Region Nine Development Commission Out-of-State Travel Request Form

Name:	Nicole Griensewic
Event:	NADO Policy Conference
Travel Destination	Washington, D.C.
Date of Departure:	03.07.2025
Date of Return:	03.13.2025

Anticipated Costs:

	Departure Airport		Arrival Airport	Cost	Funding Source
Airfare (Roundtrip)	MSP	to	DCA	\$ 778.96	General Fund
	Description			Cost	Funding Source
Registration	NADO Policy Conference			\$ 510.00	General Fund
	Total Nights		\$ Per Night	Cost	Funding Source
Lodging	6	x	\$ 286.00	\$ 1,716.00	General Fund
	Total Days		\$ Per Diem	Cost	Funding Source
Meals	7	x	\$ 75.00	\$ 525.00	General Fund
	Total Miles		\$ Per Mile	Cost	Funding Source
Mileage	156	x	\$ 0.67	\$ 104.52	General Fund
	Description			Cost	Funding Source
Other	Incidentals			\$ 50.00	General Fund
	Description			Cost	Funding Source
Other					

Total Anticipated Cost of Out-of-State Travel Request **\$ 3,684.48**

Employee Signature: _____

Executive Director Signature: _____

Notes:

Region Nine Development Commission

Balance Sheet

As of October 31, 2024

	<u>General</u>	<u>Legacy RLF</u>	<u>CARES Act RLF</u>	<u>Auto Fund</u>	<u>McKnight Fund</u>	<u>Total</u>
Assets						
Cash	\$ 423,129	\$ 1,816,972	\$ 47,280	\$ 23,612	\$ 230,580	\$ 2,541,573
Receivables						
Taxes - Current	96,968	-	-	-	-	96,968
General Accounts Receivable	19,685	-	-	-	-	19,685
Grants Accounts Receivable	364,985	-	-	-	-	364,985
Revolving Loan - Current	-	58,882	87,271	-	-	146,153
Revolving Loan - Long-Term	-	1,140,208	835,417	-	-	1,975,625
Allowance for Uncollectible Loans	-	-	-	-	-	-
Due from Other Funds	-	-	-	-	-	-
Capital Assets, Net of Depreciation	-	-	-	39,278	-	39,278
Prepays	18,048	-	-	-	-	18,048
Total Assets	<u>922,815</u>	<u>3,016,062</u>	<u>969,968</u>	<u>62,890</u>	<u>230,580</u>	<u>5,202,315</u>
Liabilities						
Accounts Payable	1,362	-	-	-	-	1,362
Due to Other RDC's	-	-	-	-	230,580	230,580
Accrued Payroll Liabilities	16,276	-	-	-	-	16,276
Unearned Revenue	222,584	-	-	-	-	222,584
Accrued Leave Payable	34,781	-	-	-	-	34,781
Indirect - Fixed vs Actual	19,911	-	-	-	-	19,911
Total Liabilities	<u>294,914</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>230,580</u>	<u>525,494</u>
Deferred Inflows of Resources						
Property Taxes Levied for Subsequent Year	-	-	-	-	-	-
Delinquent Taxes	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total Deferred Inflows of Resources	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
Fund Balances						
Non-Spendable - Prepaid Items	18,048	-	-	-	-	18,048
Restricted for Future Loans	-	3,016,062	964,489	-	-	3,980,551
Restricted Fund Balance for Auto/Capital	-	-	-	23,612	-	23,612
Restricted Fund Balance - Fixed Assets	-	-	-	39,278	-	39,278
Unassigned	609,853	-	5,479	-	-	615,332
Total Fund Balances	<u>627,901</u>	<u>3,016,062</u>	<u>969,968</u>	<u>62,890</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>4,676,821</u>
Total Liabilities, Deferred Inflows of Resources and Fund Balances	<u>922,815</u>	<u>3,016,062</u>	<u>969,968</u>	<u>62,890</u>	<u>230,580</u>	<u>5,202,315</u>
	-	-	-	-	-	-

Region Nine Development Commission
Statement of Revenues, Expenditures, and Changes
As of October 31, 2024

	<u>General</u>	<u>Legacy RLF</u>	<u>CARES Act RLF</u>	<u>Auto Fund</u>	<u>McKnight Fund</u>	<u>Total</u>
Revenues						
Levy						
Taxes	101,708	-	-	-	-	101,708
Federal Grants						
EDA Planning Grant	15,975	-	-	-	-	15,975
Other Federal Grants	153,804	-	-	-	-	153,804
Transportation						
Transportation - MnDOT Contract	38,209	-	-	-	-	38,209
Other Grants	143,725	-	-	-	-	143,725
McKnight Pass Through	-	-	-	-	1,119,420	1,119,420
Contract Revenue	13,000	-	-	-	-	13,000
Deposit Interest & Dividends	17,682	35,095	1,076	-	-	53,853
Loan Interest Earned	-	19,970	9,271	-	-	29,241
Loan Administration Revenue	-	1,000	-	-	-	1,000
Other Revenue	980	-	38	1,964	-	2,982
Total Revenues	<u>485,083</u>	<u>56,065</u>	<u>10,385</u>	<u>1,964</u>	<u>1,119,420</u>	<u>1,672,917</u>
Expenses						
Salary & Wages	270,807	26,347	3,169	-	-	300,323
Fringe Benefits	64,897	6,815	820	-	-	72,532
Indirect Costs	77,212	7,627	917	-	-	85,756
Consultants	35,537	-	-	-	-	35,537
Staff Travel	6,448	300	-	302	-	7,050
Bank Service Charges	417	-	-	-	-	417
Service Fees	198	120	-	-	-	318
Subgrantee	32,467	-	-	-	1,119,420	1,151,887
Miscellaneous	139	-	-	-	-	139
Total Current	<u>528,487</u>	<u>41,857</u>	<u>4,906</u>	<u>6,462</u>	<u>1,119,420</u>	<u>1,701,132</u>
Debt Service						
Copier Lease Payment	377	-	-	-	-	377
Total Debt Service	<u>377</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>377</u>
Total Expenditures	<u>528,864</u>	<u>41,857</u>	<u>4,906</u>	<u>6,462</u>	<u>1,119,420</u>	<u>1,701,509</u>
Net Changes in Fund Balances	(43,781)	14,208	5,479	(4,498)	-	(28,592)
Fund Balances, July 1, 2024	<u>671,682</u>	<u>3,001,854</u>	<u>964,489</u>	<u>67,388</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>4,705,413</u>
Fund Balances as of October 31, 2024	<u>\$ 627,901</u>	<u>\$ 3,016,062</u>	<u>\$ 969,968</u>	<u>\$ 62,890</u>	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ 4,676,821</u>

Finance

- Discovery of large bill owed to Minnesota Unemployment Insurance of \$40,306.39.
 - A couple of months ago, a post office employee mentioned in a casual conversation that Region Nine had been receiving letters from MN UI sent to a deactivated PO Box. Upon learning this, I contacted MN UI, obtained a login, and updated our mailing address since the organization had relocated approximately seven years ago. We then received a bill relating to charges stemming from 2018, 2019, and 2020 in the amount of \$31,562.39 plus an additional \$8,744 in added interest.
 - I submitted a request to Minnesota Unemployment Insurance (MN UI) to have the interest removed, but it was denied. After discussing this with Abdo, they recommended contacting their benefits team for further guidance. Additionally, I will reach out to others in our network to gather their advice on the matter.

Revolving Loan Fund

- As of October 2024
 - Principal Outstanding = \$2,121,778
 - Dollars Available for Lending = \$1,864,252
- See Jazmine Flores's report for more RLF specifics.

Region Nine Area, Inc.

- The Wooden Spoon has agreed to contract with RNAI for their non-profit, Food Recovery. They have asked to use RNAI's 503c status to apply for grants that require a non-profit designation.

STAFF UPDATES | December 2024

Nicole Griensewic

Nicole chaired the recent Center for Transportation Studies (CTS) Executive Committee Meeting, which was held at the U of M. The recent research that was presented was regarding GIS mapping on rural resident's access to resources, transit, distance from grocery stores, etc. She will look to hosting the researchers at a future commission meeting.

Nicole, Jessica and Sabri met again with the Mankato Area Foundation (MAF) regarding the creation and funding of a Regional Food Recovery Planner. MAF was pleased to inform us that they found two more donors who wanted to support the work. The team is looking to post the position soon and have it for full time, vs. part time since more funding was secured. Nicole will briefly present to MAF's board directly before the RNDC board meets on Dec. 4th. MAF sent out a press release regarding the funding to help attract other future donors as well as promoting the good work that is already happening in our region. It looks to be a very positive partnership that could lead to a big impact for our residents who are food insecure, as well as preventing tons of food from going to area landfills.

Jessica and Nicole hosted Laurence Reszetar, Director of International Business Strategy and Elise Buchen, International Business Development Manager from the MN Trade Office, (MTO) to discuss how our organizations can best partner and support each other's mission. As follow up from Nicole's earlier conversation w. MSUM's President Inch, she shared the concept of creating a mini "Gov's Trade Mission" to focus on the region and its partnership with the Aachen region of Germany in the state of NRW. Minnesota has reupped it's formal MOU with the German state of North Rhine-Westphalia (NRW), where Aachen is located.

Nicole met with Darcie Davis-Gage, the Director of the Center for Rural Behavioral Health, housed at MSU,M. Nicole serves on the newly created Center's Advisory Board. Nicole offered to invite Darcie to a future board or commission meeting and/or other RNDC events where she could have the opportunity to connect directly with local elected officials and citizens. Nicole wants to ensure Davis-Gage is well connected with regional leaders, as she recently moved from northern Iowa to take the position. The Center is now offering services on campus in the mixed-use buildings near Weggy's, Chiptole and Noodles on campus. Nicole is hoping to organize a tour of the clinic in the future, as RNDC has been a supporter and partner of the Center since its infancy.

Nicole will be serving on the MYALP Selection Committee again. The free program is offered by the U of M and the Harvard Business School to develop MN leaders from the public, nonprofit and private sectors. Nicole, Sabri, Alejandra as well as commissioners Omar and Dalton have been previous participants for the Minnesota Young America Leaders Program.

Nicole, Lisa and Sam will be meeting in Le Sueur on Nov. 26th to discuss potential clean energy projects with their city administrator Joe Roby and RNDC Commissioner and Le Sueur City Councilor Scott Schleuter. Scott and Joe have both been active participants in the U of M's Climate Smart Municipalities program.

Alejandra Bejarano

Alejandra has been actively working on regional child care initiatives. As an example, she has been participating in the Child Care Solution Pathway Meetings led by the Southern Minnesota Initiative Foundation in partnership with Greater Mankato Growth. These meetings aim to identify child care needs in the region and determine potential solutions involving employers and regional organizations.

Another key child care project is the Rural Child Care Innovation Program through First Children's Finance, which is currently underway in Eagle Lake. As part of this program, the City of Eagle Lake hosted a town hall event at the American Legion in October. The event brought together regional child care providers, residents, and local stakeholders to review data and input collected from surveys and to work on identifying child care goals for Eagle Lake. The feedback from the town hall will inform the design and implementation of child care initiatives in the city.

Alejandra has also been supporting Giselle with her listening tour by attending some of the meetings she has been leading on broadband. The goal of these meetings is to engage with representatives from each of the nine counties to identify broadband goals for each county. Participants have included providers, community stakeholders, and local elected officials.

In addition, Alejandra and Mercedes have completed the development of an employer toolkit on hiring international talent. As part of this work, they are planning to create a training program for local employers on how to effectively engage and hire talent from local communities. They will also collaborate with the local chamber in Mankato to host a workforce summit in the spring of 2025.

Alejandra and Kristian have finalized a contract with the City of Springfield to develop a housing and strategic economic development plan. They will meet with the local EDA in December to begin outlining a plan and timeline for the project.

Jessica Beyer

Jessica has been supporting the team with many projects, events, and activities connected to the entire Region Nine team. Notably, two key visits that Jessica worked to spearhead and coordinate along with Kristian and team members included bringing Darrin Fleener from the Federal EDA to spend an entire day in our region providing outreach and education to Region Nine stakeholders including counties, cities, higher education institutions, and economic development partner agencies. The second key visit included bringing in Representatives from the MN Trade Office to spend a day in our region learning more about our organization, discussing potential partnership avenues, and to take a tour of Nidec as part of learning more about the power generation industry cluster.

An additional area of partnership that Jessica has helped support the organization and team with is working with Mankato Area Foundation and Sabri Fair related to regional food recovery opportunities. Her work with the Minnesota Climate Adaptation Partnership is also ramping up.

Throughout the last few weeks, Jessica has also been focused on internal organizational development projects including putting together a plan for Monday.com software use, policy manual coordination, assistance to Nicole with strategic planning next steps, and job description development.

Kristian Braekkan

Kristian helped coordinate Darrin Fleener's (federal EDA) visit to the region on November 21st in partnership with Jessica, including hosting the MADDO economic development planners for a call from RND's offices, a presentation to regional stakeholders at MSU, and giving a brief economic development overview in Waterville during Mr. Fleener's visit.

Kristian also began the next phase of economic opportunity assessments with SMIF this month. This work will conclude in June 2025.

He is also working with the University of Minnesota's Transportation Policy and Economic Competitiveness Program to build a dashboard to assess transportation needs and opportunities in partnership with Redlands University, Georgetown University, and other statewide partners as it pertains to agribusiness clusters across the state and the upper Midwest.

He has also been supporting Waseca County with additional documentation for the workforce center application to the federal EDA that was conditionally approved pending further documentation. Finally, Kristian has begun to build the framework for a housing study for the city of Springfield, which he is doing in partnership with Alejandra, who will lead the city's strategic economic development planning.

Lisa Callahan

Lisa has been primarily working on energy and climate-related initiatives. Although still in the initial stages, Lisa, along with Sam Sharp, has sent out community readiness and outreach materials to many communities within Region Nine. These materials include improvement opportunities, resources, and a survey. Some of the improvement opportunities involve weatherizing homes, adding green infrastructure, installing solar panels, considering road salt alternatives, and exploring other efficiency strategies. The survey aims to gauge communities' interest in becoming more resilient and to identify patterns in responses to better understand their priorities and concerns.

Lisa has also been supporting outreach for the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant (EECBG) program, which offers disadvantaged communities the opportunity to work with Region Nine on developing climate resilience plans. She assisted Fairmont as they continue to explore EECBG initiatives. There are many opportunities under the EECBG program.

Additionally, Lisa attended the MPCA-led GreenCorps training, where she explored topics, such as developing a Climate Action Framework, addressing environmental injustice, and promoting equitable community engagement. She also toured the Arden Hills Department of Admin Fleet Vehicles to see how the state manages their EV vehicles and charging stations. Lisa plans to use this knowledge to help develop climate resilience plans for communities within Region Nine.

Sabri Fair

Sabri received notice from the philanthropic organization Resource Rural and Build US that the Convivencia Community Energy Navigator project had been selected to receive \$150,000 to build on the successes of the project so far. These funds will go towards implementation of findings from the community wide energy audits.

Sabri has also been preparing the presentation of the Convivencia Project for the grant final event in Chicago on December 4th and 5th. The team will present their findings so far including that 45% of A/C units in homes audited were past their useful life and are prime to be replaced with Air Source Heat Pumps, as well as the fact that 90% of the attics audited are under insulated.

Sabri worked with three local farmers to submit grants to the Minnesota Department of Ag's Beginning Farmer Infrastructure Grant. The funds will go towards deer fencing for a vegetable farm, a green house, and irrigation technology for a native plant nursery, and new technology for a mushroom farm.

Sabri has also been working with Eagle Lake on their application for the Solar on Public Buildings Grant through the MN Department of Commerce. If awarded Eagle Lake would receive a grant for 70% of their solar system and would get 30% direct pay from the IRS covering 100% of a solar system at their City Hall and/or Public Works Building.

Sabri has continued work on the Regional Food Recovery Plan and is now transitioning into preparing for the presentation and community conversation on December 10th.

Sabri has also been working with Comfrey to apply for the MPCA's climate resilience grant which would fund an upgrade to the Municipal buildings HVAC system. The goal of the application is to present the municipal building as a resilience hub for the community that would provide a safe space for community members in the event of extreme weather. The upgrade would also reduce greenhouse gas emissions related to heating and cooling by implementing more efficient technology and reducing the amount of propane needed to heat the building.

Jazmine Flores

Jazmine participated in an advanced RLSS webinar and attended December's One Million Cups meeting. She conducted a site visit at JR's Barn in Waldorf and coordinated with a banker on a potential daycare project in the Mankato area, expected to develop within the next two weeks. Additionally, Jazmine has been in discussions with a prospective client regarding the potential purchase of the old American Legion building in Wells, MN.

She is actively organizing site visits with existing loan clients and scheduling meetings with loan committee members for the coming weeks. Jazmine also met with Joe Roby, the city administrator of Le Sueur, to discuss potential opportunities.

Jazmine has been finalizing a comprehensive tracking tool to monitor site visits, including recording the dates of the most recent visits. Furthermore, she has been working with insurance companies to update and remove outdated policies where the organization should no longer be listed.

Nathan George

Nathan worked on updating the Board Portal page of the website to make the information easier to find and add some requested documents. He eliminated redundant documents and added a map of the region that will lead to county profiles. Nathan presented the new portal to the Board of Directors and after he received their approval, he worked with Lime Valley to implement the page.

Also during the Board of Directors meeting Nathan gave an overview of the RNDC E-newsletter regarding statistics and demographics. The statistics showed that the newsletter performs better than the national average for open rates, click rates, and unsubscribes. This information shows that RNDC is providing relevant content to the readers.

Nathan helped facilitate EDA Representative Darrin Fleener's Funding Opportunities session at Minnesota State University, Mankato. He set up and administered the registration, managed the technology, helped create presentations, and various other tasks to ensure the event went smoothly.

Nathan has been in contact with JP Lawrence from the Minnesota Star Tribune about potential stories that would run in the paper and on their website, but also in their newsletter. He continues to work to get the story of Region Nine to a larger audience in Minnesota to increase visibility with potential partners from around the state.

Nathan worked with Joel to create a Facebook ad for the listening session that occurred November 21 in Eagle Lake. The ad was sent to a narrowly defined audience, targeting Eagle Lake residents that are involved in Emergency Medical Services, Healthcare, Fire and EMT services, and Social Work. The ad had a higher-than-expected reach due to the ad being shared organically through social media channels.

Nathan also wrote and sent out a press release for RNDC receiving a NADO Impact award for its partnership with the American-Scandinavian Foundation. Through this foundation, RNDC hosted Saga Rydåker, an impact scholar from Uppsala University in Sweden to build community and economic development capacity in the region. Nathan also sent out a press release announcing Nicole's appointment to as Treasurer of the NADO Board of Directors.

Nathan is also working with Alejandra and Mercedes on the International Student reports. He is creating/recreating graphs, charts, and icons for the report. As the reports near completion, he will design, layout, and edit the final reports.

Joel Hanif

Joel coordinated with the Empowering Small Minnesota Communities project team to hold a listening session on issues in recruitment and retention of EMS workers in Eagle Lake. Joel was unable to attend the actual day of the event, but Ky was able to attend in his place. The event was well attended, and the project team was pleased with how it went. Joel is working with the project team on next steps. This will likely include a second meeting to engage with people that were unable to attend the first and also further explore discussion points that came up in the first meeting.

Joel completed a draft Safe Routes to School plan for Waterville-Elysian-Morristown schools. He received feedback from the project team and is working on revisions. Also, the school district recently announced plans to move all grade levels to Waterville. This will impact the plan significantly as four grade levels currently attend school in Morristown. While the district plans to retain ownership of the Morristown building, its new purpose will change some priorities in Morristown. Some plan priorities in Waterville may change as well as there may be new procedures and policies with arrival and dismissal that could impact the flow of bike, pedestrian, and vehicular

traffic in and around the Waterville campus. Joel will meet with the superintendent to discuss the planned changes further and incorporate that into the SRTS plan revisions.

Joel conducted a Letter of Intent (LOI) review with Watonwan County's engineer for the annual Transportation Alternatives (TA) funding solicitation. The county is interested in rehabilitating a historic bridge that is currently closed. The bridge would function as a bike and pedestrian bridge, separating these modes of transportation from motor vehicles on the adjacent modern bridge. After discussing the proposed project's details with the county engineer, Joel recommended that the county proceed with a full TA application.

Sarah Janovsky

Sarah completed the November Board meeting and is now preparing for the December meeting. She organized the Wellness Program's Steps Challenge, with 10 staff members set to receive warm socks as prizes. She continues overseeing operations and planning ahead to support the organization.

Giselle Lo

Giselle has continued to conduct her listening tour, meeting with a variety of people with different backgrounds and experiences. This resulted in a listening tour report presentation for American Connection Corps (ACC), which will be presented among her peers at the 2024 ACC Winter Institute. Although the ACC deadline for the report has passed, Giselle plans to continue the listening tour throughout her service year, continuing to hear more broadband experiences and perspectives across the nine counties she serves.

In addition to the listening tour, Giselle has participated in several webinars focused on applying for the NTIA Digital Equity Capacity and Planning Grants. These webinars have been insightful as they have provided detailed guidance in creating a strong and competitive application. The knowledge gained from these webinars will enable her to support broadband equity initiatives more effectively by deepening her understanding of broadband grant requirements. Grants are critical for addressing the high costs of broadband infrastructure, especially in rural areas.

Aaron Pacheco

Aaron has focused on supportive research this month by creating several datasets for regional business projects. The first dataset includes agriculture and agriculture-related manufacturing businesses for Greater Mankato Growth. The second identifies larger manufacturing firms that may qualify for solid waste programming.

Additionally, Aaron has been working on an Economic Development Administration (EDA) grant proposal. This project aims to develop a study that identifies and tracks how public investments in distressed rural Minnesota communities can be measured more effectively instead of following more urban-tailored metrics. Along with the preliminary study results, he has prepared visuals to be used in the proposal and to present during the visit of Minnesota EDA representative Darrin Fleener.

Sam Sharp

Samuel has been working with Lisa on community outreach and engagement, developing materials and making introductions to visit communities and inform them of the services Region Nine can provide. Throughout Lisa's service plan, we will continue to strengthen connections and position

communities to be more prepared for funding opportunities and development initiatives. Samuel has continued to work on engaging communities for the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant (EECBG) funding awarded by the MN Dept of Commerce. This funding is designed to support resilience planning for disadvantaged and environmental justice communities in the region. Engagement efforts are ongoing, and under consideration by several communities. Upon the city agreement of RNDC services, planning efforts will begin.

Samuel, Sabri, and Lisa are working to connect with the City of Fairmont on a Tier 2 EV Charging project. The MPCA was awarded funding to install Tier 2 charging stations along the major corridors predefined by the funding criteria. The City of Fairmont has been selected and is eligible for a \$70,000 grant to help fund the installation. ZEF Energy contacted Samuel with this opportunity, and RNDC planners will work to connect them with the city. This project bodes well for community development as the energy transition continues to unfold. Individuals charging their vehicles will have the opportunity to spend time in the community, as the site must be near retail and convenience businesses and ensure long-term community benefits.

Samuel is working on outreach for the MPCA's Local Climate Action Grants. Applications are due January 9th, at 4pm. This funding is designed to support planning and implementation efforts for community resilience and adaptation.

Samuel and Sabri are collaborating with other RDOs to develop a concept paper for the DOE's Energy Improvements for Rural and Remote Areas funding opportunities. This project aims to provide implementation funding for energy efficiency improvements that bring widespread and long-term community benefits. The concept paper is due in February and the application's deadline is August 2025.

Check#	Check Date	Vendor Name	Check Amount	Description
117372	10/09/2024	Region Nine Development Commission	40,000.00	Funds Transfer to Cover 10/11 Payroll
117373	10/09/2024	Trina Olson LLC	5,000.00	MADO DEI Presentation - 10/4/24
117375	10/23/2024	Region Nine Development Commission	40,000.00	Bank Transfer for 10/25 Payroll
117376	10/25/2024	Bejarano Cubillos, Maria Alejandra	342.28	Reimbursement for MADO Hotel Stay
117377	10/25/2024	Wooden Spoon	198.40	USDA NRCS - Appetizers & Room Rental for Growers Network - INV 933
117378	10/25/2024	Metro Sales Inc	377.25	Copier Base Contract - 10/27 to 11/26 - INV 2629342
117379	10/25/2024	Security Storage Systems	210.00	Off Site Storage for Oct & November - INV 26151 & 26152
117380	10/25/2024	Wiimani Homestead LLC	153.84	LFPA Passthrough - Tomatotes Reimbursement - INV 24-29
117381	10/25/2024	GMNP	1,000.00	Annual Membership - INV 1417
117382	10/25/2024	Cedar Crate Farm	200.00	LFPA Passthrough - Kohlrabi Reimbursment - INV 358
117383	10/25/2024	iSpace environments	3,096.12	Office Furniture for New Deputy Director Position - INV 30698
117384	10/25/2024	United Team Elite	120.00	VOID Voucher 25147 & Check 117384
117385	10/25/2024	Verizon Wireless	226.51	Cell & Table Billing - INV 9975801277
117386	10/25/2024	Xcel Energy	60.44	Electric Utility Service - 9/15 to 10/14 - Account 51-0012085064-9
117387	10/25/2024	Bethke, Edward	350.00	LFPA Passthrough - Corn Reimbursement - INV 272816
117388	10/25/2024	GMS	4,031.27	Monthly & Annual Services for Accounting Software - Billing #69092024
117389	10/25/2024	Maria C Carreon	1,875.00	Community Energy Navigator - 2nd Half Payment - Convivencia Hispana
117390	10/25/2024	Nidia Zelaya Henriquez	1,875.00	Convencia Hispana - 2nd Half Community Energy Navigator
117391	10/25/2024	Trapero, Luisa	3,125.00	Convivencia Hispana - 2nd Half Community Energy Program Director
117392	10/25/2024	Julietta Ochoa Orozco	3,125.00	Convivencia Hispana - 2nd Half Community Navigator Program Director
117393	10/25/2024	Everado Vargas	1,875.00	Convivencia Hispana - 2nd Half Community Navigator
117394	10/25/2024	Benjamin Eliseo Ayala Aguilar	1,875.00	Convivencia Hispana - 2nd Half Community Navigator Payment
117395	10/25/2024	Maria Yasmin Zamarripa	1,875.00	Convivencia Hispana - 2nd Half Community Enegy Navigator
117396	10/25/2024	Cristi Liliana Aguilar Aguilar	1,875.00	Convivencia Hispana - 2nd Half Communtiy Energy Navigator
117397	10/25/2024	Blethen Berens	116.00	Loan Template WOrk - Acct 12541.010 Statement 10
117398	10/25/2024	South Central Service Coop	54.00	Beverages for Commission Meeting - INV 23172
117399	10/25/2024	Ahern & Frutiman LLC	1,120.00	Georgetown Fellow Work - Transportation Study - INV 10.4.21
117400	10/25/2024	Creative Ad Solutions Inc	55.12	Frame Plaque - INV 27764
117401	10/25/2024	TeamKeeper, Harris Local Governement Solaris	86.25	TeemKeeper Clocksystem - Month of October - INV 100863
117402	10/25/2024	League of MN Cities Insurance Trust P&C	250.00	Insurance Deductible - INV 9235
117403	10/25/2024	Johnson, Corree	3,465.00	Consulting Fees - Website Updates - INV 10
117404	10/25/2024	Principal Life Insurance Company	563.42	Life Insurance Premiums - 10.15 to 11.14 - Account 1125885-10001
117405	10/25/2024	River Bend Business Products	29.70	Printing Services - INV 415173
117406	10/25/2024	Blethen Berens	1,558.00	Policy Handbook Review - Acct 12541.003 Statement 84
117407	10/25/2024	GMS	120.00	RNAI Accounting Software Monthly Support
117408	10/25/2024	Abdo	2,000.00	Audit Services - INV 496298
117409	10/25/2024	Living Earth Center	5,358.50	LFPA Passthrough - Program Donations - INV 1047
117410	10/25/2024	Living Earth Center	1,354.93	USDA NRCS - September 2024 Grant Administration - INV 1046
117411	10/25/2024	Hilary Leuer	50.36	LFPA Passthrough - Cherry Tomatoes - INV 1032
117412	10/25/2024	Blethen Berens	300.00	Title Opinion - File 12541.011
117413	10/25/2024	Southwest Regional Development Commission	2,837.94	MADO 2024 Costs
117414	10/25/2024	Laven, Mike	50.00	10/9 - Per Diem
117415	10/25/2024	Cooling, Steven	90.20	10/9 - Per Diem & Mileage
117416	10/25/2024	Femrite, Lyle	63.40	10/9 - Per Diem & Mileage
117417	10/25/2024	Milbrath, Mary	54.02	10/9 - Per Diem & Mileage
117418	10/25/2024	Boettger, Andrea S	80.82	10/9 - Per Diem & Mileage
117419	10/25/2024	Dalton, Chris	80.82	10/9 - Per Diem & Mileage
117420	10/25/2024	Schafer, Philip H	133.75	10/9 - Per Diem & Mileage
117421	10/25/2024	Richter, Gary	121.02	10/9 - Per Diem & Mileage
117422	10/25/2024	Kratzke, Dawn	91.54	10/9 - Per Diem & Mileage
117423	10/25/2024	Rohlfing, Steve J	79.48	10/9 - Per Diem & Mileage
117424	10/25/2024	Schlueter, Scott A	34.75	9/19 - Aachen Delegation Mileage
117425	10/25/2024	Schlueter, Scott A	83.63	10/9 - Per Diem & Mileage
117426	10/25/2024	Borchert, Dave	83.50	10/9 - Per Diem & Mileage
117427	10/25/2024	Nowell, Shanon	20.10	10/9 - Mileage
117428	10/25/2024	Rodewald, Pamela B	76.80	10/9 - Per Diem & Mileage
117429	10/25/2024	O'Connor, Patty	50.00	10/9 - Per Diem
117430	10/25/2024	Pfeil, Mike	98.24	10/9 - Per Diem & Mileage
117431	10/25/2024	Belgard, Elliot R	106.28	10/9 - Per Diem & Mileage
117432	10/25/2024	Goblirsch, Robert	310.80	6/14, 9/19, 10/9 - ATP, Bus Trip, Commission Meeting Mileage & Per Diems
117433	10/25/2024	Nielsen, Robert	128.39	10/9 - Per Diem & Mileage
117434	10/25/2024	Omar, Ayan	71.44	10/9 - Per Diem & Mileage
117435	10/25/2024	Regents of the University of Minnesota	4,500.00	Oct - Policy Fellow Fee Humphrey School of Public Affairs
117457	10/24/2024	US Bank	70.12	2024 Rural Forum - Event Registration for 12/5 - 9/5 - SJ
			40.82	Walmart.com - Name Badges - 9/10 - SJ
			12.98	HyVee - Commission Snacks - 9/11 - SJ
			59.41	Amazon - Office Supplies - 9/16 - SJ
			110.52	Amazon - Office Supplies - 9/15 - SJ
			10.29	Hy Vee - Ice & Card - 9/17 - SJ
			42.98	Walmart - Cooler for Events - 9/20 - SJ
			180.00	August Schell Brewing - Event Rental - 9/19 - SJ
			63.65	Coursera.org - Professional Development - 9/1 - NateG
			235.00	Pins Fast - Lapel Pins for Denmark Delegation - 9/3 - NateG
			198.78	Frame It - Bus Tour Frame - 9/6 - NateG
			9.50	USPS - Envelopes - 9/4 - JF
			49.23	USPS - Certified Mailings - 9/5 - JF
			0.99	Apple.com - iCloud Storage - 9/1 - NG
			119.88	DropBox - Dropbox Plus Subscription - 9/9 - NG
			22.57	Kwik Trip - Fuel for RAV4 - 9/9 - NG
			14.00	MSP Parking - Parking for Transp Event - 9/10 - NG
			468.31	Number 4 American Bar - Delegation Dinner - 9/18 - NG
			56.00	MSP Parking - 4 Days - 9/10 to 9/13 - SS

Check#	Check Date	Vendor Name	Check Amount	Description
			38.50	HyVee Fuel - Fuel for RAV4 - 9/11 - SF
			25.57	HyVee Fuel - Fuel for RAV4 - 9/19 - SF
			6.46	Joann Stores - Office Supplies - 9/20 - SF
			532.00	AICP Membership - Joel - 9/30 - KB
			29.34	Mavericks Bar - MADO Meal - 10/1 - KB
			16.39	Mavericks Bar - MADO Meal - 10/1 - KB
			171.14	Hilton Garden Inn - MADO Stay - 10/4 - KB
			17.32	Family Fresh Market - Bottled Water for Event - 10/15 - KB
			199.18	El Agave - Event Catering - 10/15 - KB
			19.98	HyVee - Commission Snacks - 9/24 - SJ
			3,765.08	Hilton Garden Inn - MADO Hotel Rooms - 10/4 - SJ
			677.34	Chipotle - Commission Meal - 10/9 - SJ
			75.00	Harbor Hill Graphics - R9 Vehicle Logo - 9/25 - NateG
			63.65	Coursera.org - Professional Development - 10/1 - NateG
			20.00	Secretary of State - Filing Fees - 9/23 - Jf
			31.85	Tav on Ave - Lunch Meeting with SMIF - 9/25 - JF
			40.00	Secretary of State - Filing Fees - 10/7 - JF
			7.71	Coffee Hag - RLF Meeting - JF - 10/16
			60.00	Agricultural Utilization - Event Registration - 10/18 - SS
			13.53	HyVee Fuel - Fuel for RAV4 - 9/30 - SF
			153.67	Plaza Jalisco - NREL Passthrough - 9/30 - SF
			30.41	HyVee Fuel - Fuel for RAV4 - 10/7 - SF
			1.56	Currenty Exchange - 9/29 - NG
			0.99	Apple - iCloud Storage - 10/1 - NG
			28.01	Joys Pattaya - Staff Meal - 10/17 - NG
Check Total		146,384.02		
Report Total:		146,384.02	Approved by:	
		Date:	Approved by:	Date:

Terms & Abbreviations

ACC – American Connection Corp	MAPO – Mankato/North Mankato Area Planning Organization
APPR – Annual Performance Progress Report (CEDS)	MCLA – Minnesota Council on Latino Affairs
ATP – Area Transportation Partnership	MDH – Minnesota Department of Health
AURI – Agricultural Utilization Research Institute	MPCA – Minnesota Pollution Control Agency
BDO – Bioeconomy Development Opportunity	MSA – Metropolitan Statistical Area
CRP – Carbon Reduction Program	MSU-M – Minnesota State University, Mankato
CEDS – Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy	MYLAP – MN Young American Leaders Program
COPAL – Comunidades Organizando el Poder y la Acción Latina (Communities Organizing Latino Power and Action)	NEA – National Endowment for the Arts
CGMC – Coalition of Greater Minnesota Cities	NEH – National Endowment for the Humanities
CPRG – Climate Pollution Reduction Grant	NUBRIC – New Ulm Business Resource Innovation Center
CSET – College of Science, Engineering & Technology	NRCS – Natural Resources Conservation Services
CSM – Climate Smart Municipalities	PI - Prosperity Initiative
CSSJ – Climate Smart St. James	PROTECT – Promoting Resilient Operations for Transformative, Efficient, and Cost-saving Transportation
CTS – Center for Transportation Studies	REDA – Regional Economic Development Alliance
DEED – Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development	REV – Rural Entrepreneurial Venture
DOE – Department of Energy	RLF – Revolving Loan Fund
EDA – Economic Development Administration	RNAI – Region Nine Area Inc.
EDD – Economic Development District	RNDC – Region Nine Development Commission
EECBG - Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant	SACE – Southern Agricultural Center for Excellence
GAC – Gustavus Adolphus College	SAF – Sustainable Aviation Fuel
GIS – Geographic Information Systems	SBDC – Small Business Development Center
GMG – Greater Mankato Growth	SCC – South Central College
GMNP – Greater Minnesota Partnership	SCSC – South Central Service Cooperative
HACER – Hispanic Advocacy and Community Empowerment through Research	SHIP – Statewide Health Improvement Partnership
IF – Initiative Foundation	SMIF – Southern Minnesota Initiative Foundation
LGU – Local Government Unit	SRTS – Safe Routes to Schools
LMI – Labor Market Information	SS4A – Safe Streets for All
LMI – Low-to-Moderate Income	STIP – State Transportation Improvement Program
MADO – Minnesota Association of Development Organizations	TAC – Transportation Advisory Committee
MAPCED - Minnesota Association of Professional County Economic Developers	WCI – West-Central Initiative
	TZD – Toward Zero Deaths