REGION NINE DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
Meeting Minutes
November 8, 2023

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Laven called the meeting to order at 4:30 p.m. at RNDC in Mankato, MN

II. ROLL CALL

MEMBERS PRESENT: Jim Branstad, Lyle Femrite, Mike Laven, Christian Lilienthal, Tom Loveall, Steve Rohlfing, Phil Schafer, Rob Wilkening

MEMBERS EXCUSED: Andrea Boettger, Marie Dranttel

OTHERS PRESENT: Kristian Braekkan, Ky Battern, Joel Hanif, Heather Bartelt

There was a quorum.

III. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Branstad moved to approve the agenda. Wilkening seconded. Motion carried.

IV. APPROVAL OF AUGUST 9, 2023 MINUTES

Rohlfing moved to approve the August 9, 2023 minutes as presented, Schafer seconded. Motion carried.

V. TREASURER'S REPORT

Battern presented the Treasurer's Report in Dranttel's excused absence.

Battern noted that the new layout to the Treasurer's Report is in month three. Battern shared this is the layout that will be used for the audit going forward.

Battern noted that the balances listed are actual cash balances.

Schafer questioned the amount spent on bank service charges. Battern noted that was the cost of banking with Wells Fargo year to date. Battern shared that RNDC has since transitioned to the MAGIC Fund and US Bank to avoid those charges.

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

VI. FINANCE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

A. Audit Update

Battern shared that he had hoped to have Abdo present to the board, however they were not ready at this time and will join present at the December Board of Director's meeting and the January Full Commission meeting.

Battern noted that to date, Abdo has not found any findings or needed adjustments made while completing the audit.

Battern shared the largest decrease in the Fund Balance due to the USDA grant overbudgeted at the start of the year.

Battern noted that there was some internal miscommunication regarding if the MSU-M contract was reoccurring which led to $34,000 shortfall.

Discussion followed over the Abdo audit process changes this year and going forward.

Battern had conversations with Abdo expressing interest in having a complete audit wrap up for FY24 by October next year.

B. Fund Reclassification Request

Battern shared that currently RNDC has an Auto Fund and a Capital Equipment Fund. Battern requested that the Auto Fund be incorporated into the Capital Equipment Fund.

Discussion followed.

<u>Branstad moved to approve the Fund Reclassification Request as presented, Schafer seconded. Motion carried.</u>

VII. CHAIR'S REPORT

Chair Laven cautioned Commissioners about possible concrete shortages for future projects requiring large amounts of concrete.

VIII. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Kristian Braekkan presented the Executive Director's Report in Griensewic's excused absence.

Braekkan shared that Griensewic is in Demark learning about private and public partnerships in clean energy and will defer the topic to Griensewic to share at an upcoming Board & Commission meeting.

Braekkan acknowledged Commissioner Wilkening on providing a successful grant writing workshop in Waldorf for the region.

Braekkan shared that RNDC presented to the Faribault County Board meeting on August 15th. Braekkan noted that RNDC will be doing a Strategic Economic Development Plan with the county with funding from the EDA Planning Grant.

Braekkan shared that he, alongside Sabri Fair, recently presented the completion of the MBFFA.

Braekkan presented RNDC's assessment of the REV and PI to SMIF's October Board meeting. Braekkan shared that the SMIF board is looking into combining those two programs into one.

Braekkan shared that RNDC started an EDA Planning grant with NUBRIC as they are looking into robotics and automation training. The program would be housed in New Ulm, however, would serve Sibley, Nicollet, Brown, Martin, and Watonwan Counties. The task would include a needs assessment, feasibility study, and then RNDC would hand it over to NUBRIC to create an implementation plan. Braekkan noted that this grant will complete in June 2024.

Braekkan noted that Sibley County is having a meeting with the City of Gaylord regarding potential reuse of the former school building. Discussion followed.

Braekkan shared that starting in January Alejandra Bejarano's role will transition slightly to involve more local issues such as housing, broadband and finishing the APR.

Commissioner Lilienthal asked for explanation of the APR.

Braekkan shared that RNDC will have an intern, Saga Rydaker, from January to mid-July from Sweden. Rydaker is a college student studying Community Development. RNDC will not incur any expenses, apart from Rydaker's time.

Braekkan noted that next week he will be in Waseca helping the County submit an EDA application for construction of a building to house the machining, LEAN Training and Cyber Security training center.

Braekkan shared that RNDC has received an invitation from Redlands University in partnership with ESRI and the University of Minnesota to continue supply chain mapping exercise and expand to other industries. Braekkan noted this could lead to future contractual work.

A. Resolution 2023 – 10 – Local Human Services Transit Coordination Plan

Joel Hanif presented a PowerPoint presentation on the Local Human Services Transit Coordination Plan.

Hanif explained coordinated transit plan and the key components.

Hanif presented results from rider surveys and focus groups within the 9 counties.

Hanif shared avenues for improving transit service based on the survey results.

Discussion followed.

Wilkening moved to approve Resolution 2023 – 10 Local Human Services Transit Coordination Plan as presented, Femrite seconded. Motion carried.

B. MedTech Connect Plan Update

Braekkan shared the Twin Cities was awarded a large grant from the Federal EDA for MedTech 3.0. Braekkan noted that Greater MSP is the recipient in partnership with the U of M. Braekkan shared that MSU-M contacted RNDC to see if any funds would be available for them. RNDC has set up a meeting with U of M to clarify and explore opportunities for all to be involved in that work.

IX. OTHER BUSINESSS

A. Commissioner Updates

Commissioners shared updates from the municipalities.

B. Meeting Evaluation

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

X. ADJOURNMENT

Loveall moved to adjourn. Schafer seconded. Motion carried.

The meeting adjourned at 6:21 p.m.

Mike Laven, Chair	Jim Branstad, Secretary