



EAST CENTRAL REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

100 Park Street South

Mora, MN 55051

February 27, 2017

7:00 P.M.

Commission Members Present:

Karen Amundson – Kanabec Co. Public Interest
Greg Anderson – Isanti Co. Commissioner
Loren Davis – Isanti Co. Public Interest
Carla Dunkley – Tribal Representative
Linda Evans – Mille Lacs Co. Public Interest
Tim Franklin – Pine Co. Municipalities
Gordon Gullixson – Kanabec Co. Municipalities
Richard Hansen – Isanti Co. Townships
Jeanette Kester – Pine Co. Public Interest
Tom Lawlor – Southern School Board
John Mikrot, Jr. – Pine Co. Commissioner
Ben Montzka – Chisago Co. Commissioner
Steve Odegard – Northern School Board
Marlys Palmer – Isanti Co. Municipalities
Dave Patenaude – Kanabec Co. Townships
Genny Reynolds – Mille Lacs Co. Commissioner

Commission Members Absent:

Kathi Ellis – Kanabec Co. Commissioner
Steven Kimmel – Chisago Co. Public Interest
Diane Larkin – Chisago Co. Townships
Jim Swenson – City of North Branch
Thom Walker – Mille Lacs Co. Municipalities
Barb Welty – Mille Lacs Co. Townships
Glen Williamson – Pine Co. Townships

Staff Present:

Bob Voss – Executive Director
Bob Bollenbeck – Transportation/TZD Program
Trish Rydlund – Office Manager
Penny Simonsen – Community Dev/TZD Program
Jordan Zeller – Economic Development

1. **WELCOME:** Chairman Montzka called the regular meeting of the East Central Regional Development Commission to order at 7:00 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.
2. **AGENDA APPROVAL:** Hansen moved to approve the agenda as presented. Lawlor seconded – motion carried.
3. **MINUTES APPROVAL:** Odegard moved to approve the minutes of the December 19, 2016 meeting. Davis seconded – motion carried.
4. **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT:** Executive Director Voss reported on a number of items including:
 - a. **EDA PLANNING GRANT:** The 3-Year EDA Partnership Planning Grant application was submitted to EDA online on February 15, 2017. Staff revised the budget to account for the increased grant from \$157,884 (\$52,628 annually) to \$210,000 (\$70,000 annually). The ECRDC will be providing a local financial match from our General Fund of the same amount each year for a total budget of \$420,000 for the three years. The new planning grant cycle is set to begin on April 1, 2017 and continue through March 31, 2020.
 - b. **AUDITING SERVICES:** The three-year audit agreement with the Clifton Larson Allen (CLA) CPA firm came to a conclusion with our last audit for FY 2015-2016. Previously, the fees were a fixed \$9,000 for each of the last three years. The proposal includes a fee increase to \$9,500, \$9,850, and \$10,200 for audit years 2017, 2018, and 2019 respectively. Davis moved acceptance of the Clifton Larson Allen audit proposal. Kester seconded – motion carried. A request for proposal will be sent out after this three-year cycle of audits.
 - c. **COMMISSION VACANCIES:** We have experienced some challenges in replacing the Chisago Municipalities seat vacated by Bill Schlumbohm last fall. No nominations were received by the end of December 2016. A second attempt to solicit nominations was conducted with a deadline

of February 20, 2017 which yielded three nominations. Ballots will be distributed to the cities in Chisago County for a vote on who, among the nominees, will serve on the Commission. We were notified by the City of North Branch that City Councilor Jim Swenson was appointed to replace Mayor Kirsten Kennedy as the "Cities of 10,000" representative on the Commission. Also, the Pine County Board appointed John Mikrot, Jr. to replace Steve Hallan on the ECRDC Board at their organizational meeting in January. Since Hallan served as the Commission's Vice-Chair/P&B Chair, nominations were called for three times from the floor. One nomination was received for Loren Davis. Reynolds moved to cease nominations. Odegard seconded – motion carried. Palmer moved to appoint Loren Davis as the new Vice-Chair/P&B Chair. Evans seconded – motion carried.

- d. **EDA DISTRICT EVALUATION:** Lee Shirey of EDA's Chicago Regional Office visited our office on January 12th to conduct the required 3-year Economic Development District (EDD) evaluation. This visit involved the review of the EDD's overall management processes; financial accountability; and program performance. No deficiencies were noted and all indications are the program is operating in a commendable manner. The ECRDC will receive a written evaluation report pertaining to the visit.
5. **TREASURERS REPORT:** Voss presented the Treasurer's report. Hansen moved to approve the Treasurer's Report to include the checks written (#9171 through #9245) along with ACH payments from December 1, 2016 to January 30, 2017. Amundson seconded – motion carried. General Journals have been reviewed and approved for the period October 1, 2016 through January 30, 2017.
 6. **COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT:** Simonsen provided the following updates on Community Development planning projects including:
 - a. **SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL:** The community of Taylors Falls SRTS planning process is complete. Taylors Falls has applied for infrastructure funding for the current round (2020), along with the communities of Mora and Princeton. Each of these communities have completed a SRTS Plan, with their proposed projects included in their plans. This is the natural progression that we inform communities/schools who have an interest in SRTS. Letters of Intent to apply for SRTS planning funding was delayed beyond the end of October due date. We now have a March 3rd application deadline to work with. The communities of Braham and Rush City have interest in applying for SRTS planning grants.
 - b. **TRANSIT COORDINATION STUDY:** A contract has been signed to facilitate a region-wide planning process related to transit coordination. We have conducted this work for MnDOT in 2011 and 2006. Our first meeting with the region's transit stake-holders was held in Pine City at the Pine County Courthouse. Three meetings in total, along with a daylong workshop are part of our workplan. The study should be completed by the end of June.
 - c. **LAKE MILLE LACS SCENIC BYWAYS:** Initial work has begun on the Lake Mille Lacs Scenic Byways. The core group met in January, and will meet monthly through May. Additional community gatherings are planned to garner support and provide information related to a possible scenic byway. The goal is to have this project completed within 18 months
 7. **TRANSPORTATION:** Bob Bollenbeck brought forth two recommendations from the Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC):
 - a. **DISTRICT 3 ATP FUNDING:** Region 7E will receive additional federal dollars for FY 20 & 21 through the D3 ATP process. Motioned by Evans to allocate \$385,480 to Mille Lacs CSAH 4 project. Seconded by Reynolds – motion carried.

New Target (FY21):	\$ 1,326,720
Region 7E Previous Target:	\$ 1,133,240
Additional Funds	\$ 193,480
Additional Transit \$	\$ 192,000 (Office of Transit is providing funding for vehicles)
Total available	\$ 385,480

- b. SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL: Hansen moved to award 10 additional points for the Mora SRTS project and 5 additional points to the Princeton SRTS project. Kester seconded – motion carried.

TA (Transportation Alternatives) Projects:
Princeton Safe Routes to Schools - \$ 218,757
Mora Safe Routes to Schools - \$ 249,000

8. **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**: Zeller reported on the following:

- a. MILLE LACS LAKE AREA ECONOMIC RELIEF LOAN PROGRAM: The ECRDC is assisting Mille Lacs County, grantee from MN DEED, in providing technical assistance, primarily loan closing work, to businesses in Mille Lacs, Crow Wing and Aitkin Counties distressed by the downturn in walleye numbers in Mille Lacs Lake. As of 2/21/2017 we have helped close 6 loans. We anticipate assisting with several more loan closings. Loan funds must be disbursed by June 30, 2017.
- b. CEDS WORK PROGRAM / EVENTS: As part of our work program in the recently approved Regional Five-Year Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS), the ECRDC is facilitating a Regional Child Care Capacity Building Event on Monday, March 20th from 7:00 PM – 9:00 PM at Pine Technical & Community College in Pine City. We are also making plans for a Tourism Resources event in April.

9. **TOPICS OF REGIONAL INTEREST**:

- a. COALITION AGAINST BIG TRUCKS: Big trucks are essential to our society today but bigger trucks endanger and damage infrastructure. Several concerns regarding bigger trucks include highway safety, infrastructure damage, underpayment to fix highway and bridges and traffic congestion. Motioned by Evans to table any recommendation until further information can be gathered. Seconded by Odegard – motion carried.
- b. EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT OPERATION COOPERATION: Gullixson reported that he was recently appointed to serve on Kanabec County's Emergency Management Committee. Disasters such as flooding, tornados, etc. can often effect multiple counties and the Commission discussed the importance of Counties working together.

10. **OTHER**:

- a. ANNUAL MEETING: The annual meeting will be held June 26, 2017. Several locations were suggested: Pine County Museum in Askov, Grant Event Center in Mora, and Grand Casino in Hinckley. All will be contacted for pricing and availability.

11. **ADJOURNMENT**: The next meeting of the ECRDC will be April 24, 2017 at the ECRDC offices. Palmer moved for adjournment of the meeting at 8:15 p.m. Franklin seconded – motion carried.



Robert L. Voss, Executive Director



Ben Montzka, Chairman

