



## EAST CENTRAL REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

100 Park Street South

Mora, MN 55051

April 24, 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  
Kathi Ellis – Kanabec Co. Commissioner  
Linda Evans – Mille Lacs Co. Public Interest  
Tim Franklin – Pine 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  
Kevin Stenson – Chisago Co. Municipalities  
Jim Swenson – City of North Branch  
Glen Williamson – Pine Co. Townships

### Commission Members Absent:

Gordon Gullixson – Kanabec Co. Municipalities  
Steven Kimmel – Chisago Co. Public Interest  
Diane Larkin – Chisago Co. Townships  
Thom Walker – Mille Lacs Co. Municipalities  
Barb Welty – Mille Lacs 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:** Lawlor moved to approve the agenda as presented. Evans seconded – motion carried.
3. **MINUTES APPROVAL:** Kester moved to approve the minutes of the February 24, 2017 meeting. Franklin seconded – motion carried.
4. **TREASURERS REPORT:** Ellis presented the Treasurer's report. Williamson moved to approve the Treasurer's Report to include the checks written (#9246 through #9300) along with ACH payments from February 1 to March 31, 2017. Dunkley seconded – motion carried. General Journals have been reviewed and approved for the period February 1 through March 31, 2017.
5. **PERSONNEL & BUDGET COMMITTEE REPORT:** P&B Chair Loren Davis reported that the P&B Committee met prior to the meeting and discussed a number of items to be considered as part of the 2017-2018 ECRDC budget. Anticipated projects for next year include the EDA Partnership Planning Program; Mille Lacs Lake Scenic Byway Designation Study; MnDOT Planning Grant; Safe Routes to School; and the Mille Lacs Safe Roads. The Committee is proposing the statutory maximum of 3% for the regional tax levy for the upcoming budget. Due to uncertainties surrounding the ECRDC's federal funds, however, it was decided to limit cost-of-living adjustments on staff salaries to just 2 ½ percent in the initial draft budget. Should federal funds come through, the P&B will consider recommending a higher cost-of-living adjustment. It was also proposed to phase out the \$12,121 contribution toward CMCOA's administrative match requirements as the ECRDC no longer operates any of the programs funded by the federal Older American's Act. Staff was directed to develop the two budget scenarios in preparation for the next P&B meeting in May.

6. **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT:** Executive Director Voss reported on a number of items including:
- a. ESSENTIA HEALTH-SANDSTONE OPEN HOUSE: An open house will be held to celebrate the opening of the new Essentia Health-Sandstone Medical Campus on May 17, 2017. The ECRDC assisted the city of Sandstone with the \$2.3 million EDA Public Works grant application for the 181 acre business park where the new medical facility is located. The grant funded the infrastructure improvements needed for the Regional Medical Campus and Business Park Project.
  - b. EDA UPDATE: The EDA planning grant is currently being processed by staff at EDA's Chicago Regional Office. Darrin Fleener has been appointed as our new EDA representative. If approved the planning grant cycle will be effective retroactive to April 1, 2017 and continue through March 31, 2020.
  - c. COMMISSION VACANCIES: Steve Kimmel, Chisago County Public Interest, indicated he and his family are relocating to Florida. Consequently, he will no longer be able to serve on the Commission or the CEDS advisory committee. Notices for the vacancy will be published in Chisago County newspapers.
  - d. METRO MN/DOT MEETING: On March 28<sup>th</sup> Chairman Montzka, TAC Chair Joe Triplett, Bob Bollenbeck, and Bob Voss met with Metro MnDOT to review upcoming projects included in the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) that may affect our region. Proposed were two Transportation Alternative (TA) projects in Taylors Falls for federal funding – pedestrian improvement sidewalk project \$183,561 (\$146,849 federal) and a Safe Routes to School project \$250,000 (\$200,000 federal).
  - e. QUAMBA COMP PLAN AND ZONING ORDINANCE: The city of Quamba has adopted a resolution establishing a planning commission and has contracted with the ECRDC to assist in the comp plan and zoning ordinance.
7. **COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT:** Simonsen provided the following updates on Community Development planning projects including:
- a. MILLE LACS SCENIC BYWAYS: Public input and visioning meetings are being organized in locations around Lake Mille Lacs. The Scenic Byways project was also promoted at our Regional Tourism Conference in Wahkon on April 17<sup>th</sup>. There will also be future presentations to local civic groups, expos and other events.
  - b. SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL: Taylors Falls Safe Routes to School (SRTS) is still in the planning process for an infrastructure funding application 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. The Braham SRTS application grew to include the Cambridge-Isanti School District, and was submitted to MnDOT at the Isanti County project. With 9 schools and almost 6,000 students. This is the largest application to come forward in Region 7E.
  - c. TOWARD ZERO DEATHS/SAFE ROADS: A top priority currently with the Toward Zero Deaths (TZD) project includes an all-around effort to reduce crashes along Highway 23 in Mille Lacs County. The Mille Lacs County Sheriff's office and the Minnesota State Patrol have heightened enforcement efforts with designated periods through the remainder of the year.

8. **TRANSPORTATION:** Bollenbeck provided the following updates for the transportation program:
- a. TRANSPORTATION PLANNERS MEETING: The RDC Transportation Planners and Directors met with Mn/DOT on February 28<sup>th</sup> to discuss planning and administrative issues. A program review meeting is planned for May 22<sup>nd</sup> to discuss any new requirements and work plan for this next fiscal year.
  - b. ISANTI TOWARD ZERO DEATHS/SAFE ROADS: Isanti TZD project continued the effort to address traffic safety. Received funding through AAA to support a couple of TZD activities not funded by the Safe Roads grant. Discussion regarding the future direction of the Isanti TZD/Safe roads program was discussed. The next TZD application will be completed by Isanti County Public Health and if approved by the Dept. of Public Safety Isanti County Public Health will administer the program henceforth.
9. **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT:** Zeller reported on the following:
- a. CEDS WORK PROGRAM / EVENTS: As part of our work program in the recently approved Regional Five-Year Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDs), the ECRDC facilitated a Regional Child Care Capacity Building Event on Monday, March 20 at Pine Technical & Community College in Pine City. Also held was a Regional Tourism Business Resource Summit on April 17 at the Wahkon City Hall.
  - b. REVOLVING LOAN FUND (RLF): The RLF committee met on April 5<sup>th</sup> to approve a new loan. We currently have 10 loans outstanding. All are making payments as agreed. The RLF has approximately \$100,000 available to lend – enough for 2 to 3 average size loans.
10. **TOPICS OF REGIONAL INTEREST:**
- a. INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CONFERENCE: Karen Amundson reported on the upcoming conference on February 8, 2018 at the Grand Event Center. The Kanabec County EDA is hosting the conference. The theme is “*Developing Rural Business in a Global Economy*”.
11. **ADJOURNMENT:** The next meeting of the ECRDC will be the annual meeting on June 26, 2017 at the Pine County Historical Museum in Askov. The business meeting will begin at 5:30 and dinner to follow at 7:00 p.m. Amundson moved to adjourn the meeting. Williamson seconded – motion carried.



Robert L. Voss, Executive Director



Ben Montzka, Chairman