



EAST CENTRAL REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

August 24, 2020

Via Zoom®

100 Park Street South

Mora, MN 55051

Commission Members Present:

Bob Bollenbeck - Kanabec Co. Public Interest  
Loren Davis - Isanti Co. Public Interest  
Dave Dillan – Mille Lacs Co. Municipalities  
Linda Evans - Mille Lacs Co. Public Interest  
Richard Hansen - Isanti Co. Townships  
Diane Larkin - Chisago Co. Townships  
Carri Levitski – Southern School Boards  
John Mikrot, Jr. - Pine Co. Commissioner  
Scott Moe - Northern School Boards  
Ben Montzka- Chisago Co. Commissioner  
Genny Reynolds-Mille Lacs Co. Commissioner  
Peter Spartz – Pine Co. Municipalities  
Kevin Stenson-Chisago Co. Municipalities  
Terry Turnquist - Isanti Co. Commissioner  
Glen Williamson-Pine Co. Townships

Commission Members Absent:

Tish Carlson – Isanti Co. Municipalities  
Carla Dunkley- Tribal Representative  
Kathi Ellis - Kanabec Co. Commissioner  
Gordon Gullixson-Kanabec Co. Municipalities  
Robert Hoefert, Mille Lacs Co. Townships  
Jeanette Kester - Pine Co. Public Interest  
Tom Lawlor – Chisago Co. Public Interest  
Dave Patenaude -Kanabec Co. Townships  
Jim Swenson - City of North Branch

Staff Present:

Bob Voss - Executive Director  
Ashely Eckdahl – Community Development  
Brenda Hughley, Finance Officer  
Karen Onan-Wakefield, Community Development  
Trish Rydlund - Office Manager  
Penny Simonsen - Transportation  
Jordan Zeller - Economic Development

1. **WELCOME:** Chairman Montzka called the meeting of the East Central Regional Development Commission to order at 7:00 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.
2. **AGENDA APPROVAL:** Stenson moved to approve the agenda with the addition of 5b. NE Service Cooperative EDA Letter of Support. Hansen seconded - motion carried.
3. **MINUTES APPROVAL:** Evans moved to approve the minutes of the June 22, 2020, ECRDC Annual meeting. Hansen seconded- motion carried.
4. **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT:** Executive Director Voss provide a report on the following items:
  - a. HIRING OF REGIONAL ECONOMIC RESILIENCY COORDINATOR: A total of 35 applications were received for the Regional Economic Resiliency Coordinator position to be funded by the CARES EDA grant. Interviews were conducted and the position was offered and accepted by Michelle Thomas. Starting salary will be Pay Grade D Step 8 (\$58,987) with a starting date of September 16<sup>th</sup>. Levitski moved to hire Michelle Thomas at Pay Grade D Step 8 and starting date of September 16, 2020. Hansen seconded – motion carried.
  - b. LETTER OF SUPPORT – NORTHEAST SERVICE COOPERATIVE EDA GRANT OPPORTUNITY: Arrowhead RDC and Northeast Service Cooperative are working on effort to build a broadband fiber optic cable that would be the medium mile. They would like to connect with the Twin Cities which would entail having the fiber optic cable go through Region 7E. This would be a great opportunity for Region 7E to be able to access the fiber optics through the region. Stenson moved to sign the letter of support for the Northeast Services Cooperative EDA grant application letter of support. Hansen seconded – motion carried.
  - c. ANNUAL REPORT: The ECRDC annual report is complete and will be sent to the State Legislative Reference Library by September 1<sup>st</sup>. The report covers the fiscal year July 1, 2019 through June 30, 2020.
  - d. ANNUAL AUDIT: The accounting firm of Clifton Larson Allen (CLA) will be scheduling a time in either late September or early October to conduct the field work for the ECRDC's FY2019-2020 year-end financial audit. This will be the first year of the new three-year audit agreement with CLA.
5. **TREASURERS REPORT:** The Board reviewed the June and July 2020 Treasurer's report. Reynolds moved to approve the Treasurer's Report to include the checks written #10655 through #10710 along with ACH payments

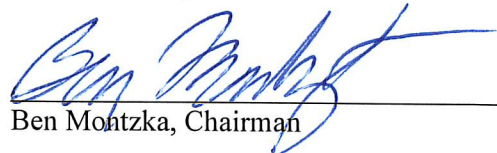
from June 1 and July 31, 2020. Stenson seconded- motion carried. General Journals were reviewed and approved for the period June 1 and July 31, 2020.

6. **TRANSPORTATION:** Penny Simonsen reported on the following items:
  - a. MnDOT has a demonstration project component that they fund. These projects provide funds for communities to test a project to see how the communities and users respond to it before having to submit a full application. Some projects that could be tested include: bump-outs in downtown areas, parking changes, adding a bike lane, trail projects along a trunk highway, etc. Application deadline will be October 5<sup>th</sup>.
  - b. Staff will be putting up bike and pedestrian (non-motorized) counters that will be placed in Pine City in the next few weeks. The counters will calculate data and track the amount of traffic the sidewalk/segment is used. This is free to any county/city that has a location they would like to have tested.
  - c. Transportation Alternative Projects will begin the solicitation process later this fall. The application process will possibly be shorted to be completed before Christmas.
  
7. **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT:** Jordan Zeller reported on economic development events and brought forth the following recommendation:
  - a. The Annual Recertification of the Revolving Loan Fund resolution was brought forth. This resolution finds the RLF is consistent with and supportive of the area's current economic development strategies, the RLF Plan is being operated in accordance with the policies and procedures in the RLF Plan, and the loan portfolio meets the standards. Motioned by Davis to approve the RLF Certification resolution. Moe seconded – motion carried.
  - b. The ECRDC was notified by the Federal EDA that we were awarded a \$550,000 grant to create a new COVID-19 business revolving loan fund. On August 17<sup>th</sup> the RLF Board approved the purchase of a \$25,000 participation in a loan to Glockenspiel, Inc. / Deutschland Meats in Lindstrom from the new loan fund.
  - c. In an effort to spur housing development in the region, the ECRDC facilitated three tours to bring housing developers, in a safe/socially distant way.
  - d. Work is nearing completion and is expected to be completed this fall on the Pine Technical & Community College campus modernization project. They received a Federal EDA grant for \$1.1 million for this project.
  
8. **REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION COORDINATION COUNCIL (ECRTCC):** Karen Onan and Ashley Eckdahl. The ECRDC received a grant for the third phase of the RTCC in the amount of \$215,886 with the ECRDC matching 10%. This phase continues the following tasks:
  - a. Transportation Management Coordination
  - b. Volunteer Drive Prog Coordinating & Training
  - c. Policy Action (Regulation/Legislative Oversight)
  - d. Transportation Exploration

Onan commented that Chisago and Isanti Counties are considering the discontinuance of the Heartland Express transit system. Chairman Montzka indicated, however, that this most likely will happened only after a suitable replacement structure is found.
  
9. **SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOLS:** Ashley Eckdahl gave an updated on the Hinckley/Finlayson Safe Routes to School planning project.
  
10. **ADJOURNMENT:** Chairman Montzka announced the next meeting will be October 26, 2020 at 7:00 p.m. Davis moved to adjourn the regular meeting of the ECRDC at 7:55 p.m. Hansen seconded- motion carried.

---

Robert L. Voss, Executive Director



---

Ben Montzka, Chairman