



EAST CENTRAL REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

April 22, 2024

100 Park Street South

Mora, MN 55051

Commission Members Present:

Tom Anderson – Isanti Co. Townships
Loren Davis - Isanti Co. Public Interest
Alan Duff – Isanti Co. Commissioner
Jack Edmonds – Mille Lacs Co. Public Interest
Bruce Fitzwater – Chisago Co. Townships
Robert Hoefert, Mille Lacs Co. Townships
Jeannette Kester - Pine Co. Public Interest
Scott Moe - Northern School Boards
Ben Montzka- Chisago Co. Commissioner
Dave Patenaude -Kanabec Co. Townships
Genny Reynolds – Mille Lacs Co. Commissioner
Peter Ripka – Kanabec Co. Commissioner
Brent Switzer – Pine Co. Municipalities
Sara Treiber – Kanabec Co. Public Interest
Dave Waldoch – Chisago Co. Municipalities
Glen Williamson-Pine Co. Townships

Commission Members Absent:

Dave Dillan – Mille Lacs Co. Municipalities
Nate George – Isanti Co. Municipalities
Tom Lawlor – Chisago Co. Public Interest
Kevin Schieber - City of North Branch
JJ Waldhalm, Pine Co. Commissioner

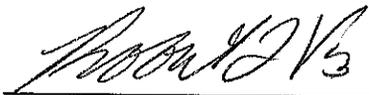
Staff Present:

Bob Voss - Executive Director
Nicole Klosner – Climate & Energy
Karen Onan – RTCC Planner
Trish Rydlund - Office Administrator
Darcy Rylander – Finance Director
Penny Simonsen – Transportation
Michelle Thomas - Resiliency Coordinator/RTCC
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:** Williamson moved to approve the agenda as recommended. Moe seconded - motion carried.
3. **MINUTES APPROVAL:** Kester moved to approve the minutes of the February 26, 2024 meeting. Duff seconded- motion carried.
4. **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT:** Executive Director Voss reported Congressman Stauber along with his Field Representative Jack Priebe visited with ECRDC Chairman Montzka and our staff on Friday, April 5th. Updates were given on the Commission's major program areas – especially those involving federal funding. Among the items discussed were the Surface Transportation funding; Scenic Byways; Safe Routes to School; Toward Zero Deaths; RTCC efforts on volunteer mileage rates; childcare initiatives; our revolving CARES, ARPA, and USDA revolving loan funds; the Regional Food Business Center work; and the recent Climate & Energy work funded through IJJA.
5. **PERSONNEL & BUDGET (P&B) REPORT:** The P&B met prior to the Commission meeting and brought forth the following recommendations:
 - A. **Procurement Policy:** A procurement policy was originally approved by the Commission on December 19, 2022 but it was later discovered that it needed further revisions to fulfill federal requirements. Treiber moved to approve the revised procurement policy as presented. Anderson seconded – motion carried.

6. **TREASURERS REPORT:** The Board reviewed the February and March 2024 Treasurer's report. Hoefert moved to accept the Treasurer's Report to include the checks written #11792 through #11844 along with ACH payments for February 1, 2024 through March 31, 2024. Edmonds seconded - motion carried. General Journals were reviewed and approved for the period February 1, 2024 through March 31, 2024.
7. **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT:** Jordan Zeller reported on the following items:
 - A. East Central Development Partnership Familiarization Event: ECRDC staff moderated a "familiarization" event for influencers on Wednesday, April 17th in Pine City, facilitated by the East Central Development Partnership (formerly GPS::45::93). The goal is to bring in influencers that help businesses and entrepreneurs select locations to operate from. We focus on real estate professionals and offer them continuing education credits for attending.
 - B. Spring Barnstorming: The ECRDC and partners is undertaking our Spring "Barnstorming" visits to the banks, credit unions and city halls in East Central MN. We visited Mille Lacs County on March 11th, Kanabec & Isanti Counties on March 13th and Pine County on February 12th.
8. **TRANSPORTATION UPDATE:** Penny Simonsen reported on the following:
 - A. WSB Engineering firm will assist with the Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) for Region 7E. LRTP is an interactive plan that connects local voices, regional technical needs, and funding sources into a dynamic decision-making resource. The Plan will start with public engagement and visits with County Boards in about a month.
 - B. Congratulations to the city of Pine City on receiving a Safe Routes to School Planning Grant. Staff will be conducting the work for this Plan
9. **REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION COORDINATION COUNCIL (ECRTCC):** Karen Onan reported on the following items:
 - A. Work is being conducted to market the Assisted Transportation Services program in Kanabec County.
 - B. Staff will be attending Senior Fairs, Expos, Human Services Conferences, and the Kanabec County Fair.
 - C. The ECRTCC will host an upcoming MnDOT Rail Division meeting on May 9, 2024, at 11:00 a.m. at the ECRDC offices. Those interested in information regarding the Northern Lights Express Passenger Rail Line will be invited.
10. **ECONOMIC RESILIENCY COORDINATOR AND TZD UPDATE:** Michelle Thomas reported on the following:
 - A. Meetings have been held in both Kanabec and Mille Lacs Counties to move ahead with renewed interest in the Toward Zero Deaths program. A mock crash is planned for Mille Lacs County in May.
 - B. Stark Transportation has taken advantage of and been approved for the 0% -interest loan we have extended from the Historic Revolving Loan Fund. Stark Transportation is looking to expand the need for non-emergency medical transit (NEMT) in the region.
 - C. May 10th is Child Care Provider Appreciation Day. Appreciation events are being planning in Chisago, Isanti, Kanabec and Mille Lacs Counties.

11. **RURAL FOOD BUSINESS CENTER (RFBC):** Darcy Rylander reported on the following items:
 - A. Regenerative Agriculture event was held April 10th at the Braham Event Center with 220 people attending. This is part of the RFBC grant.
 - B. Looking at applying for a grant for local producers.
12. **CLIMATE AND ENERGY (C&E):** Nicole Klosner reported she attended a Grant Opportunities seminar in Mankato on April 12th. This was a great opportunity to meet with other RDC C&E employees throughout the state.
13. **ADJOURNMENT:** Chairman Montzka announced the next meeting will be the Annual Meeting to be held June 24, 2024 with the location to be determined at a later date. Davis moved to adjourn the regular meeting of the ECRDC. Waldock seconded- motion carried.



Robert L. Voss, Executive Director



Ben Montzka, Chairman

