



EAST CENTRAL REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

ANNUAL MEETING

June 23, 2025

Rock Creek City Center

7000 State Hwy 70

Pine City, MN 55063

Commission Members Present:

Tom Anderson – Isanti Co. Townships
Wallace Bengston – Isanti Co. Public Interest
Dave Dillan – Mille Lacs Co. Municipalities
Alan Duff – Isanti Co. Commissioner
Jack Edmonds – Mille Lacs Co. Public Interest
Bruce Fitzwater – Chisago Co. Townships
Nate George – Isanti Co. Municipalities
Shelly Johnson – Southern School Boards
Scott Moe - Northern School Boards
Ben Montzka - Chisago Co. Commissioner
Rick Olseen – Chisago Co. Public Interest
Genny Reynolds – Mille Lacs Co. Commissioner
Kevin Schieber - City of North Branch
Sara Treiber – Kanabec Co. Public Interest
JJ Waldhalm, Pine Co. Commissioner
Dave Waldoch – Chisago Co. Municipalities
Glen Williamson-Pine Co. Townships

Commission Members Absent:

Robert Hoefert, Mille Lacs Co. Townships
Jeannette Kester - Pine Co. Public Interest
Dave Patenaude -Kanabec Co. Townships
Peter Ripka – Kanabec Co. Commissioner
Dave Youngquist – Kanabec Co. Municipalities

Staff Present:

Bob Voss - Executive Director
Nicole Klosner, Regional Dev. & Grant Specialist
Karen Onan, RTCC
Darcy Rylander – Finance Director
Trish Rydlund - Office Manager
Penny Simonsen – Transportation Planner
Michelle Thomas – Community/Economic Dev.
Jordan Zeller – Economic Development Planner

Others Present

Tom Cruikshank – MnDOT District 3
Austin Hauf – WSB Consulting

- A. **WELCOME:** Chairman Montzka called the annual meeting of the East Central Regional Development Commission Annual meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.
- B. **AGENDA APPROVAL:** Moe moved to approve the agenda as presented. Bengston seconded - motion carried.
- C. **MINUTES APPROVAL:** Duff moved to approve the minutes of the February 24, 2025 meeting subject to correcting a typographical error on item E3. Fitzwater seconded – motion carried.
- D. **TREASURERS REPORT:** The Board reviewed the April and May 2025. Reynolds moved to accept the Treasurer's Report to include the checks written #12145 through #12173, ACH payments for April and May 2025, and to send a letter to Brent Switzer to recover mileage and per diem expenses inadvertently paid. Olseen seconded - motion carried with Waldhalm opposing. General Journals were reviewed and approved for the period April and May 2025.
- E. **PUBLIC HEARING FY 2025-2026 WORK PROGRAM:** Chairman Montzka opened the Public Hearing at 5:50 p.m. for comments on the FY2025-2026 Work Program. Executive Director Voss provided highlights of the Work Program. Moe moved to approve the FY 2025-2026 Work Program. Dillan seconded – motion carried.
- F. **BUDGET AND INDIRECT COST PLAN:** Voss reviewed the budget and indirect cost plan and fielded questions. During the budget discussion Voss reported his plans to retire sometime in late December 2025 or early January 2026. The public hearing was closed by Chairman Montzka at 6:05 p.m. Waldoch then moved to

approve the budget and indirect cost plan as presented. Moe seconded, motion carried. At this time the public hearing was closed.

G. **AMENDMENT TO AGENDA:** In anticipation of the upcoming retirement of Executive Director Voss, Waldoch moved to amend the agenda to include the formation of a search committee for the Executive Director position. The motion was seconded by Waldhalm. During discussion on the motion, however, it was noted that it is the responsibility of the Personnel and Budget Committee to serve as the search committee. The motion to amend the agenda consequently received no action.

H. **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT:** Executive Director Voss brought before the Commission the following items:

1. Resolution approving MnDOT Planning Agreement & Financial Match: MnDOT provides a \$75,000 annual planning grant to fund/staff our work program and the ECRDC has a required 15% match of \$13,235. Motioned by Trieber to approve the MnDOT Planning Agreement and financial match resolution. Williamson seconded – motion carried.
2. Resolution Authorizing MAGIC Fund for Investments: On May 7, representatives from the Minnesota Association of Governments Investing for Counties (MAGIC) Fund met with staff to provide an overview of the program and to discuss its potential as an investment option for the Commission’s funds. It was noted that many counties and regional development commissions participate in the MAGIC Fund due to its competitive interest rates and flexibility not typically available through conventional banking institutions. Williamson moved to authorize the ECRDC to participate in the MAGIC Fund investment program. Seconded by Moe - motion carried.

I. **PERSONNEL & BUDGET COMMITTEE:**

1. Approve Revised Salary Scale and Adjustments for Implementation on July 1, 2025: The Personnel and Budget Committee recommended a 3.0% Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) be applied to each step of the Salary Schedule, effective July 1, 2025. Williamson moved to approve the 3.0% COLA to the salary schedule, along with step increases for eligible staff, effective July 1, 2025. Bengston seconded - motion carried, with Waldhalm voting against.

Employee	FY26 Salary / Step / Grade	
	Approved for July 1, 2025 implementation	
	Grade/Step	Salary Amt
Nichole Klosner	G6 S3	\$ 72,864.35
Karen Onan	G6 S4	\$ 75,050.28
Trish Rydlund	G4 S10	\$ 74,583.08
Darcy Rylander	G6 S7	\$ 79,620.84
Penny Simonsen	G6 S10	\$ 87,003.85
Michelle Thomas	G6 S7	\$ 79,620.84
Bob Voss	G9 S10	\$ 123,330.95
Jordan Zeller	G6 S10	\$ 87,003.85

2. Designate Financial Depository: Trieber moved to approve First Citizens Bank as the ECRDC’s financial depository. Waldoch seconded – motion carried.

3. Inventory Deletions/Additions: In anticipation of the annual audit, Waldoch moved to approve the inventory deletions in the amount of \$6,767.12 and additions totaling \$2,087.99. Duff seconded – motion carried.

J. ELECTION OF OFFICERS

1. Nominations and Annual Officer Election

- a. Chairperson: Voss announced two nominations were received by mail for Chairperson. The nominations were Ben Montzka and Alan Duff. Voss then opened the floor for further nominations for Chair. Nominations were asked for three times. Nominations were closed. Commissioners cast their ballots and Ben Montzka was re-elected as Chairman.
- b. Vice-Chair: Voss announced six nominations were received by mail for Vice-Chair. The nominations included: Glen Williamson, Rick Olseen, Dave Patenaude, Nate George, Scott Moe, and Kevin Schieber. Voss then opened the floor for further nominations for Vice-Chair. Nominations were asked for three times. Nominations were closed. Commissioners cast their ballots and Glen Williamson was re-elected as Vice-Chairman.
- c. Secretary/Treasurer: Voss announced one nomination was received by mail for Secretary/ Treasurer. The nomination was Genny Reynolds. Voss then opened the floor for further nominations for Secretary/Treasurer. Nominations were asked for three times. Commissioners cast their ballots and Genny Reynolds was re-elected as Secretary/Treasurer.

2. ECRDC Liaison’s to Program Committees: Following are the appointments for the various ECRDC advisory committees.

- a. Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) / Area Transportation Partnership (ATP): Nominations were opened from the floor for the TAC / ATP. One nomination was received for Genny Reynolds. Edmonds moved to appoint Genny Reynolds to the TAC / ATP. Moe seconded – motion carried.
- b. Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) Board: Nominations were opened from the floor for the Revolving Loan Fund Committee. One nomination was received for Glen Williamson. Moe moved to appoint Glen Williamson to the RLF Board. Anderson seconded – motion carried.
- c. Regional Transportation Coordinating Council (RTCC): Nominations were opened from the floor for the RTCC. Nominations were received as follows: Rick Olseen (Chisago County), Tom Anderson (Isanti County), Sara Treiber (Kanabec County), and Jack Edmonds (Mille Lacs County). Pine County will remain vacant until a municipality representative has been elected. Hearing no further nominations, Fitzwater moved to approve. Williamson seconded - motion carried.
- d. County Caucus for Personnel & Budget (P&B) Committee: Bengston moved to appoint the following to the Personnel and Budget Committee: Dave Waldoch (Chisago County), Wallace Bengston (Isanti County), Dave Patenaude (Kanabec County), Robert Hoefert (Mille Lacs County). The seat representing Pine County will remain vacant until a municipal representative has been elected. Anderson seconded – motion carried.

K. REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION COORDINATION COUNCIL (ECRTCC): Karen Onan reported on the following:

1. The East Central Regional Development Commission (ECRDC) and East Central Regional Transportation Coordinating Council (ECRTCC) have been awarded the 2025 FTA Section 5310 Enhanced Mobility for Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities Capital Grant from MnDOT. Project implementation is scheduled for fiscal years 2026–2027. It was noted that future funding under this program will transition to a competitive application process for future years
2. Transit route updates:
 - a. Arrowhead Transit has introduced a newly redesigned service program, RideSmart 2025, serving Isanti and Chisago Counties with connections to the Metro area.
 - b. Tri-CAP, the public transportation provider for Mille Lacs County, has launched a new Wednesday route connecting Princeton and Milaca to St. Cloud.
 - c. Collaboration is ongoing with Jefferson Lines to initiate a pilot project providing service from Pine County to St. Cloud.

- L. **ECONOMIC RESILIENCY COORDINATOR UPDATE:** Michelle Thomas reported on the following items:
 - 1. We are currently in the process of arranging a potential loan for a childcare center to be located at the Tanger Mall in North Branch. This loan will be a participation with the Initiative Foundation.
 - 2. Arrowhead Transit officially launched RideSmart 2025 on June 2nd. The redesigned system includes expanded commuter routes, clearly defined Dial-A-Ride zones with extended hours, and multiple new loop routes designed to improve regional connectivity. The redesign also lays the ground-work for future app-based booking and real-time tracking technology. Work continues to iron out final details of the transfer options for riders entering and leaving Region 7E and the Twin Cities Metro Area via I-35 and Hwy 65.

- LI. **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT UPDATE:** Jordan Zeller reported on following items:
 - 1. Zeller presented the Board with updated Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) plans for the ARPA and CARES RLFs, revised to align with current federal Economic Development Administration (EDA) requirements, emphasizing merit-based principles. Waldoch moved to approve the updated RLF plans as presented. Williamson seconded – motion carried with Moe voting against.
 - 2. Four RLF Board members have terms set to expire at the end of June 2025. A motion was made by Olseen to reappoint the following individuals: Allen Goldsmith (Isanti County) for a 2-year term, David Waldoch (Chisago County) for a 2-year term, Paul Gilbertson (Kanabec County) for a 2-year term, and Glen Williamson (ECRDC Board Representative) for a 1-year term. The motion was seconded by Duff and carried unanimously.
 - 3. Due to term limits, two seats on the RLF Board will become vacant—one representing Chisago County and the other representing Pine County. Public notices regarding these vacancies will be published in local newspapers and shared through social media.

- LII. **CLIMATE AND ENERGY (C&E):** Nicole Klosner reported on the following:
 - 1. Working with the Pine City Elementary School on an HVAC program for energy efficiency.
 - 2. Potential partnership opportunity with the Initiative Foundation for the Energy Efficiency Conservation Block Grant (EECBG). The EECBG Program is a federal initiative that provides funding to states, local governments, and tribes to implement energy efficiency and conservation strategies.

- LIII. **TRANSPORTATION UPDATE:** Penny Simonsen yielded her time to Tom Cruikshank and Austin Hauf for the Regional Transportation Plan Update to follow after adjournment and dinner.

- LIV. **ADJOURNMENT:** Chairman Montzka announced the next meeting will be August 25, 2025, at the ECRDC offices. Treiber moved to adjourn the meeting. Dillan seconded- motion carried.



Robert L. Voss, Executive Director



Ben Montzka, Chairman