

# Meeting of the Koochiching Economic Development Authority

## Planning Meeting

Wednesday, May 10<sup>th</sup>, 2017  
County Boardroom

**Board Members Present:** Bob Anderson, Allen Rasmussen, Mike Hanson, Brian McBride, Brian Briggs (Alternate), Jerry Struss

**Members Absent:** Harley Droba, Wade Pavleck

**Staff Present:** Paul Nevanen, Kyra Hasbargen

**Others Attending:** Crystal Clance

Meeting called to order at 10:00 a.m. by Chairman Rasmussen.

- 01 Approve agenda – **Motion by Briggs, a second by McBride to accept the agenda as presented. Motion carried unanimously.**
  
- 02 Planning Session – Facilitated by Jerry Struss – Struss read the KEDA mission statement “To recruit new businesses and encourage expansion and business retention in Koochiching County”. Struss referenced the Planning Meeting Survey results and defined the purpose of this meeting, questioning each board member on their role of the KEDA board. Each agreed the role is to carry out the KEDA mission as well as providing support and direction to KEDA staff, and ensuring financials are accurate. Discussion on the roles and providing leadership to KEDA staff. Discussion on frequency of meetings. Board agreed monthly meetings are a responsibility of board members and a requirement for financials. Discussion on content of the meetings, having a business or organization attend the meetings to give updates, and meeting locations. Board agreed to hold KEDA meetings in the out county twice per year and for the next 6 months reach out to area businesses to give updates or address needs and/or concerns to the KEDA board.  
2017 KEDA Goals – Struss referenced and read through the 2016 KEDA Work Plan and the full results of the Planning Survey, putting each action plan in order by importance ranked, adding the need to plan for the next 12 months and have clear ideas to meet KEDA goals. Nevanen started with Recruitment and explained how the KEDA plays to the strengths of the area for recruitment, noting what has been in the past, what is currently being done and plan for marketing the future. Anderson mentioned there is not much to market currently and suggested spending the next 5 years getting one of the sites in the area “Shovel Ready”, while he passed out a hand out of a proposed 2017-18 KEDA Work Plan he put together. Anderson suggested the City and County each commit \$20,000-25,000 each year for the next 5 years to work on infrastructure on a viable site in the area, referencing the New Mark Study suggestions of ranked sites, noting the top two being the Foreign Trade Zone (FTZ) and Multi-Modal site. McBride stated he would like to see cost estimates on what it would be to get the site “Shovel Ready”, by putting water, sewer, electrical into the site and removing all the rock. Short discussion on CN, the FTZ site, the potential cost and timeframe. The Board agreed the need to putting together a plan to invest in infrastructure to better attract potential businesses. Ken Anderson explained the certification process for being “Shovel Ready” and how it is being revised, noting the Multi-Modal site is a designated shovel ready site. Short discussion on the RECAP project and landfills. The board agreed to continue to monitor RECAP but take off the Work Plan. The Board discussed Cold Weather Testing and the construction of a 3<sup>rd</sup> Cold Box, and decided to keep on the work plan and add the new cold box will be completed by November and to work in conjunction with other entities to accommodate additional testing. Discussion on areas in the county that lack broadband and the board agreed for broadband to continue to remain a priority

and add cell tower access. Nevanen explained the process and partnership with Voyage Forward and the Newmark checklist. Short discussion on Voyage Forward and shifting the order of goals, moving Voyage Forward to number five. Nevanen explained the Expand Business Retention and Expansion effort goal in detail. The board discussed advisory committees, industries, and other key areas, while agreeing to establish industry based advisory committees within the next year in the areas of Timber, Tourism, Transportation and Technology. Discussion on affiliate organizations and adding local utility companies to the list. Nevanen explained the KEDA's marketing strategies, noting the extensive reach that is gained with social media, and added there are often things that come up with a lack of public awareness due to it not meant to be public yet. Rasmussen concurred, adding there is a fine line between economic development and revealing a project too soon, noting email updates are great for keeping the board up to date. Nevanen explained how the KEDA supports entrepreneurial programs such as Junior Achievement and CEO's in the Classrooms, noting their value and long term goals. Anderson stated the need to review staff development annually and questioned if the staff size is adequate. McBride questioned budgeting more and needing additional funds in specific staff related areas such as training, etc, noting the need to ensure staff needs are met. Discussion on staff and supporting their needs. Hanson questioned the KEDA office space is if it serves staff well, or if there is a more suitable location or additional signage that may be needed. Short additional discussion on staff and the KEDA office.

**03 Meeting adjourned at 11:58 a.m.**