

# Meeting of the Koochiching Economic Development Authority

Wednesday, March 18, 2015

The City Council Chambers

- Board Members Present:** Allen Rasmussen, Wayne Skoe (Alternate), Brian Briggs (Alternate), Cynthia Jaksa (Alternate)
- Members Absent:** Bob Anderson, Soren Olesen, Rob Ecklund, Pete Kalar, Wade Pavleck
- Staff Present:** Paul Nevanen, Kyra Briggs
- Others Attending:** Spencer Bickett (The Journal), Crystal Clance, Shawn Mason, Randy Thoms (CFOB - B93)

Meeting called to order at 10:16 a.m. by Chairman Rasmussen.

- 01 Approve agenda – **motion by Briggs, a second by Jaksa to accept the agenda. Motion carried unanimously.**
- 02 Approve minutes from 1/22/15 –**Motion by Briggs, a second by Rasmussen to approve the 2/18/15 meeting minutes. Motion carried unanimously.**
- 03 Public Comment – None
- 04 Treasurer’s Report – Nevanen presented the financials in Treasurer Ecklund’s absence for February and bills for March totaling \$20,341.04. Nevanen mentioned updates to the Budget have been done to reflect the addition of the Airport Commission Admin and Kyra Briggs’ full-time status. Jaksa questioned a few of the Airport items on the Budget vs. Actual. **Motion by Jaksa, a second by Skoe to approve the February KEDA bills and financial reports. Motion carried unanimously.** Nevanen then presented the CWT financial reports for February and March bills totaling \$28,638.80 and JLR bills totaling \$3,348.00. Nevanen noted a transfer from the JLR account to CWT in the amount of \$10,000 to cover bills for the month. Short discussion on the Balance Sheet **Motion by Briggs, a second by Jaksa to approve the February CWT bills, financial reports and transfer of funds. Motion carried unanimously.**
- 05 SBDC Update – Jenny Herman provided an update on the SBDC, noting her last update was in October 2014. Herman reported so far this year she has had 70 client sessions with 37 different clients, adding it is a very busy time of year with year-end reporting. Herman mentioned the continuing education courses are going well and conducted a QuickBooks course a few weeks ago that was well attended. Herman also noted she held another class with presenter John Bennett of the U of M Extension on the “Digital Super Highway” which was paid for by Voyage Forward funds and went into detail on the class, adding it was well attended. Herman mentioned the next class will be with the Minnesota Loggers Association on May 28<sup>th</sup> in Big Falls and will talk about transitioning their business to a family member or a key employee, along with succession planning. Herman reported she has been involved with the Economic Gardening movement to grow businesses and has completed the introductory courses, adding she learned a lot about the program and believes there should be 5-6 businesses that will benefit from this in the county. Herman stated the International Women’s Business Network group is still going well and informed the board this will be the 3<sup>rd</sup> year a scholarship will be awarded to a female student going to college in the business field, adding the scholarship amount is around \$250 each year. Herman explained the various other programs she is involved in which include Junior Achievement and CEO’s in the Classroom. Herman also mentioned she has been helping Kyra Briggs with the Airport Commission

to get a trial balance and budget set up in QuickBooks and ensure good reporting and that everything is matching the City. Herman then referred to the Economic Indicators Report which now includes 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter reporting. Herman went through the report in detail, highlighting certain areas of concern or those which had a significant difference from the last report. Nevanen thanked Herman and commended her on all her work on the report, adding it is a good tool and helps with decision making.

- 06 Member's Terms Follow-up – Nevanen explained the KEDA Board Member terms and noted Soren Olesen and Debbie Bowman's term has expired this month, adding each of them was contacted to see if they were interested in serving and both agreed they would be interested in continuing with the KEDA Board. **Motion by Skoe, a second by Briggs to approve the re-nomination of KEDA Board Member Soren Olesen and alternate Debbie Bowman. Motion carried unanimously.**
- 07 Director's Report – *RECAP* – Nevanen reported Coronal is currently working on a site determination report for two possible sites for the RECAP Project, adding one in Big Falls and one in the International Falls area. Nevanen stated they will make an assessment to allow the County to move permitting forward and have recently met with the MPCA to provide a project update to continue work with vendors and finalize 30% of the design. Nevanen noted they are also planning a visit here soon to provide an update and discuss the site determination process. *Voyage Forward/Newmark Follow-up* – Nevanen explained he is working with the Long Term Vision/Asset Team to coordinate Newmark's next visit to here as part of their economic adjustment strategy project, adding they will be here Monday, March 30th through April 2<sup>nd</sup>. Nevanen stated the main focus of this visit will be to meet onsite, conduct phone interviews and have round table discussions with local business owners/managers to get a better understanding of the local market, challenges and opportunities they face. *Cold Weather Testing* – Nevanen reported the season is coming to a close and have two scheduled groups left for testing. Nevanen mentioned JLR's management recently visited the area to tour the facility and were very impressed with all the improvements, adding they want this facility to match all their facilities. Nevanen stated he had a chance to get the management team out on the ice roads and extended a thank you to Eric Johnson, Joe Mershon and Rod Haanen for taking them on a snowmobile ride.
- 08 Other (City/County Updates) – Shawn Mason mentioned an EDA Advisory meeting was held yesterday and noted three new members, George Hnatiuk, Eric Johnson and Alysa Hackenmueller. Mason also mentioned they are working with DEED on an Angel Investment program, adding she is also working on a few other projects.
- 09 Public Comment Period – None.
- 10 The next board meeting was scheduled for April 20th at 10:00 a.m. at the County Board Room. **Meeting adjourned at 11:15 a.m.**