

Meeting of the Koochiching Economic Development Authority

Wednesday, April 18th, 2018
County Board Room

Board Members Present: Allen Rasmussen, Mike Hanson, Harley Droba, Brian McBride

Members Absent: Wade Pavleck, Bob Anderson

Staff Present: Paul Nevanen

Others Attending: JoAnn Smith, Whitney Jackson (The Journal), Darci Sullivan (KCC-TV), Chrystal Clance, Tricia Heibel (Chamber President), Jim Yount (Small Town Tech)

Meeting called to order at 1:02 p.m. by Chairman Rasmussen.

- 01 Approve agenda – **Motion by Droba, a second by McBride to accept the agenda. Motion carried unanimously.**
- 02 Approve minutes from 3/21/18 – **Motion by Droba, a second by Hanson to approve the 3/21/2018 meeting minutes. Motion carried unanimously.**
- 03 Public Comment – None
- 04 Treasurer’s Report – McBride presented the CWT financial reports for March and monthly bills for April in the amount of \$23,526.08, and a transfer from JLR to Cold Weather Testing in the amount of \$24,000, while explaining the details. There is a 60-90 day wait time from invoice to payment from CWT vendors. **Motion by McBride, a second by Hanson to approve the March CWT financial reports and bills for April with a total of \$23,526.08, and a transfer of \$24,000 from JLR to CWT. Motion carried unanimously.** McBride presented the KEDA financials for March and bills for April in the amount of \$29,302.14. JLR is The housing study showed an amount of \$11,300.47. **Motion by McBride, a second by Droba to approve the March KEDA financial reports and bills for April in the amount of \$29,302.14. Motion carried unanimously.**
- 05 Director’s Report – *Cantilever Bridge Distillery & Hotel* – Demolition began earlier this month on the two existing properties in anticipation of the coming construction. Nevanen stated that KEDA continues to work with Cantilever, the County, and the City of Ranier to finalize a Developer’s Agreement and to schedule a Public Hearing to move the project forward. *Koochiching Housing Study* – Requests for Proposals were sent to three firms to conduct the County-wide study. It is anticipated that the proposals will be reviewed the first week of May and a firm will be selected at that time. There will be a regular housing coalition meeting on Monday. *FTZ Site* – Commissioner Pavleck and County Engineer Joe Sutherland went before the Ranier Planning and Zoning Commission on allowing the transfer of the existing Conditional Use Permit (CUP) that would allow for a quarry to operate at the FTZ site in the Ranier City limits. There were some noise and traffic concerns so the Ranier City Council will take additional time to consider the proposal. *Cold Weather Testing* – JLR continues to run a durability fleet and will run it into the summer months. Nevanen stated that he will be meeting with the team to review facility projects for the off-season. He will also have a formal season wrap-up for next meeting. *Miscellaneous* (Bemidji handout on how the region has grown and been stable during the recession due to the help of the college, BSU) – *Opportunity Zones* – Governor Dayton has until April 20th to make his recommendations for zones

within the state, so we should hear by Friday. (Opportunity Zones handout) *Blandin Broadband Communities Orientation* – Jim Yount provided background to the group on the Blandin Broadband Communities Program. Bill Coleman will present a Blandin Broadband Communities Orientation, Thursday, April 19th at 3pm at the Falls Public Library. (Agenda was handed out)

- 06 By-Laws Review – Review of Economic Development Authority of Koochiching County By-laws. Corrections to be made: Section 2.1, 3rd sentence – change “must not” to “may not”, Section 4.2, title – “EXECTION” changed to “EXECUTION”. **Motion to accept the By-laws with the edits by McBride, 2nd by Droba. Motion passes unanimously.**
- 07 Growing Entrepreneurship in Koochiching County – Droba stated that he has nothing for this meeting, but will talk to Alyssa about speaking at the next meeting on CEO’s in the Classroom.
- 08 Other (City/County Updates) – Droba – On Monday the EDA met and agreed to give \$6000 to the County-wide Housing Study. McBride – Met with the auditor and the taxes for the first half of the year are starting to come in. Hanson – The ramps that way have seen a lot of traffic due to the river opening partway. Littlefork and Northome are planning infrastructure improvements.
- 09 Public Comment Period – Clance asked about the Granite Digital project and if KEDA was still working with them because she had heard a rumor that they were not able to get the project going. Nevanen answered that they continue to work with Granite Digital on funding. They are confident in initial fundraising, and once that is complete an announcement will be made. Droba stated that rumors are hard on businesses and has an impact on revenue and can be devastating at times to that particular business. Nevanen added that some of the information on this project is confidential, so there is a wait time for public announcements.
- 10 The next board meeting was scheduled for Wednesday, May 23rd at 1:00 p.m. in BigFalls at the Community Building. **Meeting adjourned at 1:56 p.m.**