

Meeting of the Koochiching Economic Development Authority

Monday, November 21st, 2018
Koochiching County Boardroom

Board Members Present: Bob Anderson, Mike Hanson, Brian McBride, Wade Pavleck, Representative Rob Ecklund

Members Absent: Allen Rasmussen, Harley Droba

Staff Present: Paul Nevanen, Kyra Hasbargen

Others Attending: JoAnn Smith, Darci Sullivan (KCC-TV)

Meeting called to order at 1:01 p.m. by Vice Chairman Hanson in Chairman Rasmussen's absence.

- 01 Approve agenda – Nevanen stated he just received the VSO Lease Agreement and would like to add it to the agenda. **Motion by McBride, a second by Anderson to accept the agenda with the addition of VSO Lease Agreement. Motion carried unanimously.**
- 02 Approve minutes from 10/22/18 – **Motion by Anderson, a second by McBride to approve the 10/22/2018 meeting minutes. Motion carried unanimously.**
- 03 Public Comment – None
- 04 Treasurer's Report – Treasurer McBride presented the CWT financial reports for October and monthly bills for November in the amount of \$14,476.43, JLR bills in the amount of \$8,187.40 and a transfer from JLR to CWT in the amount of \$12,000, while explaining the details. **Motion by McBride, a second by Anderson to approve the October CWT financial reports and bills for November with a total of \$14,476.43, JLR bills in the amount of \$8,187.40 and a transfer from JLR to CWT in the amount of \$12,000. Motion carried unanimously.** McBride presented the KEDA financials for October and bills for November in the amount of \$21,752.52 and a payment for the housing study in the amount of \$15,950, noting KEDA is the fiscal agent for the Housing Study. **Motion by McBride, a second by Pavleck to approve the October KEDA financial reports and bills for November in the amount of \$21,752.52 and \$15,950 for the Housing Study. Motion carried unanimously.**
- 05 Director's Report – *Cantilever Bridge Distillery & Hotel* – Nevanen reported the owners held a ceremonial kick-off event last month to celebrate the Cantilever project's initial construction. *International Falls Business Park* – Nevanen stated Ricky Roche began construction on his building in the business park last week, noting work continues with another interested party on building on the expanded area of the park and after a series of meetings with various stake holders on planning the expansion, they are ready and would need to issue an RFP for surveying and the formal creation of an expanded plat. **Motion by Pavleck, a second by McBride to move forward with soliciting a Request for Proposal to seek surveying of the Business Park expansion plat. Motion carried unanimously.** Nevanen stated there is no formal agreement in place, however the platting process will need to be completed regardless. Discussion on Northland Counseling and the governance of the board with the County, as well as the platting, water/sewer and the process. *Koochiching Childcare Initiative* – Nevanen stated Jeff Andrews of First Children's Finance returned last month to meet with a core planning and strategy group to continue to discuss the current childcare issues here in the County. Nevanen added in addition to First Children's Finance Rural Child Care Innovation Program taking place over the next two years, Isaac Meyer of Kootasca is applying for an Early Head Start Child Care Partnership Grant for Itasca and Koochiching County. Smith elaborated on the grant Meyer is working on, and the process of First

Children's Finance's timeline of events. Smith mentioned a couple new representatives from Littlefork and Ranier who have joined the core group and a couple things Littlefork is looking into for additional child care options. Discussion on the core group's focus, timeline of the grant Meyer is working on. Ecklund stated the State pushed hard the last three years for increased funding for free tuition of Preschool programs, noting the free preschool hurts daycares due to those spots known to be the "money makers" for childcare. Short discussion on daycare and free preschool. *Blandin Broadband Communities Initiative* – Nevanen mentioned he was part of the Koochiching Technology Initiative that attended the Border to Border Broadband Conference in Brainerd last month, adding part of the conference they were able to work with a technical consulting team to assess Koochiching County's broadband infrastructure as well as identify potential solutions for expanding service. Short discussion on the cell phone towers in the area that were supposed to be built and AT&T not fulfilling their obligation with the towers. *Housing Collaborative/Study* – Nevanen stated the Koochiching Housing Collaborative will be meeting next Monday with Steve Griesert of Community Partners Research to review a final presentation of the draft study of CPR's county-wide housing study. *Cold Weather Testing* – Nevanen stated testing for the 2018-19 season will begin next month and the facility projects are being completed, noting there were representatives from another automaker here earlier this month to tour the facility and community for possible future testing. *Foreign Trade Zone* - Nevanen stated formal notification was received earlier this month from the Commerce Department – Foreign Trade Zones Board, that Digi-Key's application for sub-zone status for their facilities in Thief River Falls has been accepted, noting the jobs that will be created will be in Thief River Falls, however annual administration fees will be received here for recording their activity as part of our zone. Nevanen noted he received a call from Arctic Cat/Textron for inquiry about the zone due to the newly declared tariffs, however after discussion; it was felt that the manufacturing facility in St. Cloud would be the best location and would fall to the Minneapolis zone.

- 06 VSO Office Space – Nevanen referenced the County Veterans Service Office's (VSO) lease agreement with KEDA, noting it was reviewed but the County Attorney. **Motion by McBride, a second by Anderson to approve the lease agreement between the KEDA and the County's Veteran's Service Office. Motion carried unanimously.**
- 07 Other (City/County/Out-County Updated) – Hanson stated MN Power has started putting up the towers in Birchdale. Anderson stated the Citizens of International Falls approved a Sales and Use Tax in the recent election, adding the next step will be to work with Representative Ecklund and Senator Bakk to move it through legislation, noting the hope to begin seeing revenue in 2019 or 2020. McBride questioned how the Bill works. Ecklund explained it would be part of the tax bill. Short discussion on a tax bill and other areas in the State that approved a Sales and Use Tax. Anderson stated the sale of the TeePee Motel Property has been completed and they will work with the City Attorney to get the building cleaned up. Anderson gave a brief update on the Airport Terminal Phase II. McBride referenced a mandatory training for the County yesterday on an active shooter and de-escalation situation, adding it was a very good and interesting training. Pavleck stated the sewer project is at a standstill until Spring. Anderson noted the Highway 53 project of more passing and turn lanes will begin in 2020 and work will be completed over the course of two years. Ecklund noted the committees he will be a part of for his next term and questioned taking another look at bonding for a CWT facility and dusting off the old proposal to have ready when the time comes. Nevanen noted Ron Sutherland was hired by Land Rover and recently took his boss' position and is moving up the line within the company.
- 08 Public Comment Period – None
- 09 The next board meeting was scheduled for Thursday, December 20th at 1:00pm in the City Council Chambers. **Meeting adjourned at 2:20p.m.**