

# Meeting of the Koochiching Economic Development Authority

Monday, October 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2018  
Koochiching County Boardroom

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

**Members Absent:** Wade Pavleck, Representative Rob Ecklund

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

**Others Attending:** JoAnn Smith, Darci Sullivan (KCC-TV), Crystal Clance, Whitney Jackson (The Journal)

Meeting called to order at 1:00 p.m. by Chairman Rasmussen.

- 01 Approve agenda – **Motion by McBride, a second by Anderson to accept the agenda. Motion carried unanimously.**
- 02 Approve minutes from 9/24/18 – **Motion by Hanson, a second by Anderson to approve the 9/24/2018 meeting minutes. Motion carried unanimously.**
- 03 Public Comment – None
- 04 Treasurer’s Report – Treasurer McBride presented the CWT financial reports for September and monthly bills for October in the amount of \$54,034.16, JLR bills in the amount of \$19,119.53 and a transfer from JLR to CWT in the amount of \$55,000, while explaining the details. Anderson questioned Jackson Electric’s bill. Nevanen explained the projects and quotes for improvements, noting the \$48,000 is for the old cold box doors which have been having problems and needed to be replaced, adding JLR requests 2 quotes for all projects and Jackson subs out the job and oversees as an onsite manager. McBride questioned if some of the larger projects should be brought to the board. **Motion by McBride, a second by Anderson to approve the September CWT financial reports and bills for October with a total of \$54,034.16, JLR bills in the amount of \$19,119.53 and a transfer from JLR to CWT in the amount of \$55,000. Motion carried unanimously.** McBride presented the KEDA financials for September and bills for October in the amount of \$24,842.08. Anderson questioned the bill for aerial photos. Nevanen explained Sean Bahr was hired to take some drone photos for an updated ad in Site Selection magazine. **Motion by McBride, a second by Anderson to approve the September KEDA financial reports and bills for October in the amount of \$24,842.08. Motion carried unanimously.**
- 05 VSO Office Space – Nevanen explained the County Veterans Service Office’s (VSO) relocation and working with Jenny Herman and the County Attorney to draft a lease agreement, noting they will pay \$400/month to the KEDA. Droba questioned the lease being with Wells Fargo. Nevanen stated that because the KEDA holds the current lease with Wells Fargo, Wells Fargo didn’t feel the need to be involved since the lease agreement will be a sublease between the KEDA and the County VSO. **Motion by McBride, a second by Droba to approve a lease between the KEDA and the County’s Veteran’s Service Office. Motion carried unanimously.**
- 06 Director’s Report – Nevanen reported the IRRRB funding was received on Friday. *Cantilever Bridge Distillery & Hotel* – Nevanen referenced an upcoming ceremonial kick-off event for the Cantilever project this Friday from 3-5pm at Loony’s Brew if any board members can make it. *Koochiching Childcare Initiative* – Nevanen mentioned Jeff Andrews of First Children’s Finance was here earlier this month and conducted two forums to discuss current childcare issues in the county here; adding about 30 participants including childcare providers and social service

representatives attended the sessions. JoAnn Smith explained more detail of the sessions and the positive feedback that was received, adding she will be attending a Childcare Shortage Study outcome this Thursday at Giants Ridge. McBride thanked Smith for stepping up and taking initiative towards the issue. Nevanen stated many providers don't see themselves as a small business, however they are indeed and so it fits in with the SBDC. Discussion on childcare. *Blandin Broadband Communities Initiative* – Nevanen mentioned he will be attending the Border to Border Broadband Conference in Brainerd tomorrow and Wednesday along with the Koochiching Technology Initiative. *Housing Collaborative/Study* – Nevanen stated Steve Griesert of Community Partners Research presented a draft study of his county-wide housing study last week to a number of collaborative members, adding after reviewing the draft he took some additional feedback and will incorporate a final draft and give a final presentation in several locations throughout the County. *DEED Visit* - Nevanen stated Kari Howe, the regional DEED representative, was here earlier this month to discuss current projects. *Minnesota Power* – Nevanen noted Paul Helstrom of Minnesota Power was here last week to look at possible locations for two Level 2 Vehicle Charging stations. *Northome Fairground Bleacher Project* – Nevanen noted the Northome Fairgrounds are looking at replacing the grandstand bleachers and are doing a donation fundraiser, adding the cost for a section is \$350 to sponsor and questioned if the KEDA Board would like to sponsor a section. **Motion by Anderson, a second by Hanson to approve a \$350 sponsorship donation to the Northome Fairgrounds for their bleacher replacement. Motion carried unanimously.** *Minnesota Chamber of Commerce Priorities Lunch* – Nevanen stated he recently attended a luncheon session by Tony Kwalis of the State Chamber at Packaging Corporation of America, added PCA provided a tour of the facility to about 12 people. Anderson questioned the DigiKey FTZ designation status. Nevanen gave a brief update on the application, noting he should get notification soon. Rasmussen questioned the CWT Improvement list. Nevanen explained the project list is mostly for JLR projects they request to have completed.

- 07 Tour of International Falls Business Park – Nevanen referenced an aerial map of the International Falls Business Park and explained the property. Discussion on the property and the process for when there are interested parties in the properties. Nevanen referenced the one parcel that is still tied up with liens and is hoping to get some direction from the County Attorney on how to proceed. Discussion on the building that is there and zoning of the other lots.
- 08 Other (City/County/Out-County Updated) – Anderson reported the airport terminal Phase II is moving along and hopes to see the windows go in soon, adding the City Council continues to focus on the proposed Sales Tax as he handed out a document on the City's infrastructure and explained the details. Anderson noted there is a Public Meeting tomorrow at 7pm regarding the proposed sales tax. Droba stated the Council has been doing its best to get the sales tax information out to citizens and referenced the importance of the tax. Short discussion on the aging infrastructure. McBride stated the County is trying to work and balance the 2019 budget. Hanson reported Big Falls closed on their land project last week, adding Northome's new apartment building is going up and referenced Birchdale's Great Pumpkin carving and hay rides this upcoming weekend.
- 09 Public Comment Period – Clance expressed her concern that Good Samaritan has closed one of their wings due to staffing requirement to patients. The Board concurred they were not aware of the situation and there was a short discussion on the shortage of CNA and LNP's. Droba questioned getting more info on the closure for the next meeting, and requested looking into what the hospital staffing needs are. McBride stated he just met with RRCC and three healthcare providers and thought things were good as they did not mention the closure. Discussion on RRCC, MNSCU and a possible new housing facility.
- 10 The next board meeting was scheduled for Wednesday, November 21<sup>st</sup> at 1:00pm in the Koochiching County Boardroom. **Meeting adjourned at 2:00p.m.**