

Minutes of Meeting
Traill County Economic Development Commission
November 16, 2017
7:00 p.m. Traill County EDC Office – Hillsboro, N.D.

Board of Directors Present: Rick Halvorson, Greg Krieger, Jami Hovet, Alana Gerszewski, Paul Geray, Roxanne Phipps and Gary Nysveen. Also present: Melissa Beach – Executive Director, Alyssa Short – Project Coordinator, Cole Short – Hillsboro Banner and Harry Lipsiea – Traill County Tribune.

The meeting was called to order at 7:10 p.m. by Director Halvorson.

Additions to Agenda

There were no additions to the agenda.

Executive Director’s Report

Beach presented the monthly executive director’s report. She gave updates on projects with area businesses and described other recent initiatives, such as making business recruitment contacts and requesting infrastructure, zoning and development maps from several cities in the county.

Beach also provided a recap of the Economic Development North Dakota conference in Williston last month, where she moderated a panel on natural gas development efforts in the state. Beach also was elected to the EDND Board of Directors and was named the 2017 Rural Economic Developer of the Year.

The board reached quorum when Nysveen arrived at 7:19 p.m.

Secretary’s Report

Nysveen moved to accept the Oct. 12, 2017 meeting minutes, seconded by Phipps. Motion carried.

Treasurer’s Report

A. Short noted that the Executive Committee approved a transfer of \$17,000 from the business savings account to the general operating account, and that all clients were current on their loan payments.

Beach explained that the recent transfer left a nominal amount in business savings, so what remains is basically what TCEDC has in CDs. If TCEDC doesn’t receive a large payment from HEDC in December, TCEDC will be very limited in its ability to do any loans.

Several directors expressed concern about the County Commission approving department budgets funded in part by allocating state funds versus levying more mills. They also questioned how widespread the issue is and why the auditors hadn’t noted it previously.

Beach said she met with Larry Young and Ken Nesvig, and both reiterated the County Commission’s support of TCEDC’s work and lending capabilities.



Hovet suggested quarterly or even monthly assessments of incoming taxes next year in case TCEDC needs to make cuts sooner in the year.

Gerszewski moved to accept the Nov. 16, 2017 treasurer's report, seconded by Phipps. Motion carried.

Gerszewski moved to approve payment of checks as submitted. Geray seconded. Motion carried.

Gerszewski moved to ratify the Executive Committee's decision to transfer \$17,000 from business savings to the general operating checking account. Nysveen seconded. Motion carried.

Website Project

The new TCEDC website again went live Nov. 15. Beach and A. Short met with Absolute Marketing on Nov. 1 for onsite training and further review of the site's issues. A. Short was able to add some properties and job listings to the site in its beta version so that the site went live with some updated content, but there is a lengthy list of changes yet to be made.

Beach did a demo of the website, pointing out some of the changes and enhancements, and also some areas that will require rework for content that didn't transition well or that was incorporated incorrectly. Beach said she and A. Short plan to have more areas of the site updated before the December board meeting.

Flex Pace Loan – Smith & Abell Properties, LLC

Beach received the loan paperwork from the Bank of North Dakota, and the paperwork needs to be reviewed and signed by an attorney. Beach requested that Trail County State's Attorney Charlie Stock review the information; she planned to meet with him Nov. 17 to discuss the paperwork and whether TCEDC fits within the scope of the state's attorney's responsibilities. Beach noted the paperwork needs to be submitted by Dec. 1.

Marketing Committee Update

The Marketing Committee met prior to the Nov. 16 board meeting to discuss changes in marketing strategies based on budget limitations.

Billboard: The committee recommends attempting to shorten the length of its contract with Newman Outdoor Signs, or get out of the contract altogether, if possible. There is \$9,200 remaining on the contract.

Nysveen moved to give the Marketing Committee the authority to decide the best way to deal with the Newman Outdoor Signs contract. Hovet seconded. Motion carried.

Website: The estimate from Absolute Marketing was \$12,000 to \$14,000 and the total cost of the project now stands at \$15,798, \$12,000 of which has been paid. Considering the issues with the project and the fact that Absolute missed the hard deadline of Oct. 1 that was stated in the contract, the committee recommends forgoing further payment until the overages are explained and justified by Absolute.

Shop Local: The committee previously budgeted \$5,000 for the Shop Local campaign this year. In light of the budget shortage, the committee revised the budget to spend only what they currently have available (nothing). TCEDC will reuse the advertisements that were created last year, and they'll use social media as a platform and ask local newspapers to run the ads for free if space allows.

Halvorson suggested asking local businesses to potentially include the Shop Local logo when they run their own individual ads, as well.

TCEDC Budget

The board will discuss this further at its December meeting, in case any additional tax dollars come in before then.

Nominating Committee Reminder

Phipps and Scott Hovde comprise the Nominating Committee and they'll need to prepare nominations for the December board meeting. Phipps asked that anyone contact her if they have preferences for where they'd like to serve.

Community Updates

Halvorson – An offer has been accepted on the local parsonage that's for sale. The Fireman's Club social last weekend was well attended.

Krieger – Harvest is winding down and the area's roads and ditches are in good shape. Our Lady Peace Catholic Church in Mayville is hosting a steak fry Oct. 21. Krieger recommended a book he recently read – *Lake Agassiz: The Rise and Demise of the World's Greatest Lake* by Bill Redekop.

Hovet – Mayville State University's presidential search is underway. A national search company is looking for candidates and hopes to end the call for nominations by the first of the year, with candidates reviewed starting Feb. 1 and interviews commencing in March. The university also is seeking an Executive Foundation director and will have first-round candidates for three finalists from North Dakota, South Dakota and Tennessee. Upcoming events on campus include Thanksgiving dinner for students who are on campus over the holiday, and the Madrigal Feast.

Gerszewski – Mayville Christmas Cash is underway and 18 businesses have signed on. Winterfest is set for Dec. 9, with a tour of homes the week prior.

Geray – The Traill County Historical Society is hosting its Christmas Extravaganza at the Plummer House again this year and tickets are still available for some of the seatings. The HBA Christmas Carnival will be held Dec. 10, and another building permit was approved for a lot in Prairieview. The Vets Club Fun Night was well attended (helped by the fact that the Burros won the state football championship earlier in the day). Banks are accepting Christmas Cash applications and winter sports are starting up at the schools. St. John Lutheran is hosting a meatball dinner Sunday, with the proceeds going to the Hillsboro Park Board. And day care actually seems to be going OK in Hillsboro.

Nysveen – A new house is being built on West Caledonia near the entrance to town.

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Phipps – A public meeting was held for the school building project, which goes to a vote Dec. 12. The district opened absentee ballots with a strong turnout thus far. The city street project probably won't go to a vote until after the school building project vote. A Christmas celebration is scheduled Dec. 2, and it will include crafts, a food drive, a visit from Santa, hay rides and a tree lighting.

December meeting

Due to its proximity to the Christmas holiday, the December board meeting will be moved up a week to Thursday, Dec. 14. The tentative plan is to meet at the Plummer House in Hillsboro with a tour preceding the meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 8:44 pm.

Officer (printed name & office)	Signature	Date
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Recording Secretary (printed name)	Signature	Date
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