

Minutes of Meeting
Trail County Economic Development Commission
June 20, 2019 – 7:00 p.m.
Trail County EDC Conference Room – Hillsboro, N.D.

The meeting was preceded by a 6:30 p.m. visit to Hillsboro Body Shop.

Present: Board members: Ben Hershey, Paul Geray, Les Amb, Tom Eblen, Roxanne Phipps, Scott Hovde and Gary Nysveen. Also present: Jim Murphy – Executive Director, Alyssa Short – Project Coordinator, Cole Short – Hillsboro Banner and Bryce Haugen – Trail County Tribune.

The meeting was called to order at 7:04 p.m. by Chairman Hershey.

Additions to Agenda

None.

Secretary's Report

Geray moved to accept the May 16, 2019 meeting minutes, seconded by Amb. Motion carried.

Treasurer's Report

Nysveen moved to accept the May 2019 treasurer's report, seconded by Eblen. Motion carried.

It was noted by A. Short that this month's checks included a large fee to AE2S, most of which will be reimbursed by the Department of Commerce as part of the Partners in Marketing grant. Other atypical checks included the annual insurance premium and some advertising for the featured employer ads. The checks also includes the first installment of the interest buydown share with Hatton EDC for the Heggy's Flex PACE loan.

Phipps moved to approve payment of checks as submitted, Hovde seconded. Motion carried.

Executive Director's Report

TCEDC wrapped up its recent six-week "featured employer" ad campaign to highlight job openings in the area and educate people about the Careers area of the TCEDC website. TCEDC received its highest-ever number of monthly users dating back to April of 2012; of those, approximately 83 percent were new users, 39 percent were in-state, most were in the 25- to 34-year-old age range and there was a wide geographic spread. Murphy noted that he'd met with a state representative regarding some of TCEDC's upcoming projects and goals, and also met with a Hillsboro business regarding manufacturing and workforce.

The TCEDC office provided resources for a land sale presentation for land near Hillsboro, continued talks with Dakota Natural Gas about possible new customers, discussed the most recent Jordahl developments and the possibility of moving the idea to Mayville and submitted primary sector certification paperwork for a new Buxton/Hillsboro entity.



Murphy has been organizing a ND Dept. of Commerce tour of Trail County businesses next month and has been in talks with a consulting firm and corporate leaders about the possibility of locating a primary sector manufacturing building in the Titan Machinery building near Mayville or that vicinity. The office submitted an APUC grant request for a Hillsboro business and also hosted a Lunch & Learn seminar in Mayville with approximately 25 attendees. Murphy thanked Mayville State President Van Horn for allowing TCEDC to use the auditorium free of charge and noted that attendees represented a wide swath of the county.

The first phase of the “Come Home to Trail” marketing campaign has been released and is being promoted. Murphy also has been working on the Community Pulse survey draft, spoke with a charitable housing rehab entity about grants for small rehab projects on homes in Mayville-Portland and Hillsboro and spoke with a county representative about the possibility of renewing the signage grant program, specifically for the City of Clifford.

Murphy attended the Main Street Regional Leaders Summit in Ellendale in June and said affordable rental housing was a main focus. He and A. Short also attended the summer EDND conference in Mandan. Murphy highly recommended a book by keynote speaker Doug Griffiths entitled *13 Ways to Kill Your Community*.

Natural Gas Update

Murphy spoke with Dakota Natural Gas about some new potential clients. Nysveen mentioned that he heard there was another natural gas player interested in providing natural gas to the area. Murphy and A. Short stressed that any company needs to consider the needs of the county; Nysveen agreed and noted that Trail County has been trying to get natural gas for 60 years.

Housing Update – Jordahl, Riverwood, Hatton & Muller

Phipps said that if the City of Hatton agrees, the Hatton EDC will help finance phase 1 of the new housing development in Hatton, starting with four lots. Naastad Brothers will start work in the next few days. The Muller project continues to move forward in Hillsboro. Regarding Jordahl, no news probably isn't good news.

Sundae Brew Flex PACE loan request

Hershey recapped the progress of the Sundae Brew Flex PACE loan request and that the business owners approached the City of Hillsboro with a 10-year buydown request, which was approved by the City of Hillsboro.

The business initially requested a 10-year buydown from TCEDC. After a long discussion, TCEDC's board didn't move forward, instead asking Murphy to work with the clients on a 5-year loan request so that it could be approved quickly. The new loan request came through and the board approved the loan via email. Hershey wanted it clear that TCEDC did not deny a loan to Sundae Brew – the board was being mindful of using taxpayer money responsibly – and he was disappointed that TCEDC didn't receive a response from the business owners.

That being said, the motion to approve the loan was an offer for 90 days, which goes through Aug. 1. Board members supported keeping the offer on the table for the 90 days, especially in light of legality questions arising in regard to the City of Hillsboro's loan offer.

TCEDC doesn't currently have wording in its business assistance application about requiring loans to be five years or fewer, and the preference is to leave this open so loans can be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Murphy also said he would contact Nicole Evans and ask if she has a yes or no answer for TCEDC's loan, and inform the board as to her response.

Partners in Marketing “Come Home to Trail” campaign update

Murphy discussed this in his Executive Director's report. A. Short mentioned that Hatton will be featured in upcoming videos.

CD renewals

TCEDC's 7-month CD is up for renewal. Hovde suggested talking to Bob Hebl at Goose River Bank to negotiate the best possible rate. Hershey recommended a 36-year CD so that the maturation dates of the three CDs are staggered across subsequent years.

Auditor preference

Murphy asked if the board had any history on TCEDC's decision to use a private auditing firm rather than the state auditor. The board recommended Murphy talk to county auditor Glenda Haugen to see if she knows the background. Hershey said that he appreciates the thoroughness of what Overmoe Nelson provides.

Lunch & Learn Recap

Murphy gave the recap during his Executive Director's report.

Community Pulse Survey

Murphy ran through a draft of the survey and asked community representatives to provide a few questions specific to each of their communities. He hopes to roll out the survey after July's TCEDC meeting.

City signage grants

TCEDC was approached about reopening the city signage grants, which last were reopened in 2016 (and originally in 2012). The board recommended tabling the discussion until next month to have a better handle on what TCEDC's grant capacity might be. They also recommended that interested cities provide a mockup of a the news signs' designs so the board has a better idea of what they're approving.

Community updates

Hovde – Farming. Some crops got planted. Some didn't.

Geray – Hillsboro Days went well despite some rain. There's a pool forum June 25 to get input on a possible indoor pool.

Amb – Lots of chip and crack sealing on county roads.

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Eblen – Not much going on for county. Hershey asked about the latest Nielsville bridge application.

Phipps – Fourth of July celebration starts Wednesday, July 3 and has lots of events scheduled. The Hatton Park Board just upgraded some of their playground equipment. Phipps says it's quite the attraction, includes slides and a zipline. The school project continues and it will be a beautiful project when it's done.

Nysveen – There will be a compost demonstration July 9 in the Hatton area. Mayville Summerfest is this weekend. Nysveen asked Geray about the rescheduled Hillsboro Days human pull, which went well and lasted three hours.

Hershey – Buxton Family Fun Day is next weekend. The festivities will feature a 5K in the morning, and Immanuel Lutheran is having an open house and will serve funeral sandwiches. (Nysveen clarified that these are sandwiches of cheese and olives, otherwise known as "dead spread.") The hardware store has a new owner and there are discussions on possible improvements to the building and potential plans to locate a business there. The City of Buxton is looking at a two-phase ditching and road improvement project. Funding is the major challenge; the median income in Buxton is too high to qualify for the best grants.

Meeting adjourned at 8:44 p.m.

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