

Minutes of Meeting
Traill County Economic Development Commission
March 25, 2021 – 7:00 p.m.
Zoom Video Conference Call

Present: Board members: Gary Nysveen, Sarah Lovas, Roxanne Phipps, Ben Hershey, Brian Van Horn, Cassie Braaten, Kurt Elliott and David Knudsvig. Also attending: Jim Murphy – TCEDC Executive Director, Alyssa Short – TCEDC Project Coordinator, Cole Short – Hillsboro Banner and Jim Johnson – Traill County Tribune.

The meeting was called to order at 7:02 p.m. by Chairman Nysveen.

Secretary's report

Hershey moved to accept the February 18, 2021 meeting minutes, seconded by Van Horn. Motion carried.

Treasurer's report/approve checks

Short noted that the customer balance information needed to be updated in Quickbooks. She and Murphy recently met with Vice Chair Scott Hovde about creating a consistent interest calculation model for loans, and also updating the customer balances to reflect the actual amounts paid out to date rather than the approved loan amount. She also noted that Heggy's in Hatton had paid off their loan with BND and subsequently paid off the outstanding Flex PACE buydown amounts with both TCEDC and the Hatton EDC. Lovas moved to receive and file the treasurer's report, seconded by Elliott. Motion carried.

Phipps moved to approve checks, seconded by Hershey. Motion carried.

Executive Director's report

Murphy said the office has had a lot of child care discussions with Hatton, Buxton and Mayville day care center and noted that some new in-home day cares are opening up around the county.

He discussed expansion plans with a Hatton client and had a lot of conversations with Dakota Natural Gas about the natural gas installation – passing along inquiries, helping identify potential customers, etc. Murphy spoke with someone working on a building in Mayville who may have a Flex PACE request by next month's meeting. He received multiple inquiries about commercial space availability in both Mayville in Hillsboro – especially in regard to properties that had been vacant for a while. He also visited the grand opening of the new gluten-free bakery in Hatton.

Murphy said he and Short had an idea to put together a builders' summit later this summer and invite home-builders and community evangelists to get together in the same room and get the ball rolling.



Murphy had several interviews with local radio and newspapers and encouraged the board to check out the article in the Herald about Hillsboro's Riverwalk Development. He's hoping for an in-person lunch & learn this summer, and also is trying to line up resources with Dakota Natural Gas to train local firefighters to work with natural gas situations versus propane.

The office, as PIOs for Traill-Steele Unified Command, has been helping with social media and website updates for various vaccination clinics and other announcements. They had meetings with Sanford Health Foundation, which has plans for the two clinics and hospitals in the county and wanted advice on meeting with Hillsboro EDC and MPEDC. They assisted Hillsboro EDC with loan and grant protocol until they're up to speed with their assistance programs and also attended more PIO training in Bismarck. Murphy noted that Traill County's assistant emergency manager, Ben Gates, is relying on the TCEDC staff to fulfill that role long term in regard to emergency management planning. He also said a significant portion of the office staff's time was spent lining up the virtual career expo and job fair.

Natural gas progress update

Trucks are rolling. Dakota Natural Gas has been finishing up with laying pipe in the stretch from Highway 81 to Mayville and is working on steel from Fertile to Beltrami. Meters will be installed in Hillsboro by fall. Nysveen noted that local HVAC companies likely can't handle all the conversion/install work so there likely will be out-of-town businesses coming in to help. Dakota Natural Gas reps also met with the Hatton City Council, and they're offering a conversion rebate.

Knudsvig dialed in at 7:17 p.m.

Murphy will contact Nikki with DNG about helping to promote the DNG rebate. The office also will keep pushing the Buxton area as a possibility. Hershey said three entities are interested in converting. Murphy will contact DNG about setting up a meeting with the Buxton City Council.

Beautification and child care grant update

The office is in the process of taking applications for the mini-grants. Some have come in and the office has received a lot of inquiries. Murphy anticipated a fair number of applications based on that interest.

Housing update – Riverwalk and Riverwood developments

Within the last month, the Hillsboro City Commission approved the Riverwalk developer's agreement and will hold a hearing at its next meeting. Then the plat will be ready to rock and dirt will be ready to move. Murphy said that currently in the U.S., there are more Realtors than there are homes for sale. He's hopeful that the next phase of Riverwood is moving forward, as well.

2021 Trall County Job Fair/Career Expo

Murphy said the career expo and job fair is coming together, but slowly, because it's a new process. Some of the county's major employers are ready. The plan is to go live April 12 with the schools, then keep the content online for two months for anyone and everyone to see. All Trall County schools, along with Northern Cass, are lined up with a time slot on the 12th. Murphy said he's hoping for 20 vendors and has received about 10 verbal yeses. There are employers who are committed but who are slow to get their info into the system.

April meeting format

Murphy asked if the board is ready to meet again in person and thinks the board can use the LEP community room to socially distance and make sure we have masks if we can't be at least 6 feet apart. Ryan Opdahl wants us to tour The Clubhouse, as well.

Community updates

Braaten – Nothing too major happening in Mayville. There's one house left on the market between Mayville and Portland. The communities need homes to sell and child care.

Elliott – Galesburg has a pancake feed this Sunday. Load limits went into effect a week ago. The county commission hired Hepper-Olson Architects to help with a natural gas boiler study. The county's burn ban goes into effect depending on the state's website. He recommended checking with the sheriff's department if you need to know for certain.

Phipps – Due North GF Bakery & Goods opened in Hatton (GF is gluten free). There are always cars over there now. There are at least three homes for sale in Hatton but they need people in Hatton to buy them. Spring sports have started.

Hershey – The Buxton City Council approved the annexation of land on the northwest side of town and there are a couple homes for sale. Buxton Daycare gave a presentation at the City Council meeting and they've been able to shuffle some expenditures around but still are highly dependent on gaming funding. A few people dropped off donations after they read the article in the paper. The daycare's remodeling project has grown in scope and cost but is moving forward. The Central Valley School Board is having discussions about the contracts of some of the administrators and a teacher. The Central Valley Dollars for Scholars pancake breakfast is this Sunday at the KC Hall in Reynolds.

Lovas – The brewery is coming along in Hillsboro, as is construction at The Learning Circle. Spring planting is moving along quickly, as well, but the topsoil is dry. Murphy asked Lovas to check on the bill that contains the MSU capital request. HB 1475, related to the Ag Innovation Fund and geared toward meatpacking, rendering plants, etc., is a contentious bill and now is very different from how it started. In its current form, the bill provides a revolving loan fund of \$20

Trail County EDC – March 25, 2021 Meeting Minutes

million, with grants also available but not to exceed 25 percent of the fund. APUC would disburse those funds.

Van Horn – Has talked twice in past few weeks with House Appropriations regarding HB 2003, the bill with the capital request funding. He said he had a productive meeting with the House subcommittee so at least they've been heard a couple of times. He stressed that the natural gas project isn't important just for MSU but for Traill County as a whole. An event will be held April 7 at 5 p.m. to make an announcement that could possibly be the biggest deal that's ever happened in Mayville or possibly Traill County.

Knudsvig – Not a lot going on with townships except that roads are being bladed. School discussions are going on but everything is being handled professionally.

Nysveen – On Monday night, HEDC approved a few child care loans and have another they're reviewing. Paul Geray with the Stars & Stripes project is taking applications for this year's flags. Looked awesome last year. A public hearing about Riverwalk will be held April. The Hillsboro golf course is open.

Lovas moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Van Horn. Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 7:51 p.m.

Officer (printed name & office)	Signature	Date
---------------------------------	-----------	------

Recording Secretary (printed name)	Signature	Date
------------------------------------	-----------	------