

Minutes of Meeting
Trail County Economic Development Commission
July 15, 2021 – 7:00 p.m.
Trail County EDC Conference Room, Hillsboro, N.D.

Present: Board members: Gary Nysveen, Roxanne Phipps, Cassie Braaten, Ben Hershey, Dr. Brian Van Horn, Scott Hovde. 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 7:01 p.m. by Chairman Nysveen. No quorum upon calling meeting to order (quorum was established at 7:02 p.m.) so Nysveen adjusted the order of agenda items.

Agenda additions

None.

Lunch & Learn – Sept. 29

Murphy said the office was working on an in-person Lunch & Learn Sept. 29 with the UND Center for Innovation and the ND Career Builders program. Murphy said everyone in the state needs to get the message out about the Career Builders scholarship and loan repayment plan, which offers up to \$17,000 in assistance per student in high-need occupations.

Dakota Natural Gas Ribbon

The ribbon-cutting was set for Aug. 5. Murphy noted with no small amount of sarcasm that all board members had been fantastic about RSVP'ing.

Ongoing child care issues

Availability of child care spots is a big chunk of the problem, along with workforce. There are no easy answers but Murphy said TCEDC is trying to do its part to get more people working in the industry and to get more industry going. Van Horn, Murphy and Short met with MSU CDP and HEDC president Paula Suda to talk about possible employment strategies. The MSU situation was resolved – they got some applicants for their open positions – but Murphy said the situation will come up again so it was a good exercise.

Housing update

Developers are turning dirt in Riverwalk in Hillsboro and in Bernie's Addition in Hatton.

Mini-grant update

Mini-grant funds started going out to recipients. Murphy included a letter of thanks in the packet. The program got a little press, as well, which helps keep the project going.



Main Street Summit

Last year TCEDC set aside funds to reimburse people for registration for the ND Main Street Summit. Murphy asked if TCEDC could set aside \$1,000 for similar reimbursements this year (the cost of 50 registrations). Van Horn moved to approve up to \$1,000 for Main Street Summit scholarships, seconded by Hovde. Motion carried.

Equipment purchase laptop expense

Murphy's laptop is on its last legs and was hoping to get a new one paid for by FEMA or using county CARES money because the machine won't work in online conference calls. Short noted that the money is available in the furniture & equipment area of the budget, as well, and due to the chip shortage she wanted to give a heads-up that they'd be getting a new laptop as soon as one becomes available.

Patrick B. event

TCEDC would like to host Patrick Bertagnolli for a Lunch & Learn event – although maybe not over lunch. This talk would be most important for employers/administration in terms of hiring and retention. Murphy will ask Bertagnolli about scheduling at 1:30 p.m. on a Wednesday in mid-October, with TCEDC providing cookies, coffee, lemonade, etc.

Secretary's report

Phipps moved to accept the June 24, 2021 meeting minutes, seconded by Braaten. Motion carried.

Treasurer's report/approve checks

Short said the office paid out a few mini-grants and noted the office needed a replacement fridge due to a Freon leak. Hershey moved to approve the treasurer's report, seconded by Van Horn. Motion carried.

Short said the Remark check was for a bill that wasn't previously sent but should have been; there are expenses related to the ribbon-cutting but they'll be partly offset by corporate sponsors. Hovde moved to approve checks, seconded by Hershey. Motion carried.

Executive Director's report

Murphy said child care issues are ongoing and have increased in the past year. It's the same situation with health care staffing; Murphy said he and Short also had meetings with health care officials but a lot of their staffing issues aren't on the high-need list identified by the state. Murphy also said a Flex PACE loan application originally was supposed to be discussed this evening but the business got a better loan offer directly through BND. The office also has started work on APUC grants for a few local businesses.

Murphy and Short met with an economic developer from BNSF to discuss how BNSF can help market our areas. They're working with Braaten on some possible housing options for Riverwood in Mayville, and have had inquiries into site selection for Hillsboro's industrial park. They also talked to a local investor about ideas for a main street building in Hillsboro.

Murphy submitted RFP to Commerce; he noted that natural gas and new water line make Trail County a more attractive option. He and Short had a BR&E visit with a Hillsboro service business and are planning the DNG ribbon-cutting.

Regarding the Main Street Summit scholarships, Murphy already has been in touch with a few people interested in attending. Office staff met with people interested in fundraising options for lights at the softball field in Hillsboro. Murphy also sent a message to Wilson about grant info for the fire hall/community center in Galesburg and sent a letter of support for proposed pedestrian bridge on I-29.

COVID PIO work is winding down; Murphy and Short attended after-action reviews and met with Sheriff Steve Hunt and Assistant Emergency Manager Ben Gates to do a physical inventory of the emergency center. A hazmat exercise is scheduled at MSU in September.

Community updates

Phipps – The road to Bernie's Addition in Hatton was paved today; lots are for sale and one is pending.

Van Horn – Mayville State is putting in an application to host the Shrine Bowl next year, which would bring 3,000 or so people into town for the game. Fall enrollment looks good and stable. There are housing issues; 2-3 dorms are essentially full. The new Remembrance Garden, which included a \$1,000 TCEDC beautification grant, was unveiled; \$1,000 bought a tremendous amount of support with most cost coming through volunteer labor (it was probably a \$25k to \$50k investment).

Hershey – Buxton held a flag-raising and dedication for Gene Rosholt and local veterans. The community day went well. A new house is being built on the northwest side of town; dirt for the foundation has been dug but they're having infrastructure issues and need to get water to the property. A new principal is starting at CV school.

Hovde – SRS Commodities is using the former Titan building for warehousing right as they continue to expand. Crop conditions are tough in some spots and good in others; next two weeks of heat will take a toll. As bushels go down, there's an impact on the community.

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Braaten – MayPort SummerFest went well and there was a big turnout for all the events. Continues to be a need for rental properties and child care.

Nysveen – In Riverwalk in Hillsboro, dirt is moving. You can see where the streets are going to be and they’re putting in the storm sewer. Jordahl is staking out its next units. Sundae Brew is remodeling its building – maybe a couple months of work yet. Goose River Brewing has plumbing and concrete in the back.

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

Meeting adjourned at 7:57 p.m.

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