

Minutes of Meeting
Trail County Economic Development Commission
July 20, 2023 – 7:00 p.m.
TCEDC Conference Room – Hillsboro, N.D./Conference call via Zoom

Present: Board members: Jami Hovet, Vicky Grothmann, Dr. Brian Van Horn, Dustin Olson, Marshall Erickson, AJ Andresen, Cassie Braaten and Ben Hershey. Also present: Jim Murphy – TCEDC Executive Director, Alyssa Short – TCEDC Deputy Director, Cole Short – Hillsboro Banner and Jim Johnson – Traill County Tribune.

The meeting was called to order at 7 p.m. by Chairperson Hovet.

Agenda additions

None

Secretary’s report

Van Horn moved to accept the June 15, 2023 meeting minutes, seconded by Olson. Motion carried.

Treasurer’s report/approve checks

Short noted that all loan payments were current and that some of the new grants had been paid out, as had some of the second installments of the 2022-23 child care grants. Erickson moved to accept the treasurer’s report, seconded by Andresen. Motion carried.

Short said the month’s checks for approval included CivicPlus fee for the upcoming TCEDC department header website and the New Jobs Training pass-throughs for Degelman and Traill United Group. Grothmann moved to approve checks, seconded by Braaten. Motion carried.

Executive Director’s report

- Murphy showed photos from the Degelman ribbon-cutting and said there’s a YouTube video available from YourLiveEvent. “Chuck Norris never kicked as much ass as we did that day and Chuck Norris never loses,” he added.
- Country Roads Ranch and Tiny Town child care centers in Mayville reached their 12-month checkpoints on their child care grants. Both facilities had doubled their expectations. “We were told that without the grant, this wouldn’t have happened, Murphy said. “If we’re asking whether this was successful, I’d say yes.”
- Murphy and Short Talked to a Hillsboro business owner about another building changing hands – the former Farmers Union building. The people who own the Hillsboro Cafe will be doing something with it. They researched land for development, including tours in Hatton and Portland, looking for sites for clients. They also researched commercial space



comps for a client in the region and spoke with a Minnesota wholesaler about moving a facility to Traill County.

- Murphy and Short met with a company called Bandwango, with whom they're considering revamping the Shop Local campaign.
- They talked with a Hillsboro city commissioner about placemaking and other available grants, fielded many housing inquiries and participated in a discussion about an irrigation project at Olsen Softball Complex in Hillsboro.
- Murphy participated in a virtual seminar about how ChatGTP can be used in the office and whether the robots will kill us. He also spoke with someone in Cass County who is looking to start a JDA in their county and they're asking us for advice.
- Worked on the upcoming county website and starting that workflow.

Mayor's Social/Summit 2023

This year's social/summit is scheduled for Aug. 10 at Mayville State. Murphy said some of the mayors had requested that auditors be invited, as well. The agenda will include going through some things that changed at the state level and encouraging them to take advantage of networking and programming. It's a great opportunity to get everyone together and see how we can help.

Degelman ribbon cutting

In addition to his previous information, Murphy noted the positive feedback following the event, including the news getting top billing in the governor's weekly newsletter. Hovet applauded TCEDC's work in helping to coordinate and plan the event, in addition to the project itself. Short noted the impact the event had on high school kids in the area, as well.

Day care grant checks & wrap-up

Discussed during check approval.

Investing in rural America

Hovet discussed a presentation by Matt Marshall, a developer with MinnKota Power, in conjunction with Dawn Mandt from the Red River Regional Council. The presentation focused on trends, threats and opportunities in rural North Dakota counties. Everyone is looking for housing and child care, and being cheerleaders for our communities is crucial.

Short and Murphy had seen Marshall's presentation previously and Short noted how enlightening it was in terms of the tax implications of losing student populations in our schools. Grothmann asked about the tax implications at the K-12 level vs. the post-secondary level. Van Horn said it's about \$14,000 per student at the post-secondary level versus around \$10,000 per student at the K-12 level.

Flex PACE loan request from Luther Memorial

Luther Memorial Home is redoing the roof of their entire facility. TCEDC was approached by Tom Capouch from First State Bank/treasurer of the MayPort EDC about being a partner on the buydown.

The Business Assistance committee met prior to the board meeting. Committee Chair Hershey said everything looked really good and the committee decided to bring the request to the full board for a discussion.

Luther is asking for a buydown of their loan of about \$14,000-\$15,000, which saves the facility \$81,000 over 10 years. Murphy said Luther is one of the biggest employers in the county, a standard bearer in the community of Mayville has solid financials. TCEDC's share would be \$800 or less per year for 10 years and Luther would save a boatload of money.

Erickson moved to approve a Flex PACE buydown loan of up to \$9,000, after half the cost is billed from MayPort EDC, funded annually for a 10-year period to BND and due within 12 months after completion of the funding period, with a variable interest rate of prime plus 1 percent, accrued annually, starting upon the first payment to Bank of North Dakota, with no penalty for early payoff. Grothmann seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Community updates:

- Hershey – BIG day was Saturday. Everything went well and there was a good turnout. The basketball court was poured, although there is an issue with the lawnmower and the backboards. The roof on the firehall has been completed. The Kim Braaten Memorial golf tourney is coming up.
- Andresen – When Valley United acquired the Climax facility and the c-store, the company gave the c-store to a group in Climax that's going to renovate it. Valley United donated \$5K, matched by Land O' Lakes. They also made a significant investment in the Halstad elevator.
- Erickson – The street project in Mayville is in full force. Avoid the construction if you can but it'll be great when it's done. The Delchar is getting a good turnout for its summer movie series for kids.
- Olson – No street issues in Portland.
- Van Horn – RFQ went out today for the Old Main renovation project. The first year will all be about planning.
- Braaten – Summerfest was alright but the weather didn't cooperate. Several events were moved inside.
- Grothmann – The pool is open in Hillsboro Monday through Friday. The Sanford golf tourney will be held tomorrow in Hillsboro. The school is having a public meeting

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Tuesday on a school referendum, followed by special board meeting. The school’s current transportation manager is returning.

- Hovet – The Grand Forks EDC is bringing in workers from the Ukraine. UND is making a push for its students in graduate programs to work for STEM jobs in the area. A recent talk with someone from the state Office of Refugees who reiterated that we won’t have enough humans to work without thinking about immigration. The U.S. is short about 10 million people to fill its jobs. Grothmann mentioned inquiries about teaching openings as trailing spouses of agricultural workers from South Africa.

Van Horn made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Meeting adjourned at 8:02 p.m.

Officer (printed name & office) Signature Date

Recording Secretary (printed name) Signature Date