



Regional Economic Development

MINUTES OF THE MONTHLY MEETING

Williston Center for Development – Planning and Zoning Conference Room
Thursday, January 25, 2018 - 11:30 a.m.

I. CALL TO ORDER:

Jeremy Cox called the meeting to order at 11:45 AM

II. ROLL CALL

Jeremy Cox	P	Brad Curtis	P	Kevin Johnson	P
Ann Kvande	P	Ken Callahan	P	Jordon Evert	E
Cherie Harms	P	Dennis Lindahl	P	KayCee Lindsey	E
Justin Maddison	P	Jory Meyer	P	Cindy Sanford	P
Curtis Shuck	T	Gene Veeder	E	Liz Wilder	P
Brad Bekkedahl	E	Jerry Bergman	P	Dan Bjerknes	E
Howard Klug	E	Amy Krueger	A	Janna Lutz	P
John Miller	E	Shawn Wenko	P		

EXECUTIVE BOARD: Jeremy Cox, Brad Curtis, Kevin Johnson, Brad Bekkedahl, Howard Klug and Shawn Wenko

EXECUTIVE OFFICER: Ann Kvande

GUEST(S): Daniel Stenberg, Economic Development Coordinator, McKenzie County and Keith Olson, Director, SBDC – Williston Region

III. OFFICERS REPORT

A. SECRETARY’S REPORT:

Meeting Minutes for December 21, 2017 were presented.

CURTIS MOTIONED TO APPROVE THE DECEMBER 21, 2017 MINUTES AS PRESENTED. CALLAHAN SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION CARRIED ON A VOICE VOTE.

B. TREASURER’S REPORT:

1. Treasurer’s Report December 31, 2017

Kevin Johnson presented the treasurer’s report for month end December 31, 2017. The gross profit was \$6,035.63 with the expenses of \$31,919.44 for a net loss of \$25,883.81. The check book balance for December 31, 2017 is \$102,133.57.

Johnson provided an update to the board that of the available balance WRED’s portion available for use is \$69,546.87. The remaining funds included in WRED’s finances are not board restricted, but have been earmarked for use by Williston Economic Development (\$31,967.17), Job Service - Job Fairs (\$2,298.32), Events (\$426.22) and Friends of the Sales Tax (\$0).

Callahan added that the MonDak Energy Alliance has officially dissolved and would like to donate the \$3,079.58 to the WRED general fund.

MADDISON MOTIONED TO ACCEPT THE DONATION FROM THE MONDAK ENERGY ALLIANCE. MOTION SECONDED BY CURITS. MOTION CARRIED ON A VOICE VOTE.

CALLAHAN MOTIONED TO ACCEPT THE TREASURER REPORT FOR MONTH END DECEMBER 31, 2017. MOTION SECONDED BY WILDER. MOTION CARRIED ON A VOICE VOTE.

C. PRESIDENT'S REPORT

1. WPBC Committee

Cox discussed that he met with Kvande and the thought was to include all of the regional economic development entities on the WPBC committee to create a booth and decide how to break it all so that all five of the communities had space as well as TRE and XWA. An overall marketing piece would be created to showcase all of the entities.

There are 12 passes for the WRED board. Additional passes can be purchased if more board members wished to attend. A booth schedule should be created, so that there are always people in our booth. Anyone wishing to attend using one of the passes should let Jeremy or Ann know.

D. EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORT

1. GIS Planning

Kvande noted that the new GIS microsite is live and can be viewed at www.willistonredc.com Site Selection. The total population for the region is just over 100,000 people. Kvande added that she had emailed the site to the economic development entities on the board requesting their feedback. The goal is to make sure that not only Williston is represented by the site, but the surrounding communities are as well. Kvande noted with this site anyone wishing to list commercial or industrial property in any of the 7 counties can do so. The board asked if the entity needs to be a member to list properties. Kvande stated at this time there aren't any stipulations that a company has to be a member in order to list a property. At this time it is more important to promote adding properties to the system. If a landowner wanted to list that he has 20acres available that could be rezoned from agriculture to commercial or industrial, should he be asked to pay a membership? It was discussed that maybe those listing should be a member if they have more than 3 properties listed.

2. Membership Renewals for 2018

Kvande stated that she has emailed out requests for membership renewals for 2018. Anyone that doesn't have an email address will still receive the paper letter and invoice. Next month, anyone that hasn't responded to the electronic membership renewal will receive a paper version as well.

Kvande asked if members are allowed to sit in on the meetings. Kvande added that she received the request, but wanted the board's feedback. Harms stated that the meetings should be open and members should be able to sit in on any of the meetings. On other boards, the members are provided a call in number. If someone does wish to sit in on a meeting, they should RSVP for lunch counts. The monthly meetings should be listed on a calendar on the website and the password should be removed from the minutes.

The board asked if discounts could be provided to members that already belong to the surrounding economic development entities or surrounding chambers. Could an entity join for an additional \$25? Kvande noted that the by-laws state the minimum annual membership fee is \$50. Callahan stated that a minimum amount shouldn't be listed in the by-laws, but should be a part of the policies instead. Kvande asked if a committee could be formed to assist in deciding the best way to include the businesses in surrounding communities that already belong to an economic development entity or chamber and be added to the working document. The regional economic development entities should be included on the committee, Callahan and Lutz also volunteered to be on the committee.

It was mentioned that the board should strive to bring in one new member each month.

MOTION MADE BY CALLAHAN TO CREATE A MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE THAT INCLUDES THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ENTITIES AND TO ADD THE MEMBERSHIP REVIEW TO THE WORKING DOCUMENT. MOTION SECONDED BY HARMS. MOTION CARRIED ON A VOICE VOTE.

3. Website - Membership Directory

Kvande noted that she is research options for a new membership directory for the website. The current membership directory is more of a staff directory. It works fine for listing the board of directors, but not the membership. It would be ideal to find a membership directory that would provide more value to the members.

4. Regional Events

i. Stanley Commercial Club Annual Banquet – January 12th

Stanley held their Commercial Club Annual banquet on January 12th. Dennis Lindahl attended for WRED. Brent Bogar spoke at the event and the survey results for moving the post office from Main Street in Stanley were discussed.

ii. Williston Area Chamber Business After Hours – February 8th 5:30-7:30 PM at the James Memorial Art Center

WRED will be sponsoring the WACC Business After Hours for February. Kvande has reserved the James Memorial Art Center for the event. The Williston will cater and provide food, beverages and high top tables. Kvande added that she hopes to see all of the board in attendance at the event.

iii. Crosby Chamber After Hours – February 15th

This is an annual event for the Crosby Chamber. They are looking for a \$1200 sponsorship to cover the entertainment for the event. There is a charge to attend, but they are inviting the entire WRED board at no cost as a sponsor. Please let Kvande know if you will be attending. Carpooling can be arranged.

iv. Watford City Chamber of Commerce/EDC Annual Meeting – Friday, April 13th 5PM at 360 Main (food and drinks and entertainment with a dueling piano group from Montana)

This is a major event for Watford City and a great way for WRED to network with both the Chamber and EDC.

IV. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A. STRATEGIC PLAN

1. Comprehensive Strategic Plan – Working Document

The only change to the working document is to add the membership and membership committee as previously discussed.

V. NEW BUSINESS

A. Committee Reports

1. Legislative Committee

Callahan asked about the quorum as stated in the by-laws and quorum for the legislative committee after receiving an email from Kvande that committees couldn't have more than 6 board members as 7 board members constitutes quorum in the by-laws. Kvande stated that the current legislative committee has 8 board members on it. Years ago when the WRED board had issues meeting quorum the by-laws were amended to make quorum 7 or greater. Kvande asked since over half the board has been attending each meeting, would the board be willing to amend the by-laws at the next meeting. The by-laws could be added to this meeting as the issue was just brought up one day prior to the meeting and the by-law state that five days' notice needs to be provided to amend the by-laws.

MOTION MADE BY CALLAHAN FOR KVANDE TO EMAIL THE BY-LAWS TO THE BOARD TO MAKE ANY CHANGES THEY WOULD LIKE TO HAVE VOTED ON AT THE NEXT MEETING. ONCE ALL OF THE CHANGES ARE RECEIVED BY KVANDE, SHE WILL EMAIL THEM OUT TO THE BOARD PRIOR AT LEAST FIVE DAYS PRIOR TO THE FEBRAURY MEETING. MOTION SECONDED BY WILDER. MOTION CARRIED ON A VOICE VOTE.

Callahan provided an update from the last legislative committee meeting held earlier this week. Those in attendance were Ken Callahan, Brad Curtis, Janna Lutz, Shawn Wenko, Liz Wilder, Daniel Stenberg and Ann Kvande.

The committee discussed the importance of the GPT formula. Ryan Raushenberger will be presenting on the GPT formula at the next Williston API meeting March 13th at 6:30 PM at the Grand Williston Hotel and Conference Center. Callahan invited the WRED board to attend the meeting.

Callahan noted that WRED is recognized for the Legislative 101 it held to show anyone that was interested how to lookup bills in the states system. WRED was also recognized for the legislative forums that were held at crossover.

The committee now wants to put together a list of the top 5 issues that are affecting the area and make those 5 issues our primary focus.

The board asked how that differs from what lobbyists are already doing along with other groups such as Vision West and the Western Dakota Energy Association. Callahan stated that we want to reach out to the lobbyists and the other organizations. Facilitating a meeting that brings all of those groups to the same table is something WRED can do because we are regional. The lobbyists are paid to do what the cities that hire them request for them to do. Those cities need to be at the table and be represented. The goal would be a unified voice in front of the legislators as session.

Callahan proposed that we still reach out to the various groups to get their top 5 issues and ask Bekkedahl what benefit each of the groups brings. The legislators listen more to the citizens than to the lobbyists. Bekkedahl, Callahan, Cox and Kvande will meet and draft what should be sent out to the other entities.

Bergman asked who he should reach out to with ag related issues. Kvande requested that for now he reach out to Callahan, as co-chair of the legislative committee since he is in attendance, and to copy her or he can bring them up at the WRED board meetings. Bergman requested last session that a bus take people down in support of SB 2020 for the seed facility. Packing the room full of people from this area made an impact on the legislators. Callahan

stated that once the by-laws are changed that Bergman needs to be added to the legislative committee. Bergman stated that right now they are trying to get counties that have less than 2000 in their area to pay a greater share for county agents, then the areas with more than 2000.

2. Community Reports

i. Economic Development

On the City side, a Director of Development Service has been hired to oversee the planning and building department. This was created by the City when the building director resigned. It was created to provide a better liaison between planning and building. Mark Schneider will start February 1st. Williston Economic Development finished up the strategic plan included in today's packet are the pages outlining what the three pillars are and highlights the three years broken down into quarters. If anyone on the board wants to see the 55 page report, let Wenko know and he will email it. Wenko also gave a brief overview of the marketing plan out of the WED office for 2018. The last item included are the recipients of the 2019 STAR Fund Community Enhancement grants there was \$50,000 that was distributed among the recipients. This was the probably the biggest year ever with 34 applicants requesting about \$477,000. It is going to be a big year. We are getting very very busy in our office. Wenko stated he would call it Bakken 2.0. A lot of the investment firms and developers that were here several years ago are now coming back and saying that it may be time to start coming back into the area and investing again. Wenko added that we could use another person in the office, but that isn't going to happen. That is why are focus on public private partnerships is so huge the next three years to get things accomplished.

ii. Small Business Development Center

Olson noted for this time of the year that he is seeing a lot of increased traffic with projects that are larger than they were last year at this point. In all areas they are seeing an increase in activity both in Williston and in Watford and good projects too.

iii. Tioga

Lindahl noted that Tioga has a \$5.2-million community center approved and all of the financing has been resolved, but now the construction manager at risk is saying that the mechanical is going to be \$200,000 more, the grading and dirt work is going to be \$200,000 more and the HVAC is going \$200,000 more as well. The board has to reconfigure the building. They are wondering if it is back to the 30% premium now. Some of the members are saying they are going to pay it. They just need to sharpen their pencil and refigure. Tioga is still working on their website. The micro retail is going good.

iv. Williston Research Extension Center

SBARE has had three input sessions since November for ag priority. If WREC isn't made a priority they will have to look outside of SBARE to make the priority list. Hopefully, the priorities for western North Dakota are at least on the list.

Kvande noted the WRED sponsored the Hard Spring Wheat Show and they have provided a couple of tickets for breakfast on for February 7th and February 8th if any of the board would like to attend.

v. Watford City/McKenzie County

The school just had a study done showing projected enrollment of 3000 in the next 10 years. Four – five years ago the school system doubled from 700 to 1500. The firm that is being used has 97% accuracy with last year's projections to this year's. The focus is on the implications that would with finding housing under \$300,000. It could hamper the growth if there isn't affordable housing. Watford City has a Toastmaster group that is getting start this past week. The first meeting had 17 people attend.

vi. Williston Area Chamber of Commerce

The Chamber banquet was last Friday. It was very successful and had over 60 more attendees than the year prior. That is why they moved the venue to McCody Concrete, so they could accommodate more people attending. Diane Haugen was the Distinguished Western Star Award winner this year. Tuesday was the annual meeting where the members voted in the directors and officers. February the Chamber is working with the Wheat Show to host a social, February 8th is the Business After Hours and February 9th is Eggs and Issues. The superintendent of the school district is going to the presenter at the March Eggs and Issues.

vii. Job Service

Sanford provided labor force numbers that she assembled for Vision West. There is still a desperate need for workforce and growing daily. Wages are starting to increase again especially in the trucking industry. With changes in DOT regulations, it is likely that there will be a change in how drivers are paid. Where drivers use to be paid by the load they are likely to be paid so much for the load and so much for the wait time. With the pipeline going in Watford City in see even more of an increase in pay. Experienced equipment operators are starting at \$38/hr. Jobs are open all over, but not seeing the people. Mainly interest is coming from North Dakota, Minnesota, South Dakota and Montana with some from Texas because of wages. Reasons for not hiring are driving records, can't speak English or can't pass the drug test. Per diems are back and housing as high as \$1500/month. Rotations are back as well. Affordable housing is still a big issue. Job Fair is coming up in April 25th in Williston and April 26th in Watford. Notice went out Wednesday and already 20% full. The Job Fair will be held later this year to avoid frost laws. The Williston Job Fair has been moved to the Raymond Center to accommodate 100 booths instead of 60 and will be held at the Rough Rider Center again in Watford with an estimated 60 booths, but could go up to 80 if needed. Federal dollars are available for 14-24 years olds meeting certain criteria, but Job Service is in need of the employees. If you have someone that could meet the qualifications send them to Job Service includes Watford City and Tioga. The Chamber, Leonardite and WREC have hired through the program. Kvande asked for the information to contact at Job Service so it can be included in the newsletter.

viii. Great Northern Corridor Coalition

There will be meeting in Seattle, WA on February 5th for the 2018 strategic plan. Doug Goehring with the State Ag Department as well as the director for the ND DOT will be in attendance. In 2018, North Dakota has two projects. It the Long X Bridge project as well as the Highway 1804 expansion. The Great Northern Corridor Coalition will be in Washington D.C. in March on behalf of those lobbying efforts and will provide an update.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION MADE BY CALLAHAN TO ADJOURN. MOTIONED SECONDED BY MADDISON. MOTIONED CARRIED BY A VOICE VOTE.

The meeting is requested to be adjourned at 1:14 p.m.

VII. THE DATE OF THE WREDC MONTHLY BOARD MEETING

A. The next meeting is scheduled for February 22, 2017.

Ann Kvande

Williston Regional Economic Development
Executive Officer