

NEON Minutes

October 8, 2015, Biotechnology Advancement Center

Meeting began with the Pledge of Allegiance and County Administrator Tom Johnson presided over the meeting.

Broadband: Four of the nine Hotspots are up and running: Leota, Little Rock, Rushmore, and Reading. Hope to have the remaining five completed next week.

Feasibility Study: The feasibility study is fully funded. Meeting with Finley Engineering . propose 2-3 plans; options to serve every premise in the county or loop and have a tower in each community. Surveys will be completed with 3-4 simple questions. Speed tests to map speeds around the county will also be conducted. December 1 is the deadline for the next round of grants. Possibly work with Head Start, Library, Public Health, BioTechnology Advancement Center. State Broadband Conference is in mid-November, building a case for more broadband across rural Minnesota.

EMT Certification: fire departments and emergency management system services . certifications are increasing and costing money, keeping positions filled is difficult.

Legislative Priorities:

- a. Lewis & Clark completion to Worthington
- b. Infrastructure funding . including roads, bridges, broadband, transportation
- c. Housing related
- d. Education- incentives for minority teachers, school bond

The Legislative Priorities book will be put together before the December 7 AMC Annual Conference. The four priorities will be listed in the front of the booklet with each entity having their own section following.

Around the Table:

- Doug Knuth/Round Lake . Sather's building is for sale, the hope is that AgCo will come through and purchase the building as they are currently leasing part of it. The Round Lake Clerk is retiring.
- Gary Hoffmann/Worthington Public Utilities . Attended a policy meeting, learned the EPA's goal is to shut down coal plants; it takes 15 years to complete a green project. Well levels are going down, but not as fast as in the past, we are buying all the water we can at this point. Lewis & Clark project is going good to Luverne.
- Rod Sankey/City of Worthington . Oxford Street Steering Committee . long range planning; 2017 resurfacing Oxford Street, looking at adding bump outs to slow traffic down. Eastside apartments are close to full.
- Fabio Lopez/Nobles County Public Health . Public Health includes Health & Wellness. The community soccer field is in poor condition causing a lot of injuries. A lot of people use the soccer field and we need to have a place for a healthy activity.
- Keith Stubbe/Round Lake . SWBB has a new general manager, interested in expanding broadband.
- Diane Larson/Round Lake-Brewster School District . Round Lake/Brewster has an Operating Levy Referendum on the ballot this November. They are looking for a Yes vote as it is a renewal and there will be no tax increase. Asking residents to please read the literature that was mailed out; the school district will lose state funds if it doesn't pass.
- Gary Ewert/Heron Lake Watershed . Ditch viewing system, need standardized program throughout the state.
- Abraham Algadi/WREDC . working with Round Lake and Rushmore on projects; looking to work with smaller communities. Items currently working on: Round Lake Bank, Worthington Mall property; BioTechnology Advancement Center-lab space, PurNet Grand Opening, Sailor Plastics-LDL money, BioVerse building. We need to establish priorities and start acting on them: Vision 2030!

- Don Linssen/Nobles County . tax forfeiture properties . County receives them by default . we want to get them sold/cleaned up and back on track.
- Tom Johnson . Nobles County Administrator . War Memorial Building-installing a new heating and cooling system; Government Center-fixing the staircases and railings to cut down on trip hazards and bring them up to ADA standards; Armory Building-public meeting for reuse study, 50 people toured the building, we are looking for the best use of the building going forward, retail, gymnastics, world market, library, arts center, historical society, next public meeting is October 29.

The meeting adjourned.

Next Meeting:

November 12th, 5:30 . 7:00 pm
BioTechnology Advancement Center
1527 Prairie Drive, Worthington, MN 56187