

NEON Minutes  
November 8, 2018, Biotechnology Advancement Center

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

Minnesota State Demographic Center/Department of Administration:

Susan Brower, MN State Demographer, presented on the biggest demographic trends. MN ranks highly on a large number of indicators. The largest factor for these determinations is aging.

The full PowerPoint Presentation will be placed on the Nobles County Website at <http://www.co.nobles.mn.us/departments/admin/nobles-economic-opportunity-network-neon/>. Below are a few of the highlights.

- MN ranks the 5<sup>th</sup> highest state with age 25-34 with bachelors' degree. Minnesota's growth is concentrated in the cities. Nobles County since 2010 has continued to grow and neighboring counties have not. Many have declined or stayed stable.
- Nobles County's population has grown by 1,100 in last 17 years. Nobles County is projected to remain stable. Not necessarily moving here and moving away is how it is determined; a lot of the growth projected is based on age and growth of families.
- Nobles County population projected to decline .4% from 2015 to 2030.
- Since the last census, typical pattern state wide of mortality rates versus migration. When projections are made, patterns of births, deaths and migration are taken into consideration.
- Projections may increase if trends change and more people move here. Many Midwesterners are moving west, south, etc. and most of our migration is coming from abroad. Many moving away are going for college, mobile adults (not "snow birds"). Around age 21-22, you do see some movement back but not the same.
- MN labor force growth is projected to slow further over next 15 years; almost no change.
- If Federal policies restrict migration, you will see decline.
- Labor force starts to drop off at age 55, and less than 10% of older adults after 75. Nobles County will lose 150 workers every 5 years between 2015 and 2030. Could pose a problem on the workforce. Considerations to think of: How many workers do we need for the jobs we have? More technology in play. Will we have enough people to meet demands in the future?
- Populations of color now 1 million (19% of population) in Minnesota with 40% of that population in Nobles County. Worthington is the most diverse city in the State of Minnesota.

Susan Brower advised the 2020 Census is coming and very important and affects us for the next 10 years financially, etc. If we do not have accurate counts, we could lose representation and funding.

Nobles County needs a "Complete Count Committee", a voluntary committee to bring in people from churches, social services, large employers to assist. The object is to build trust and explain the importance of the census. Start now but it takes a while to find and educate the right people.

Legislative Priorities:

January 8<sup>th</sup>, 2019 is kick off starting off a much earlier and longer session. Input is needed.

City: Has not yet discussed but will have priorities approved in November.

County: The census will be a large piece; Mental Health and out-state facilities

School: ISD 518 will have priorities approved in November. Not sure about other schools, accessibility for our students: 91% of our students have internet access of some kind. Just because 91% have availability, it doesn't mean they necessarily have viable internet. Not sure where the weak spot is as 5-6 years ago was only about 74%.

Daycare: Volunteers are needed to form a committee!

City of Adrian: Transportation is needed to bridge the gap with a medivan to new clinic and stabilize funding, turn back of roads to county.

Workforce: Workforce is thin and new companies opening take workers from jobs.

Housing: Need to keep working on housing piece.

Around the Table:

Julie Foote/MVTV: Attended Ben Winchester, U of M, presentation on nonprofit superheroes. There is a common need: having a harder time finding volunteers. If you look back at Time magazine covers you'll see the "Me Me Me" self-absorbed faze. Social Media isn't bad, our youth are more engaged. We used to have a broad focus and narrow geography. The youth now have a narrow focus and broad geography. Must have an element of social to get millenials to be volunteers.

Larry Janssen/City of Worthington: Half cent sales tax now to legislators. Not that election over, back to work.

Bob Demuth/Nobles County: Congratulations to incumbents. Sand filters at Prairie View Golf course have never worked and companies have come together and working on fixing issues. Spring will hopefully bring a working system.

Bruce Heitkamp/City of Adrian: 5 lots for sale, prospects for maybe 2 more; partnered with private developer to bring Sanford clinic downtown, right next door to pharmacy; Council is the same; Senior Center in the basement of Slade hotel apartments planning to move, hopefully late 2018 early 2019; Nobles County Historical Society dropped off Adrian historic pictures; Nobles Home Initiative is working great. Lots are selling but most are probably waiting for materials to go down.

ISD 518: Up about 8 students (3300 students) without on-line school (there are 665 on-line now; projected to be over 900 in 2 years); the on-line school has doubled and are kids that are outside our boundaries of ISD518 (K-6); School Board will be doing a resolution calling for a 1 question ballot requesting \$32 million, School District putting in \$6 million above that; costs since August have increased 1.6 million and the longer we wait, the more it will cost; Southwest Initiative Foundation had "Grow Your Own Summit" and we have a similar program; the high school will teach 15 credits for high school credits towards education and you could finish your education in your own community. Looking for teachers of color and growing kids that will stay here. The High School curriculum is expanding; The Learning Center/Gymnastics facility is a big struggle, somewhere around 90-120 days behind schedule. Occupancy expected to be May/June 2019; Trojan field will eventually get upgraded at its current location but we will have to address need for soccer fields.

Tom Johnson/Nobles County: Advised on meetings on out-state mental health center. Can't use the bond money to pay for current bond at the PJC but there is only 3 years of debt service left; believe we will have a good application to provide between 8 and 16 short term beds.

Jennifer Weg/Sanford: Influenza in community; need to replace CT scanner (over \$1 million) and there is construction necessary; appreciated the demographer presentation as it confirmed workforce issues; Sanford Worthington is doing well in finding people that are licensed; have "Sons and Daughters" program, to reach out to those who want to go into medical school; with recruitment efforts over the last 18 months, we are going to employ 7 new physicians from all over - migration is very real.

Don Linssen/Nobles County: Advised on AMC District 8 meeting; the proposed tax levy started at 8.46% and now we are down around 3%; Nobles County receives wind energy (as many other counties) and we spend on projects, not buying down the levy; others use it to buy down the levy but the Wind Energy is not guaranteed so that could cause large increases for others in the future.

Doug Knuth/City of Round Lake: Court Baumgaard retiring from City Council and Jennifer Rehnelt elected; remodeled City Hall and looked at building a fire hall, but expanding instead; new feed mill construction is progressing.

Next Meeting:

December 13, 2018 5:30 pm – 7:00 pm  
BioTechnology Advancement Center  
1527 Prairie Drive, Worthington, MN 56187

The meeting adjourned.