

NEON Minutes  
June 11, 2015, Biotechnology Advancement Center

Meeting began with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Board of Equalization: Tom Johnson reported the local meetings are all completed and the County Board of Equalization Meeting will be on June 16<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 p.m. Brent Feikema reported on the City of Leota meeting, which 22 citizens attended. County Assessor Pam Friesen was able to explain the process that helped the citizens understand the increase in their taxes. Tom reported that as a county we are within the guidelines set by the State of Minnesota.

Legislative Discussion: Special Session will be Friday, June 12<sup>th</sup>. If anyone has any comments for NACO, please contact a County Commissioner soon. The Bonding Bill has a possibility to pass, if so, Lewis & Clarke can make it to Adrian. Broadband is also awaiting approval of funds; \$10.8 million is in the current bill, they are pushing for \$30 million. don't know if it will be increased and included or not at this point.

Broadband: 3 grants have been received:

- 1) District 518 Community Ed . Smarter Marketing Event
- 2) Nobles County Integration Collaborative . Google Chrome notebooks, creating classes for minorities
- 3) MN West . Digital Technology class

Cheryl Janssen has been meeting with townships to request funds to help make mobile hot spots available; grant application is due next week. Another grant the committee is applying for is to complete a feasibility study for when funding becomes available we can have the study done and be shovel ready. The Minnesota Broadband Public Alliance meeting is June 17<sup>th</sup> at New Prague, 10:00 . 3:00; it is to share experiences and information on how to become a provider. In September the second round of grants come up.

Tax Forfeited Land Sale: The sale of properties was successful. There were 3 lots in the City of Worthington that were not sold that SHIP and Extension are looking at as possibility of having community gardens on. Process went well . we would like to set up the process so we can address new tax forfeited properties year by year. State regulations have changed from 5 years behind in taxes to 3 years behind . current year + 3<sup>rd</sup> year back. There is a new 10 year payment plan . As long as the tax payer pays the current year, the delinquent amount can go on a 10 year installment payment plan. Properties that didn't sell will be discussed at a County Board work session.

Rail Authority: The rail line is 42 miles. 2.5 miles of rail ties have been picked up thus far which was 150 tons of ties. POET in SD will take the ties and burn them for fuel. We are waiting for final paperwork then will continue with the cleanup. We are close to receiving the final word on FEMA money from the flooding.

NEON meeting for July . decided to meet in July and not meet in August due to the Nobles County Fair. Ideas for the next meeting: see if Legislators will attend and PC's for People (Jessica). You may send other ideas to Tom at any time.

Around the Table:

- Don Linssen/Nobles County . Southern Prairie received \$1.5 million from Department of Health. We could have them attend a future NEON meeting to explain what they do. They take measures to reduce the cost of Healthcare, working on a way to track medicine/prescriptions in a cloud and it is instantly updated so when you visit another doctor they can see what has been prescribed to you.
- Gene Metz/Nobles County . County Commissioners attend the County Board meetings but they also serve on a lot of other committees. As people look at using more renewable energy, you need to be aware and make sure it is cost effective.
- Larry Janssen/City of Worthington . attended the Local Board of Equalization and stated it was very educational. Spoke with Bill Weber and was assured there will be a special session. The Worthington Windsurfing Regatta is this weekend, be sure to attend!
- Marv Zylstra/Nobles County . Tax Forfeited properties sale went well. Rail Authority . we are making good headway; the County has Environmental fees that can be used to help pay with the cleanup.
- Roxanne Polzine/Hershey Township . They committed \$1,000 to Broadband. The Wayside Rest Stop she works at south of Worthington has been remodeled and is very clean! They receive many compliments that it is the cleanest rest stop between here and Texas! This Sunday there is a French Toast breakfast at the Brewster Legion as a veterans fundraiser to place a memorial in the city park.

- Lyndon Olson/District 518 . 34-36 new hires in the district for next year; construction of the addition to the High School will begin soon; an enrollment study is being conducted; have a principal opening at the High School; facility needs-still looking for a location for a new facility-possibly a High School; Flex Learning Year . will be voted on at next meeting to decide if it will continue. On a personal note, Lyndon inquired about the Fire Insurance Policy increases. northern Bigelow territory is closer to Worthington, but Worthington cannot go to the fire unless called for mutual aid. Territories are bid and decided by the townships.
- Brad Meester/City of Bigelow . City bought the house in Bigelow that was tax forfeited; plans for the property will be released soon.
- Jeff Barber/Lorraine Township . passed a resolution on rocks, trees, weeds on roadsides and ditches . fees to take care of will be added to taxes. Their township still struggles when City of Worthington holds their spring clean up, Lorraine Township ends up with a lot of debris dumped in their ditches. Would like to work with the County to come up with a solution to help get rid of the debris.
- Aaron Hagen/Worthington Public Utilities . waiting for bonding bill to get approved!
- Rod Sankey/City of Worthington . approved Fire/Ladder Truck engine and rebuild valves-\$44,000; Grand Avenue-will extend north of Oxford Street as far as a 60 unit subsidized apartment complex that will be built, there will be a public hearing in the future; Rising Sun Apartments-15 confirmed renters; Mall property-the new developer has several interested companies interested in building, theatre will be first, hopefully done by the holidays.
- Keith Stubbe,Curt Lintelman/Broadband . continue broadband work.
- Bob Demuth Jr./Nobles County . Okabena/Ocheda watershed district is a committee he serves on-Aquatic Species/DNR-state funded \$75,000 to Nobles County-can use on advertising among other items; they will be traveling to Fairmont to look at a Solar Bee which is used to eliminate Blue/Green Algae-\$35,000 apiece. Parks Department hired Jacob Smith as the new Park Superintendent. County purchased an agenda management system.
- Tom Johnson/Nobles County . Construction lane closures on I-90 will begin on Monday; Mountain Lake Highway 60 detour is in place, it is an 8 mile detour; State Patrol Website has a video on distracted driving-it is very good and everyone is encouraged to watch it.

The meeting adjourned.

Next Meeting:

July 9<sup>th</sup>, 5:30 . 7:00 pm  
BioTechnology Advancement Center  
1527 Prairie Drive, Worthington, MN 56187