

NEON Minutes  
July 9, 2015, Biotechnology Advancement Center

Meeting began with the Pledge of Allegiance. Introductions were made; new Minnesota West President Terry Gaalswyk was in attendance.

Impacts of Legislation:

- a) Lewis & Clark . Aaron Hagen gave an update on behalf of Worthington Utilities. Legislation passed this session included an appropriation of \$19 million for L&C within the bonding bill; it requires a \$9 million non-state match which we have covered with our FY15 federal funding. The \$28 million is expected to complete a Rock County Rural Water connection, a Lincoln Pipestone Rural Water connection, and will make Worthington %hovel ready+. It is estimated there will be \$21-22 million in construction remaining to get connected to Adrian by 2017 and Worthington by 2018. Mark Johnson, Lincoln-Pipestone Rural Water, reported Magnolia currently receives water from Osceola Rural Water since Lewis & Clark isn't there yet; Magnolia is excited they will have two options for water. Point Source Implementation Grant . Magnolia and Edgerton water line.
- b) Buffer Strips . Dieter states the language is unclear, what will and won't be enforced. County plans on having a public meeting.
- c) Transportation - \$12.5 million in additional appropriations . small towns all received a little to help with street projects.
- d) Volunteers needed . Legislative priorities need to be compiled. Call Tom Johnson if you are interested in serving on a subcommittee; Abraham Algadi volunteered to help. We would like to see a representative from each entity to meet and come up with top list of priorities; Tom will send an email asking for volunteers.

Message received from Bill Weber:

- Lewis & Clark: Wants to see funding of the project completed in the large bonding bill next year; with the advancement of this project, he believes that is a good prospect.
- Buffer Strip Legislation: Having not seen final rules, we need to wait until they are out to make sure they are workable. If not, he has no problem opening the issue to correct those rules.
- Career/Vocational Training: Continues to work on expanded training in our secondary school system.

Renewable Energy:

- Gene Metz: Property Assessed Clean Energy . Project of the Year: Blue Line Travel Center. installed LED lighting that will save \$2,000/month.
- Energy projects . improvements will save more money in the long run than the project cost.
- Wind & Solar: the wind farm located in the northern part of the county will max out the electrical lines.
- Solar gardens: green energy.
- Renewable energy . tremendous economic resources but need to look at all issues involved, ex. run off water.

Around the Table:

- Bruce Heitkamp/City of Adrian . Broadband Initiative-City of Adrian voted to support it, they need more education to commit a dollar amount; Dollar General is building a store in Adrian; a retail discount Liquor Store is coming to Adrian; Pool Hall-didn't sell on tax forfeited sale-County and City are looking to clean it up.
- Bob Demuth/Nobles County . The County has 7 unions . recently settled with FSA union, have 2 unions left to settle for 2015. Each month Nobles County honors an employee, who is nominated by another employee, with an Excellence in Performance Award; this has been well received by employees and it is good to see excitement among employees being recognized.

- Kurt Lintelman, Keith Stubbe/Broadband . Blandin liked our two applications; they don't think there will be enough money for all requests but may award partial grants. Blandin stated the Feasibility is a good project!
- Linden Olson/District 518 . Most of the 35 teacher openings have been filled, this includes 6 or 7 new positions. Still have openings for an Assistant Principle at the Middle School and at Prairie Elementary; interviews will be held on Monday. Building project at the High School won't be done before school starts. Enrollment Projection:
  - 2015-16 2,875 students
  - 2016-17 +250 . 300 students
  - 2020 +500 . 600 students
  - 2025 +850 . 1000 studentsOther items: 2% increase on general formula, no Flex Learning Year next year, Teacher Licensure. Minnesota is too hard and too long of a process, \$10.5 million Broadband Grant, actively looking for property to build on.
- Terry Gaalswyk/MN West . He is glad to be here. MN West is positioned here to serve here.
- Larry Janssen/City of Worthington . Lewis & Clark, Grand Avenue extension, Housing Project. 15 applicants-some have moved in, Mall property, Industrial Park, Oxford Street Reconstruction.
- Aaron Hagen/Worthington Public Utilities . Lewis & Clark, close to a watering ban, hopefully citizens are doing their part to conserve water.
- Don Linssen/Nobles County . Tax Forfeited Properties, a house is already started on one of the properties sold, very positive outcome!
- Gene Metz/Nobles County . Sailor Plastics, received a loan from the Revolving Loan Fund, one of the conditions of the loan is they will increase staff.
- Abraham Algadi/WREDC . LDO (Local Development Organization) . working on transitioning money so the money is able to be used.
- Tom Johnson/Nobles County . Broadband meeting on Monday, planning/ideas for next year's grant, application grant cycle begins in October. Rail cleanup, Adrian 91 to Rushmore is done/7 of 42 miles completed.

The meeting adjourned.

Next Meeting: (no August meeting)  
September 10<sup>th</sup>, 5:30 . 7:00 pm  
BioTechnology Advancement Center  
1527 Prairie Drive, Worthington, MN 56187