

NEON Minutes  
May 11, 2017, Biotechnology Advancement Center

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

Centralized Services Discussion:

- Data Center—old Nobles County Jail, feasibility study, there is a lot of interest, in the process of putting together cost estimates.
- Local Energy—150 wind towers are planned to go up in the northern part of Nobles County.
- Prairie Justice Center—pollinator program; possible solar energy field.
- Water quality/water reclamation
- Broadband collaboration

Workforce Squeeze Discussion:

- JBS – able to hire 50 people on the spot if they had applicants.
- Over the road truck drivers and diesel mechanics are needed.
- CEO – program in Wilmar where high school students tour businesses, learn opportunities, and are taught that work ethic is important.
- Build Dakota – program in South Dakota where tuition, books, and a computer is paid for the tech students and the student makes a three year commitment to work in South Dakota.
- Need amenities here to attract and keep employees – lake, bike path, theatre, etc.
- City/County/School collaboration – working on a feasibility study to see if a multi-function facility can be built to possibly include the Library, Early Childhood, and Adult Basic Education.
- Social Media – this needs to be used to get the word out to the young workforce and promote things, it is how they communicate.
- Recruiting people is hard, need to sell the area and its offerings to get people to move here; it is not just about the job.
- Do we need a Professional Communications Expert for the area to help promote and recruit?

Around the Table:

- John Landgaard/District 518-ALC/Gymnastics Facility is in process, trying to expedite the project; collaborative building project with the County and City; district is in hiring mode-losing employees due to no day care, retirements, employees moving back home-will probably have 30 new employees in August; if someone has a 4 year degree they can substitute teach and the district can keep them busy 5 days a week if they are willing to work.
- Larry Janssen/City of Worthington-Milling Oxford Street, it will include medians.
- Jorge Lopez/SW MN Housing Partnership-Grand Avenue Project-going well, have a long list of people interested in renting, built four homes last August and sold three right away, looking at building four more homes.
- Aaron Hagen/Worthington Public Utilities-Lewis & Clark-still waiting for funding to be passed.
- Amy Ernst/City of Worthington-Bus Route in Worthington is starting in June, 9 routes around town that includes 12-13 stops, focusing on dense populated neighborhoods, stop at clinics and stores; Windsurf Regatta is coming up in June; Worthington High School Seniors are going to do a graduation walk through out Prairie Elementary; McMillan Street-bike path is being added.
- Julie Foote/MVTV Wireless-Business Education Committee with Chamber of Commerce-Marshall has a program where the High School Juniors and Seniors go to the Middle School and talk to kids-rub stones-polish yourself! Hot Spots-small issues that are being taken care of. Agribusiness Committee-Farm to Table Event will take place in July.
- Don Linssen/Nobles County-CIP Projects-Addition to the Adrian Public Works Shop and the Garage at the Prairie Justice Center; Road construction-70 miles of Nobles County will have an overlay; ditches; attending a lot of meetings.
- Tom Johnson/Nobles County-Tenth street design and foundation drainage project-tenth street entrance will be closed for close to two months while work is completed; Data Center; Railroad cleanup will be completed this year.

- Kurt Lintleman/Round Lake, Keith Stubbe/Round Lake, Linden Olson/District 518, Gary Ewert/Heron Lake Watershed District – no reports given.

Next Meeting:

June 8, 2017 5:30 – 7:00 pm

BioTechnology Advancement Center

1527 Prairie Drive, Worthington, MN 56187

The meeting adjourned.