

NEON Minutes

June 8, 2017, Biotechnology Advancement Center

Meeting began with the Pledge of Allegiance and Nobles County Board Chairperson, Donald Linssen, presided over the meeting.

The members present answered questions about NEON's initiatives, including their major focus of bringing broadband to all of southwest Minnesota, increasing participation in the Nobles Economic Opportunity Network and filling leadership gaps.

Christy Kallevig, University of Minnesota/Extension Center for Community Vitality:

- The Willmar office went through a 12 month process to build the Vision 2040 Leadership program and now has over 3,000 alumni. Vision 2040 is a 9 month program of 1 day seminars.
- The first bridging program was in Brown County where they had morning leadership seminars and afternoon tours. The number of sessions can vary – most programs meet 9-10 months.
- Programs are community specific.
- Need multicultural group.

Tobias "Toby" Spanier, University of Minnesota/Extension Center for Community Vitality:

- Vision 2040 Leadership program includes intensive training from U of M Extension Educators; Christy puts in facilitation and Toby focuses on educational content.
- Vision 2040 Leadership program is not a bridging program but the content has overlap.
- The cost of the programs vary:
 - Vision 2040 Leadership Program \$750.00/person for full day seminars lead by an Educator.
 - Bridging Programs \$375-\$400/person with teaching time in 3-4 hour blocks.
 - The fee does not truly reflect all that you get out of it. The fee provides for assessments, meals and location rentals.
- As the Community prospers, businesses prosper and vice versa. Community businesses can provide trainings for their employees locally and for less money.
- All programs find funds to offer scholarships to make it affordable and available for cultural diverse members.
- If NEON would like to pursue any of the programs, be sure to be clear as a group what the impact result should be as it will determine the direction.

Toby asked what NEON members want to see different in the County. Answers included more engagement and leadership opportunities for other cultures and closing the generational gap of business leaders. Toby suggested that it may be a good idea to step back and hear at a community level by holding open space listening sessions to gather input. Where NEON is already comprised of community leaders, it may be beneficial to look at sponsoring a leadership program. Toby and Christy provided examples of "Pipestone Forward", an organization of business owners and electeds planning for the future, and in McLeod County, an alumni led charge on a trail system and youth leadership program starting in the High School.

Around the Table:

Bruce Heitkamp/City of Adrian – Nobles Home Initiative has been great for Adrian and the Rebuild Adrian program is meeting the needs of every demographic; commercial may be able to kick off new development as there is plenty of room in schools; no interest has been received yet on the old pool hall site.

Aaron Hagen/Worthington Public Utilities – Confirmation received for money for Lewis and Clark for completion approximately November 2018.

Cheryl Janssen/Seward Township – Found gravel pit in Graham Lakes for roads.

Doug Knuth/City of Round Lake – New fire truck arriving soon and 2-4 guys will be sent for training; working on a few road projects and spraying for mosquitos; working on water tower maintenance and repainting.

Rod Sankey/Citizen of Worthington – Working on some projects for the Nobles County Historical Society; Pioneer Village is in need of major repairs as some of the buildings' wooden foundations are rotting away.

Larry Janssen/City of Worthington – City of Worthington received bids for the Liquor Store and hope to move the store this fall; overlaying and mill work will occur on Oxford Street.

Robert Demuth Jr./Nobles County – Commissioner Gene Metz was named Alternate District Director for AMC District 8; \$18 million be will divided up between Minnesota Counties for funding of enforcement for buffers; \$7 million has been dedicated for election equipment on a competitive bid; \$20 million has been shifted for Health & Human Services; a two-tier driver identification system is being implemented – true ID or non-compliant license; \$20 million has been designated for border to border broadband.

Amy Ernst/City of Worthington – Windsurfing Regatta is this weekend, June 9th and 10th; the City Bus began its route in the beginning of June; duplexes and triplexes being built south of town; Arts Design standards being worked on for new development.

Kurt Lintelman/Citizen of Round Lake – No report.

Donald Linssen/Nobles County – Nothing further to share after Robert Demuth Jr.'s report.

Next Meeting:

July 13, 2017 5:30 – 7:00 pm

BioTechnology Advancement Center

1527 Prairie Drive, Worthington, MN 56187

The meeting adjourned.