

NEON Minutes
November 9, 2017, Biotechnology Advancement Center

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

Mr. Johnson reminded the group that the agendas and minutes are labeled on the website in a "yrmoda" (Year-Month-Date) format and they are listed by year in the order of the months. Most recent will be at the bottom of the column but staff will add a "Current Agenda" link.

2018 Legislative Priorities Update: Mr. Johnson advised still waiting for more information from entities for attachments and he shared AMC priorities from regional meeting. Discussion was held on NEON's 6 essential elements.

Urban Lawmaker Tour Update: Legislators want to come during summer, but this may leave out the impact of touring the schools when they are in session. The group discussed having a detailed plan laid out for a full 24 to 48 hour tour so that lawmakers would have the opportunity to stay overnight but we still need a Champion to coordinate and guide it. Discussion continued on touring farms, including the Lewis & Clark water we will be receiving and show what it will do for our region (SWIFT & Utilities) and touring Bedford. Commissioner Demuth and Commissioner Linssen discussed getting input from Commissioners Widboom, Metz and Ahlers at the next Board Work Session for farming areas and that the Commissioners would champion this event. The group discussed "What is the ultimate outcome?" We want to educate legislators about SW MN but need an underlying goal and need to tie in to legislative priorities so we can show them what we need help with. The broadband solution is not complete, but just the first step. The inclusion of the multi-functional facility collaborative project and fiber ring with data center should also be integrated. Legislators need to understand our goals and needs for tax relief. It was suggested to schedule the tour during a local celebration such as International Festival or Windsurfing Regatta or to incorporate the College when they have an event going on as they just had the bonding tour for the lineman facility which was a big success. We also need to show our restrictions; ie; someone from Bedford to explain how Bedford has stayed here by choice and could elude to what the impact has been (negative/positive) and what restrictions are faced. VanderKooi Dairy and local Daycares could be included. Will keep on NEON agenda monthly.

The Community Wellness Partners of Cottonwood/Jackson/Nobles requested we share Southwest Minnesota: Good Food! Celebrating Champions of Food Access Event on December 6th, 2017 at the Marshall Area YMCA. The purpose of this event is to connect directly with others from the region and exchange ideas about ways to ensure all community members have access to healthy, safe and affordable food. Contact information is included in the N.E.O.N. agenda.

Marshall Wellness Project: Julie Foote advised MVTV is a member of the Marshall Chamber and the Chamber is very involved in the wellness project. The Community came together with Schwan's so that there is one place to benefit from the resources. This information is relative here because one of initiatives if N.E.O.N. is healthcare. The best way to avoid issues is to not have to go to the hospital. In addition to getting better healthcare coverage, we could have a better living campaign. Why not have a program that will help market our resources (bike path, etc). Mr. Johnson advised Nobles County got a grant 3 years ago focused on health and now we found out the grant is not going to be renewed. We got the grant because of the health statistics in our community and there were only 4 regions that received this Federal Grant. The group discussed the benefits of partnership. Avera is already participating in current grant but we would approach Sanford or the College as additional partners. Tom will send a message to Mike Daly. It was suggested to involve all parties, including City on paths, YMCA, more organizations that have a role to play, including social aspect.

The question was asked to extend a bike path to Adrian and several responded that had been voted down prior. Several discussions have taken place at the County level since in regard to the Casey Jones State Trail. A commissioner from Lyon County is the representative for the trail and they have a proposed trail that comes out of Pipestone into Rock to Nobles. The proposed trail through Nobles

County is being reviewed for availability. Discussion took place on the popularity of the trails that are in place.

Mr. Johnson advised Nobles County will hold a public hearing on the proposed 2018 Budget on December 7th at 6pm and the final budget and levy and will be set December 19th. The County's not to exceed levy was 5.94% and is now just a little over 3% for the increase.

Around the Table:

Kurt Lintelman/Citizen of Round Lake – No update.

Julie Foote/MVTV - Reminder of Shark Tank event, November 16th at Infinity Center (inside AgCo), Jackson MN and encouraged everyone to show up and see what it's about.

Larry Janssen/City of Worthington – Streets are done, but there is still some work going on; budget is being finalized and preliminary was 8.78%; Pollinator Project was a big success.

Gary Ewert/Heron Lake Watershed District – Watershed District continues with cover crop promotion; 5 year base research to keep roots in the ground as long as possible during season and helps drainage and promoting best managing practices; working with Des Moines River on pollution in Cottonwood County; received many petitions and Jan Voit, District Administrator, has done a commendable job with the petitions; commodity prices are low; many agencies are involved in the draining of the lakes to take them off impaired list.

John Landgaard/ISD 518 – Levy max (different from most entities) showed 31% increase; Dept of Ed didn't levy our debt service amount and ALC Gymnastics facility and it was recommended to the School Board to not levy the full amount; will be able to get the increase down; will provide tax calculator on ISD 518 website again to show actual impact and citizens are encouraged to use it; bulleted points for land values were provided in the past but most used the highest level for their calculation, so it does not provide a true example; 5 reviewers completed a recent advanced review of academic base in ISD 518 and overall was a good report.

Rod Sankey/Citizen of Worthington-Thank you to City for new completion of McMillan and sidewalks, it really dressed it up and looks more modern; attended the Veterans program in the Middle School Gym, packed full with approximately 925-950 students.

Amy Ernst/City of Worthington-Holiday parade 6:30pm Friday night, 11/10; Sanford hosting basketball tourney at college on Saturday, 11/11; Christian School vendor show Saturday 11/11; City working on some ideas for amenities: replacing walk bridges at Olsen park and at Centennial, lighting, fixing beach nook bike path area, adding a splash pad, building a pavilion at south end of 10th Street with public restrooms, etc. that could be used for Farmers Market/Turkey Day/Holiday events, etc.; Julie Foote added the lack of public restrooms were an issue with the Farm to Table event, moving in the right direction with SMOC Headstart issue which the City Council will be voting on Monday.

Linden Olson/ISD 518-Advanced Ed. Accreditation gave 2 things that Wgtn had high marks which included district leadership & special programs (language/special ed, etc.); there used to be a family of 4 or 6 on each quarter section; now one farmer is liable for more.

Doug Knuth/City of Round Lake-Quiet in Round Lake right now; roads done this summer; grant going along well for road improvement (Small City Street Grant), Round Lake old café due to come down soon.

Donald Linssen/Nobles County - Working on Budget Committee.

Bob Demuth/Nobles County – There could be an exchange of property between City and Okabena-Ocheda Watershed District; OOWD has easement for sediment pond, and City has some interest in St. Johns property so there could be a swap but no money exchange; discussion held on if the watershed has restrictions in regard to the use of the property.

Tom Johnson/Nobles County - 70 mile Road Improvement Project completed; 3 of 5 bridges done; Government Center foundation substantially complete; at Prairie Justice Center, 53% of the days have been compromised by the weather so additional 15 days was granted and a substantial completion date set of December 29, 2017; addition to Adrian Garage going well to create room for additional trucks; Pollinator Project a success and includes 15 acres at PJC and 4 acres at Midway Park.

John Landgaard announced the Trojan Band is heading to Hollywood. They march in the Disneyland Parade on Friday November 24th at 2:45 PM CST and the Hollywood Christmas Parade November 26th 9:30 PM CST and the recording can be viewed on ISD Facebook page at 9:39 PM CST. National broadcast of the entire Hollywood Christmas Parade is Friday, December 15th 7pm on the CW Network and on Wednesday, December 22nd 2pm on the Hallmark Channel & AFN Network. Check local listings for additional airing times.

Linden Olsen will provide an update on the School bond/referendum at the Thursday, December 14th meeting.

Next Meeting:

December 14, 2017 5:30 pm – 7:00 pm
BioTechnology Advancement Center
1527 Prairie Drive, Worthington, MN 56187

The meeting adjourned.