

## NEON Minutes

December 13, 2018, Biotechnology Advancement Center

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

### Rail To Road Facility:

Clark Meyer, President, Rail to Road Transloading, based out of Sioux Falls, SD, gave a presentation and answered questions on the Rail To Road facility being built by Org.

- Transloading concept: transportation keeps going up and there continues to be a shortage of drivers, thus showing the rail is a sufficient method for transportation. Area cement companies are trucking cement powder from a long distance. If this location works like it does in Sioux Falls, other products will be considered. Usually needs to be more than 100 miles away, heavy product, and large volumes to make it work. Animal calcium products is a product being looked at for transloading after the cement powder is established along with rebar, lumber, road salt and magnesium chloride.
- UP is the long haul, they bring it in. At the local facility, it will be taken off at the interchange tracks and taken to Org.
- Feed ingredients would be unloaded from the rail right to the truck.
- Two employees will be at the site.
- A storage building may be a possibility in the future if the demand is there, right now everything would be rail to truck for other materials.
- Hope to do some test runs this winter.
- Silos are scheduled to go up in the next week or two.
- One rail car equals 4 semi loads.
- Need a site that is flat, on the rail,
- Room for 30 rail cars on site.
- Ethanol plant needs service 4 times a week. Org will need service 2 times a week.
- Would like to upgrade the track that runs to Sioux Falls. Can only take 5 cars at a time right now, no passenger cars, and only go 10 mph.

### Community Solution Action Plan for Child Care Providers:

- If there is enough interest, they will come down and do a presentation.
- Have been able to help make increases in the number of kids they can handle.
- What do the providers think of it? Are they interested in it?
- Tom will check with the Daycare Association and see if they are interested in coming to a meeting and hear the presentation.
- Meeting with Walz, looking to see if some of the regulations can be lightened up some.

### Legislative Priorities:

- Draft of Legislative Priorities was attached to the agenda that was emailed. If there are changes/updates that need to be made, let Tom Johnson know.
- ½ cent sales tax, needs to be approved through the state bonding, earliest it would go through would be May of 2019.

## Around the Table:

Robert Demuth Jr/Nobles County: County Employees had their Holiday Social today, six weeks before this event they received needs of families from SMOC, employees then purchase gifts/clothes for the families. Delivered over 150 packages to SMOC for the families in need.

Gene Metz/Nobles County: Update on the Nobles 2 Wind project. In a week we hope to hear on the latest request. Trying to develop technology to turn the wind tower lights on when air craft fly over instead of the lights being on all of the time. Repowering some of the original towers next year. Nobles County receives an energy tax on the energy produced by the wind towers. They are making the blades more efficient. Need to remove the lead from the blades before the fiberglass blade can go to the landfill.

Gary Ewert/Heron Lake Watershed: Heron Lake Dam, the hydraulic pumps are corroding and the pumps needed to be replaced. Cover Crop Workshop is January 25.

Julie Foote/MTV Wireless: Rail to Road-is there a way to market this to the area? This is a huge asset to the area. Tom and Bob will take it to the next WREDC meeting.

Ron Janssen/Seward Township: FEMA and floods. From 4 years ago to today, pictures are easier to take, GPS coordinates, email, technology has made it a lot easier to submit the information.

Amy Ernst/City of Worthington: City committed \$3 million towards a Theatre building. The previous movie theatre operator is interested in running the theatre. Prairie Holdings Group has a long-term lease (13 years) of the BAC facility. Approved to put a new bike bridge at Centennial Park. Lewis & Clark celebration last night, very nice! Highway 60 celebration tomorrow. A lot of good things happening. Pavilion is on hold right now because costs have come in high.

Linden Olson/District 518: ALC/Gymnastics facility, there were two sets of plans being used, made some adjustments and are continuing on. February 12, Bond Referendum up for election. District will be hiring a communications director-will work on school website, social media, branding, so all information that comes out will be the same. Monday after Thanksgiving, 15 new students enrolled in one day. Looking at ½ million levy reduction in the budget.

Don Linssen/Nobles County: Tax forfeited properties-been looking at area entities to see what they are doing with them. Nobles County budgets \$115,000/year to maintain the property-mowing, snow, tear down. This is becoming a major issue everywhere, as people are just walking away and leaving it to go tax forfeited. The County ends up being the payer.

Doug Knuth/City of Round Lake: working on feed mill. They want the fire department/rescue squad to come and tour so they are aware and have a plan in the case of an emergency. Had a Santa Claus breakfast celebration that was enjoyed by all. Bruce and Jody Bentley opened up a restaurant in Round Lake- Wednesday, Thursday, Friday nights in the old liquor store. Winery serves a meal every Friday night. Feed mill planned to be operational in summer 2019.

Tom Johnson/Nobles County: County will probably certify levy at 3%. Commissioners approved having FEMA stationed at the PJC "Kids Peace" area to use as office space for approximately 3 months. They do not pay rent but 40 employees will be staying in Worthington and the money they spend will benefit all. Armory – using a grant for a design firm to design what the museum will look like. New Auditor-Treasurer and Recorder will start in January.

### Next Meeting:

January 10, 2019

5:30 to 7:00 PM

BioTechnology Advancement Center, 1527 Prairie Drive, Worthington, MN 56187

The meeting adjourned.