

NEON Minutes
June 6, 2019 Biotechnology Advancement Center

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

Volunteers needed for subcommittees:

Daycare Subcommittee Volunteers: Coleen Gruis, Darlene Macklin
Infrastructure for Natural Gas: Coleen Gruis, Gene Metz, Bruce Heitkamp; Abraham Algadi was suggested with involvement in Regional Development.

Northern has a line coming up by Bigelow but a route needs to be identified to find potential. In 2018 City of Rushmore was approached by Minnesota Energy to complete Luverne to Worthington. If they make connection between the 2, they may be able to increase the pressure. Bruce Heitkamp may have some Magnolia contacts.

The City of Rushmore has some lots on Main Street to market for business. When local community room was used last year because of fire at a daycare, City of Rushmore started to look into options to convert a portion of the old school into a daycare, with modifications. Rushmore would be an easy commute for many.

Legislative Updates:

CPA, LGA- got little bumps. Back to school credit 40% over next 4 years; IQ Credit Prairie bonds already getting 40% credit. All paid by the State.

Association of Minnesota Counties Region 8 mtg: 2 of the counties have approved half cent sales tax.

Included \$30 million for safe schools; last time applied for grant, Worthington did not get it. Will reapply. Special Ed cross subsidies and took away some of the paperwork. School board election process did not change; still have to have a special election. No mandatory statewide school lunch policies.

\$40 million for broadband/\$20 million for this year and \$20 million for next year.

Tax Conformity did pass. In line with federal taxes-should be "easier" next year. No huge mandates for the County yet.

Rescheduling/Cancellation of July 4th meeting:

A lot of Boards do cancel July.
July meeting cancelled. Next meeting August 1st, 2019.

Around the Table:

Lori Dudley/ISD518 - 3 question referendum this fall; Money to build 900 student intermediate school; 2nd question- add on; Gymnastics is lease levy (taking 10.5 million and taking to Educational bond). 1st question would have to pass for 2nd question to be eligible. Support our schools group has been formed to help with community support. The committee has to get the word out that if people don't vote, it's treated as a no. Total ballots cast is taken into consideration.

Discussion: If 40% of Ag is paid by State, does it take the bond down? The Lease levy would go away (after meeting the minimum requirements). 5 failed referendums in last 6 years.

Round Lake Brewster just passed referendum and reached out beyond local communities. ISD 518 has done that with lacking turnout. Believed that 70% of minority parents are not eligible to vote as they are not citizens.

Linden Olson/ISD 518: Gymnastics occupied around 8/1; addition to High school of 6 classrooms; this fall the track at middle school will be redone so that Trojan field can be done in 2020; money set aside in general fund for WELL; enrollment close to 3400 next fall (80-100) every year. AS in the past, there will be new teachers and new employees; sizable turnover; ADA requirements are very strict.

Coleen Gruis/City of Rushmore: got notified rehab housing grant with small cities development (10 projects); Daycare; old building demolished by County and not city has large area on main street open for commercial development to market; with Senior Center, the Bar has made inquiries about expansion and the Seniors have been relocated to Community Room in school- it would be a convenient expansion with sharing of walls.

Doug Knuth/City of Round Lake: allowed locals to put mailing in utility bills; feedmill open house; internet between 2100 and 2200 customers; people are discontinuing landlines and using cell phones. The King family bought the old gas station across the fire hall so watching for something new.

Bob Demuth/Nobles County: OOWS and clean water-watershed and Wenk engineering put trackers in Carp and each one of the fish. All fish were let go at Whiskey ditch. And they have made it through culverts and over barriers. The Intent is to put a barrier so that they can't get into other areas. Small pan fish normally eat the eggs in spawning area. They will be tracked for 2 cycles; the paper had Dugdale additions and the lots were selling for \$70,000+(3 acres) and the next tier is \$50,000 +. Understanding is that is purchase cost plus assessments. It has been challenged in areas where City has mandated that. How are things so different from now from when Eckerson addition, Johnson addition, etc?.

Tom Johnson/Nobles County: Minnesota Housing is doing strategic planning to find out what the state can do; great turnout at Worthington meeting. The City has funding but can't find a developer; WELL project is picking up steam and 3 entities have approved moving forward- grant application has not changed much; working with Nobles County Historical Society on development that will transfer ownership in 5 years; landscaping construction will resume at Government Center; community services working on Mental Health Center grant – need operators information for southwest mental health center – most things are compatible, but minor upgrades will be made. Got almost \$1million from state in grant; enjoy Regatta!

MCIT #1 claim is people who were in jail and weren't treated correctly (mental health) – jail became dumping ground for mental health issues.

Next Meeting:

August 1, 2019 5:30 pm – 7:00 pm
BioTechnology Advancement Center
1527 Prairie Drive, Worthington, MN 56187

The meeting adjourned.