

NEON Minutes
August 1, 2019 Biotechnology Advancement Center

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

Natural Gas Infrastructure Discussion – Jacob Leighty, Paul O’Sullivan – MN Energy

Jacob and Paul provided information on Minnesota Energy: company overview, coverage area, residential vs. commercial, interruptible service, project projections, and services provided. They are a distribution company. Check the MN Energy website for more information and calculators.

Tom Johnson will put out a request to get more individuals involved and serve on a committee for infrastructure for Natural Gas.

Volunteers needed for subcommittees:

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

If anyone has photos from Nobles County, please submit them to Nobles County Administration for use on the nobles County website. It is nice to rotate pictures to keep the website active.

Around the Table:

Colleen Gruis/City of Rushmore: worked with WREDC on writing a grant for day care facility assistance. Eye opening the amount of paperwork involved. Daycare centers cannot make it without additional funding per Karen DeBoer. Wrote grant so it will start out as a C1-C2-C3 daycare level (in home daycare); have capacity to grow it. Rushmore is located in the middle of Adrian/Worthington, good location wise to have a daycare. September before response is received on the grant. Can get \$8,000-\$100,000. Rushmore would use it for construction and cleanup to convert part of the school it in to a daycare.

Lori Dudley/ISD 518: Back to school month. Open houses at all of the schools are scheduled. August 29th Open House at new ALC/Gymnastics facility. Kicking off Referendum, will have booth at the Nobles County Fair.

Julie Foote/MVTV Wireless: Women of Vision recap meeting – 18 attendees – good ideas, solutions, people will be going to the school board meeting and city council meeting to present ideas and projects they will be working on. Gathering of needs of youth and other populations in community that don’t know how to make their voice heard.

Larry Janssen/City of Worthington: Splash pad is open for a couple weeks. Bridge and pedestrian bridge-working with DNR on the project. Theatre is coming next April. Committee will be formed in the near future for a swimming pool.

Don Linssen/Nobles County: W.E.L.L. project, good kickoff, hopefully it is well received in St. Paul. Solid Waste Committee: SW MN has some of the highest rates for tax forfeited properties. MPCA working on a program to rebate money back to counties to help pay for some of the expenses with tax forfeited properties. They changed the law so if the property is three years behind in taxes, the owner has to pay the entire amount of back taxes to stay active.

Doug Knuth/City of Round Lake: Feed mill held an open house and it is up and running. A Play was put on at the School Community Center. Sportsman Club hosted Horned Trout Tournament. Legion hosted a dance. Winery had a celebration along with Horned Trout Tournament weekend. On Q BBQ, closed for lunch now due to increase in catering; open Wed-Friday evenings.

Gene Metz/Nobles County: Nobles 2 Wind Project will start construction and bring 500-600 jobs to the area. Tour with energy board, two electric cars were brought in: chevy and tesla, save \$1000/year in gas, 60 mile range. Sporty looking cars, move fast, good second car for someone especially if stay local. \$100/year in license. It will be interesting to see if they decide to tax electric cars more in the future or not. A lot of drainage ditch issues going on. 100 year old law and system, trying to determine who pays for maintenance and expenses.

Linden Olson/ISD 518: 30-40 new staff members due to retirements and moving. Food packing event in Worthington this week, 500 meals/month are going to kids in our schools from this event. Brewery is getting close, behind schedule but hoping to open in August. WREDC approved money to complete the project. Solid Waste-HL Bioenergy – when they started they said they were going to be able to burn solid waste-did this ever happen? Market for recyclables is gone, products are going to landfill. Chinese are buying some recycling facilities in the US so hopefully the market will turn around. 8 trends that will affect the future – willing to share information.

Tom Johnson/Nobles County: September 4 Public Meeting for the Ash Bore arriving in Nobles County. Nobles County is In the middle of the budget process, trying to hire employees.

Future Discussions: Industrial Hemp?

County Fair is next week.

Next Meeting:

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

The meeting adjourned.