

Sargent County Job Development Authority

Minutes

Date of Meeting: 1/21/21 Time: 5:30 pm

Location of Meeting: Sargent County Courthouse Conference Room

PRESENT: Board: Robert Ptacek; Michael Mahrer; Lyle Bopp; Terry Dusek; Jessica Peterson; Mark Bopp; Dan McKeever; Paige Cary; Luke Anderson; Mark Breker; Carol Peterson; Sandra Hanson; Bryce Carlson
Not Present Board: none

Guests: Nathan Berseth-CCA; Mary Engst-SC Teller

Meeting Called to Order- Chr Terry Dusek

Minutes of Last Meeting Presented- Sandy sent out prior to meeting through email and had copies of minutes dated December 2nd, 2020 to view. Mark Bopp/Lyle to approve the minutes as presented. Motion carried unanimously (MCU).

Treasurer's Report—Sandy reported as of December 31st, 2020

2020 budget used 109% of the allowed budget with a -\$25,572.88

2020 budget was 283,600.00 Actual spending was \$309,172.88

After a question was raised and Sandy checked with the Auditor office, Final Payroll for the Committee did not get cut in December. It will be done in January 2021. The payroll portion is direct deposit into your account.

The travel portion will be distributed by a written check. Fund Account balance as of 12/31/2020 - \$482,385.14

and No activity to date for January 2021. Bill/Lyle to approve the treasurer report as presented. MCU

Sandy also provided the information for the **2021 Approved Budget** - \$632,930.00

Payroll -	\$4,300.00	office supplies -	\$ 200.00	Housing Develop. -	\$275,000.00
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Lake Agassiz -	\$3,600.00	Economic Develop. -	\$320,000.00	Misc. -	\$ 21,000.00
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Match SS -	\$ 330.00	Career Builders -	\$ 8,500.00		
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Mileage/Meeting vouchers to be signed for year 2021 by the board. Sandy will complete the information following each meeting and submit an annual reimbursement for mileage and salary.

Loan Reports:

Rutland General Store: payment made electronically each 15th of the month

Bixby Auto: payment made

Lariat Bar: payment made

FCDC Assisted living: Has not made payment since October

Forman Housing Assoc: payment made

Four Seasons Health: payment made

CDP Lodge: no payments scheduled at this time

Four Seasons Health Care Addition: payments

Southside Auto: no payments scheduled at this time

The Field LLC (DBA: The School house) - payment made

USW 560 Event/Training Center- loan dated 6/2/20 is a 20 year loan payment with primary lenders. Interest payments to the SC JDA will not begin until lead lenders loans are completed. No interest at this time is set for our loan.

Sandy stated that she spoke with Nathan Schlecht regarding the FCDC payments and he stated that they changed financial support personnel and will get it straightened out. Nathan requested a new payment schedule which Sandy will provide. Mark stated he spoke to Nathan as well. Paige the previous financial support staffer explained the sequence of events.

Oath of Office – distributed by Sandy for those that are appointed for their various terms. Paige Cary- member at large term end 12-31-21. Bryce Carlson – member at large term end 12-31-23; Lyle Bopp –

Commission term end 12/31/21 as the commission reappoint their representation annually. Bill Anderson – member at large term end 12-31-23; Carol Peterson – member at large term end 12/31/23. Jessica Peterson-member at Large term end 12/31/23; Mark Breker –Commission term end 12/31/21 as commission reappoint their representation annually. Michael Mahrer-Represents cities w/pop under 500 term end 12/31/22 (completes Ron Narum term). Dan McKeever-represents Gwinner City w/pop 500 & over term ends 12/31/23 (mailed Oath to Dan)

Re-organization of the Board Election- Terry asked the floor for nominations for the following seats with a term of one year.

Chairperson- (currently held by Terry Dusek)

Vice Chr person-(Currently held by Mark Bopp)

Secretary/Treasurer-(Currently held by Sandra Hanson)

Bill/Lyle moved for a unanimous ballot for all three positions to remain as is. With no further nominations MCU.

OLD BUSINESS

Career Builders Program – update by Paige Cary. Discussion regarding if the process has to be completed each year. Paige stated no but that the applicant is checked on up to three years to be assured that they are still in North Dakota and at the same job. Other Questions brought to the table were as follows:

Does it have to be a new student or can it be someone that is already employed and out of college for awhile? How soon do they have to apply? Is it upon employment or for example employed up to one month?

Program to focus more on High School students so that they know that it is an option. Pay direct to student loan for example \$125.00 a month to equal \$1,500.00 per year. State program rolled out is 2019. SCJDA discussion began spring of 2020. Paige, Carol and Sandy will put together better understanding/guidelines for employers and optional students as well as our program understanding.

Growing Small Towns – Carol Peterson provided an update on the test mailing of information to a few businesses in Milnor. Carol stated that 3 businesses were to busy to review the information at this time and one business stated that they would not be using it. Discussion also regarding the website that is for virtual mentoring. The people that are selected as mentors are handpicked and have done startup businesses as well. They are not local and therefore are very open minded and nonobjective.

SCJDA Spec Houses- Forman & Milnor-Luke Anderson & Terry Dusek. Luke stated that he spoke with two more contractors regarding bidding the construction of the Forman JDA Spec house. L&L construction would be a late summer start as they have a pretty busy schedule. Differding could start in spring at this time. Mark Bopp brought to the table another contractor working in the area. Luke waiting to see if the additional contractors provide a bid. Terry stated that he continues to stay in contact with Riverside and that they are hoping that a spring cost reduction in material will happen. Also held round table discussion on getting a contractor to the area to do several builds at one time and would that be a benefit to us and a draw to outside contractors to move and/or set up shop and do a multiple build? Are contractors busy enough where they are that Sargent County looks enticing enough? For instance, seeking contractors out of area such as fargo, or further out. Discussion held regarding modular homes and flipping homes. Modular or flipped houses may make it more feasible for a smaller community to get into the game. The JDA as a government entity should not or would not normally be in the construction business, but it is hard to find contractors that will take a risk on being the lead on new home construction. It would be great to let a contractor take the lead. With housing needs, the JDA is currently assisting in filling a gap in the county.

Social Media Campaign-Paige reported that she spoke with TellWell out of Fargo. This company puts together social media campaigns. She set up a conference call with them for Wednesday the 27th of Jan at 3:00 pm. Let her know if anyone wants to participate in call.

Round table discussion regarding several items: What/who/where is our market for Sargent County. Sargent County can boast about our items such as our internet capabilities, the small town way of life, tourism to include our Lakes, national grasslands in the area, museum, hunting, fishing, camping, communities and their

events/activities. Discussion regarding Brochures in rest areas vs social media. What are the 20 and 30 year olds looking at? Young families interest in where they want to raise kids. Continue forward with this project. **Strategic Plan**- Carol has spoken with Interstate engineering regarding working with the county on a strategic plan for the county. Milnor city is currently updating theirs.

CCA Report- Nathan Berseth reported on speaking to several large utilities and businesses for a proposed buy-in idea of a combined housing authority to invest in and take over the construction of housing in the county or possibly a tri-county idea. Those he would like to begin pursuing with the JDA blessing would be Dakota Valley, Ottertail Power, Doosan Bobcat, DRN, Sargent County Commission and a lead lender to each throw in a lump of money to the Housing authority to build sell and build again. A continuous circle of progress on construction of residential property in the area and to get the JDA out of the construction business. This may also be an enticement for a contractor as well. JDA supports Nathan to pursue this topic and reach out to businesses.

NEW BUSINESS

SC Community Vibrancy Survey-Paige & Carol reported that they retained some good dialog through the survey. The Survey will be sent out to the JDA members.

County Covid Dollar- Terry, Sandy and Nathan met to discuss the possibility of the JDA working the county covid dollars. The county has come upon some dollars through Covid and is wondering what would be the best ways to utilize the dollars and whom to place in charge of the dollars. Commission discussed the County JDA as a potential group. Discussion between Terry, Sandy, and Nathan was if the JDA were requested to organize and be the lead on distribution. Decisions on how much, loan or grant, application process etc. Discussion then turned to the housing situation in the county. The three will wait to here what the commission decide.

Terry called for **round table**: Paige reported that the city of Forman has a winter ice skating rink on the tennis court. Forman also has a business (the old Gold Mine Bar) on main street that is getting renovated and gearing up to open.

Bryce reported that the Lariat's new owners are doing well in Rutland.

Lyle reported that the courthouse doors will open to the public on February 1st unless there is a turn for worse with the covid outbreak.

With no further business Terry Dusek adjourned the meeting at 7:40 pm