

**Rural Development Council (RDC) Meeting
ND Department of Commerce
TEAMS Meeting
February 16, 2021 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.**

MEMBERS PRESENT		MEMBERS ABSENT	GUESTS PRESENT
Teran Doerr	Dawn Mandt	Senator Janne Myrdal	Joshua Teigen
Shawn Kessel	Daniel Stenberg	Carol Peterson	Jennifer Greuel
Jay Doan	Antoinette Heier		Michael Tolan
Gwen Crawford	Lindsey Lipp		Maria Effertz Hanson
KayCee Lindsey	Megan Laudenschlager		
Joyce ShiningOne Side			

CALL TO ORDER/WELCOME

Chairwoman Doerr called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m., welcoming members and guests.

ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

Approval of Minutes

It was moved by Megan Laudenschlager, seconded by Daniel Stenberg to approve the Rural Development Council minutes of November 30, 2020. Motion carried.

RDC Quarterly Meetings

Members were reminded of the quarterly meetings set for this year. No discrepancies were noted.

- Q2 – May 18th – joint meeting with the Economic Development Foundation
- Q3 – August 17th
- Q4 – November 16th

No subcommittee meetings have been scheduled.

ED & F Division Update and Legislative Update

Joshua Teigen

Joshua Teigen, newly hired ED&F Director, discussed the open staff positions in community development, NDDF, and Main Street Initiative (MSI) under ED&F. He spoke of the Census Data's work to join with the state Data Center to find opportunities to be more applicable for local community developers.

Lastly, he discussed the weaving of the ED&F and the MSI teams under the ED&F umbrella. Rural community development and economic development work closely together, and by educating the ED&F team on this process, the staff along with education will become a resource for local community developers, Teigen stated.

HB 1141 LIFT – Created last biennium and appropriated for \$15 million. Advocating for \$30 million.

SB 2171 NDTO – Bifurcation of the North Dakota Trade Office, with a possible move to Ag. Dept

SB 2245 Intermodal Facility in Minot – Continuing to advocate for.

HB 1425 – Legacy Fund – Twenty percent of fund and the investing of companies inside the state of ND with the State Investment Board.

Legislative Update
Jennifer Greuel - EDND

SB 2272 Career Builders - Scholarships, and loan repayments to graduates in high demand careers who live and work in ND for three years after graduation.

HB 1275 Legacy Bonding Bill - Funding for infrastructure, research, and workforce development programs.

HB 1277 Housing Incentive Fund – Tax exemption for new built homes up to \$250 thousand, same tax exemption as renaissance zone homes.

HB 1431 Legacy Bonding Bill - Funding for infrastructure revolving loan fund, highway funds, water projects and universities.

HB 1475 Legacy Fund bonding - \$100 million for value added ag. grants.

SB 2127 Housing Incentive Fund - \$50 million for affordable housing.

SB 2137 Data Center - Tax credits for rural communities.

SB 2139 Renaissance Zone - EDND watching that no changes will be made to the language of the bill.

Legislative Update
Shawn Kessel - Commerce

➤ **SB 2018 Commerce Appropriations**

- 3 FTE positions scheduled to be reduced:
 - 1 FTE position in Information Technology. The position will move to the ND Information Technology Department. Commerce will then contract the position back
 - 2 FTE positions in the Division of Community Services; HOME program. Positions will possibly move to the ND Housing and Finance Agency.
- Restored dollars in the Marketing/Tourism Division. A proposed \$2 million campaign ad outside of the state was bumped up to \$7million in committee hearing
- Unmanned Aerial System (UAS); the build out of the AVANTIS network has not been addressed in committee yet. Has a \$28 million in budget for all aspects of UAS funding.
- Biotechnology area has \$300 thousand funded for administration. Commerce has asked that the funding go to the Agriculture Department.

➤ **HB 1394 CARES ACT funding for the block grants in Division of Community Services**

- Received \$8 million

➤ **Technical Skills Grant**

- Received \$1 million in CARES ACT funding; majority of funding was spent. Asked for another \$1 million for next biennium. The committee was not in favor of using federal funding for state funding.

MSI Staffing Update
Shawn Kessel

Two core MSI team members have left the Commerce Department: Emily Brown and Brett Gurholt. An interviewing process has begun to help fill the positions. When legislative session is being held, the summit will be held in other locations outside of Bismarck. This year, to be held in West Fargo or Watford City.

Draft Annual Report Review with motion to adopt

Shawn Kessel

Shawn talked about the drafted annual report in small detail, as the report was reviewed by the council at a past meeting. It was commented to have the report attached to the EDND newsletter and Maria Effertz Hanson commented that a one pager document outlining the Rural Development Council will be sent out to all council members via email after the meeting.

With no further discussions to the report, a motion was made to adopt the report in its current form.

It was moved by Megan Laudenschlager, seconded by Jay Doan to approve the Rural Development Council 2020 Annual Report. Motion carried.

The final RDC Annual Report will be posted to the Commerce website, distributed to the council, and legislators who are actively engaged in rural community work/activities.

PiP/Vibrancy Grant Update

Shawn Kessel

Shawn gave an overview of the Partners in Planning (PiP), and Vibrancy grant dollars that have been awarded to communities during the grant rounds 1 and 2.

PiP Round 1 - \$30,000 maximum award, 9 applications, \$213,385 total requests, and \$612,625 total project costs.

PiP Round 2 – Round 2 closes February 17th.

Vibrancy Round 1 - \$1,500 maximum award, 9 applications, \$13,500 total requests and \$230,000 total project costs.

Vibrancy Round 2 - \$1,500 maximum award, 18 applications, \$25,345 total requests, and \$187,621 total project costs.

Best Practices Report

Michael Tolan

Michael gave a recap of the presentation that was given to the council in November 2020. Few changes to the Best Practices Report was to add links to reference points. The report contains programs and initiatives of Rural Development Councils across the country. These programming types within the councils reflected varying levels of capacity that were ranked into three areas of, Pursue, Consider Pursuing, and Do Not Pursue.

Members asked to review the report in more detail before the next meeting, and at that time in May, an approval by the council on the report.

It was questioned, what items are a consider for pursuing from the document. Maria Effertz Hanson listened to a recent webinar entitled “*How to Capture the Remote Worker.*” The link will be sent to the council after the meeting.

ND2C Tool Update

Michael Tolan

Michael gave a recap of the presentation that was given to the council at the November 2020 meeting. Currently the tool, listed on the Commerce website, is receiving feedback from local communities, regarding its usefulness. Also, preliminary conversations with the ND Department of Transportation are taking place on how to best use the tool to its full capacity.

The ND2C Tool will help communities better understand the long-term fiscal impacts of new development to their communities. Users can input specifications that will give cost analysis for taxes, revenue, and maintaining infrastructure. The first draft of the beta version exists in an excel spreadsheet and a web-based application will be built soon.

Commerce/Economic Development Ecosystem Map

Shawn Kessel

The Ecosystem map, located on the Commerce website, illustrates the network of entities supporting development in ND at the local, regional, and state level. The map displays several different economic zones in their own layers that aid in understanding where location-specific development resources are available. The interactive map has multiple layers of state, county, city, and tribal nation. Organizations are placed in areas they cover, and not necessarily in the area where they are physically located.

Recommendations and Action Plan for 2021

Maria Effertz Hanson

Maria talked about the strong momentum to focus on communicating and developing strong networks between rural communities and regional and state leadership; advocating for opportunities in rural North Dakota; and providing resources and education to support smart, efficient infrastructure and a continued quality of place.

1. Support Community Conversation
2. Identify Funding Opportunities
3. Rural Development emphasis on Infrastructure
4. Build Capacity for Rural Leadership
5. Communicate Value in Rural Development

Adjourn

With no further business for discussion, it was moved by Daniel Stenberg and seconded by Megan Laudenschlager to adjourn the meeting at 12:00 p.m. Motion carried unanimously. Meeting adjourned.