

BUFFALO COUNTY MINUTES

Committee of the Board: Economic Development Committee

Date of the Meeting: Thursday, January 19, 2023

Chair Schmidtknecht called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m.

Board Members Present: Mr. Brad Schmidtknecht, Mr. Brian Michaels, Ms. LeeAnne Bulman, Mr. Max Weiss, and Mr. Tom Taylor.

Others Present for All or Parts of the Meeting: Mr. Lee Engfer, Ms. Roxann Halverson, Ms. Laura Gullickson, Mr. Shawn Squires, Mr. Bill Hedberg, Ms. Tina Anibas, Mr. Garrett Martin, and Mr. Chris Woda.

Public Comments regarding Agenda Items: None.

Review/Discussion/Action regarding the Previous Meeting Minutes: Mr. Michaels made a motion to approve the previous meeting minutes, seconded by Ms. Bulman. Carried.

Review/Discussion/Action regarding a Broadband Funding Request for the Town of Montana and CCT: Mr. Squires discussed the work the Town of Montana did in a short time to get this project ready. The Town of Montana has been certified at a Telecommuting and Broadband Forward community. This will help in the grant review process. They have three providers in the area, but still have a large portion of their municipality that is not serviced by anyone. Mr. Schmidtknecht made a motion to recommend approving the funding request of \$100,000.00, seconded by Ms. Bulman. Carried.

Review/Discussion/Action regarding a Broadband Funding Request for the Town of Buffalo and CCT: Mr. Squires explained this project was originally approved last year but grant funding was denied. There has been more work done to collect needed data and that was included in this grant application. Mr. Schmidtknecht made a motion to recommend approval of the funding request of \$100,000.00, seconded by Ms. Bulman. Carried.

Review/Discussion/Action regarding a Broadband Funding Request for the City of Mondovi and Ntec: Ms. Gullickson and Mr. Martin explained the funding request. The new industrial park in the City of Mondovi does not have internet and with this project it would entice business to come to Mondovi and help with the tax base. It will also help with the creation of jobs in the area. If the county does not partner with Ntec and the City of Mondovi the likelihood of the grant being approved diminishes. Without the grant the project cannot move forward. Mr. Taylor made a motion to recommend approval of the funding request of \$100,000.00, seconded by Mr. Schmidtknecht. Mr. Weiss voting no. Carried.

Review/Discussion/Action regarding Creating a Revolving Loan Fund and Funding Mechanism: Mr. Hedberg explained the requirements he found during his research for CDBG funds and CAPX funds. He has concerns about using either of the funds without approval. A discussion was held on those requirements and how to get funds without so many of the requirements involved in the CDBG and CAPX funding. Mr. Hedberg suggested a letter to the PSC requesting an allowance to use \$100,000.00 of CAPX funds for economic development. Mr. Schmidt knecht made a motion to have Mr. Hedberg move forward with the letter to the PSC, seconded by Ms. Bulman. Carried.

Review/Discussion/Action regarding A Resolution to Support Economic Development in Buffalo County with CAPX2020 Funding: Mr. Michaels made a motion to table the resolution, seconded by Mr. Taylor. Carried.

Review/Discussion/Action regarding a Revolving Loan Fund Request from Together Farms: Mr. Weiss made a motion to table this item pending more information, seconded by Ms. Bulman. Carried.

Review/Discussion regarding the Committee Chair Report: None.

Review/Discussion/Action regarding the next meeting date and time: The next meeting will be February 16th at 8:30 a.m.

Mr. Taylor made a motion to adjourn at 9:37 a.m. Carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Roxann Halverson
Buffalo County Clerk