

BUFFALO COUNTY MINUTES

Committee of the Board: Economic Development Committee

Date of the Meeting: Thursday, August 17, 2023

The meeting was called to order by Chair Brian Michaels at 10:00 a.m.

Board Members Present: Mr. Brian Michaels, Mr. John Hadley, and Mr. Michael Taylor. Mr. Max Weiss and Ms. Carol McDonough were excused.

Others Present for All or Parts of the Meeting: Mr. Lee Engfer, Ms. Roxann Halverson, Mr. Bill Hedberg, Mr. Shawn Squires, Ms. Tina Anibas, Mr. David Brommerich (Teams), Mr. Brent Hanifl, and Ms. Amy Gabay.

Public Comments regarding Agenda Items: None.

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

Review/Discussion/Action regarding a Presentation by River Travel Media (Amy Gabay and Brent Hanifl): Mr. Hanifl and Ms. Gabay gave a presentation on what River Travel Media could offer to help increase tourism and help market Buffalo County. They will create a tourism website and will assist with updating the website for one year. The estimated cost is \$15,000.00.

Review/Discussion/Action regarding a Flyway Trail Update: Mr. Hadley recently joined the Flyway Trail Committee as a citizen. The most recent meeting had discussions on maintenance and what funds are left for the trail. The Highway Department will be doing maintenance and charging back to the Flyway Trail for the work.

Review/Discussion/Action regarding a Broadband Update: Mr. Squires gave an update on broadband that has been installed and where there are still needs. There are upcoming grants that will serve certain areas. He is continuing to work with Montana, Glencoe, Waumandee, and Buffalo. He feels by 2028 90% to 100% of the county should be served.

Review/Discussion/Action regarding the BEAD Broadband Grant: Mr. Hedberg indicated the BEAD Grant is on track. There may be some impact with TDS applying for grants in this area.

Review/Discussion/Action regarding the Buffalo County Tourism Group Update: There have now been three meetings held around the county. The group will be starting a Facebook page and trying to get more people involved.

WEAU has done a couple of news pieces in Buffalo County to promote things to see and do here. Mississippi Thunder Speedway is donating proceeds from an upcoming event to promote economic development in Buffalo County.

Review/Discussion/Action regarding Legal Counsel Review of the Revolving Loan Fund Policy: Mr. Engfer explained the policy has not been reviewed yet by legal counsel.

Review/Discussion/Action regarding Possible Funding Assistance for Buffalo County Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy: Mr. Hedberg indicated that it is time for Buffalo County to have an Economic Development Strategy Plan. Having this plan will open Buffalo County to receiving more funding. He will work with the Mississippi River Regional Planning Commission to see what help is available out there.

Review/Discussion/Action regarding the Economic Development Website Proposal: Mr. Hedberg would like to use money set aside for the tourism guide publication to fund an economic development website. He will resend the proposal and costs from River Travel Media to the Committee. This item will be brought back to the next meeting.

Review/Discussion regarding the Committee Chair Report: None.

Review/Discussion regarding Public Comments: None.

Review/Discussion/Action regarding the next meeting date and time: The next meeting will be October 19th at 10:00 a.m. or immediately following the Finance Committee meeting.

Adjournment: Mr. Taylor made a motion to adjourn at 11:20 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Roxann Halverson
Buffalo County Clerk