



Rural Development Commission Meeting XIV
June 7, 2006, 10:40 a.m. – 2:17 p.m.
Nebraska Public Power, North Platte, Nebraska
Meeting Minutes

Acting Chair Edgar Hicks called the meeting to order with 12 Commissioners present. The meeting was opened with self-introductions of all Commissioners, staff and guests (Lori Cappel, Bobbi Kriz-Wickham, Tara Hosick and Larry Cooper) present.

Motion to approve the Agenda; the April 18, 2006, RDC Minutes; and the Director's Report was made by Tim Shafer and seconded by Chuck Hassebrook. Motion carried with a unanimous roll call voice vote.

The Treasurers Report for YTD as of 4/30/06 was distributed. Discussion took place. It was noted that the report did not reflect expenses incurred during May and June. Motion to approve the Treasurer's Report was made by Bob Stowell and seconded by Gayle McClure. Motion carried with a unanimous roll call voice vote.

Linda Fettig apprised the Commission of the Grant Training Seminars that she has been conducting since April. She has done workshops in Grand Island, Gering, Norfolk, Nebraska City and Lincoln. Additionally, via videoconferencing she was able to reach Scottsbluff, Hastings, North Platte, Valentine, Beatrice, and Kearney. There have been over 100 participants. Thursday, June 8th she will be at McCook Community College. This will be the last one in this series.

Linda updated the Commission of the status of the (BECA) Building Entrepreneurial Communities contracts. The contracts have been mailed to the successful recipients for their signatures and the RDC is waiting for their return. The next BECA application deadline date is noon August 1, 2006.

Discussion took place regarding changes that possibly should be made to the BECA grant. Some of the Commissioners wondered if there is anything the RDC can do to assist some of these projects that had unsuccessful grant applications. A suggestion

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was made by Senator Stuhr to send out letters of encouragement to the unsuccessful applicants with the names of some possible groups, people or organizations that may be of assistance to them. Further research needs to be done.

Linda reported the status of the (VAA) Value-Added Agricultural grant applications. Richard Baier, Director of the Department of Economic Development, is reviewing the recommendations of the grant review committee. He will then pass them to Governor Heineman for final approval. Over 2 million dollars were requested, and there is only \$850,000 to award. It is anticipated the Governor will be announcing the successful recipients by the end of June. The next VAA grant application deadline date is noon August 7, 2006.

Dr. Tim Shafer suggested that the successful grant recipient names be listed on the RDC website. Linda is checking into this suggestion.

Marketing and Public Relations Committee Report: Discussion took place regarding the current RDC website URL of <http://rdc.neded.org> and the possibility of changing the URL. Linda advised the commission of the results of her research. Motion to approve changing the RDC website URL to www.ruralnebraska was made by Christine Peterson and seconded by M.L. Martin. We will have a standard ending but will also try to buy the alternate endings such as .org, .net, or .com. They will all be routed to our site.

The possibility of the RDC Commission getting more exposure through the radio, TV and newspaper was also discussed. Linda reported that she had been interviewed by radio station KRVN. The Commission, as well as the RDC Staff, will be working on this issue.

Linda advised the Commissioners their bios and photos will be posted on the website. Discussion took place as to whether or not contact information should be provided along with the bio. It was decided posting contact information with the bios is a personal issue to be decided by each individual Commissioner.

Legislative Committee Report: Linda distributed a copy of the Nebraska Rural Development Commission Work Plan 2006-2007. Committee member Chuck Hassebrook reported that the Legislative Committee concurs with the other Commission members that the #1 goal of the Commission is to educate the senators and the senatorial candidates about the RDC. Discussion took place and it was determined the best time to educate people is when they are running for office. It was suggested that each Commissioner choose at least one candidate or returning Senator to brief about the Commission.

Finance Committee: Scot Blehm reported that the Committee feels the RDC should send out letters to the organizations that provide the RDC with funding.

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These letters would advise the organizations of how their contributions are being used and what benefits those funds are providing. Discussion took place and the Commission concurred.

Linda advised that Scot is the new chair for the PRN (Partnership for Rural Nebraska).

Nominating Committee: The members of the new Nominating Committee are M.L Martin, Christine Peterson, Sandy Scofield, Dr. Tim Shafer and Senator Elaine Stuhr.

Edgar remarked he would like to see the individual committees meeting between the RDC Commission meetings. This would allow the Commission to accomplish more throughout the year. Linda advised that the committee members could meet via conference calls. She also reminded the committee members they were not allowed to make decisions, just recommendations. The Commission must discuss and vote on all decisions during one of the regularly advertised RDC Commission meetings.

Linda reported on Georgia's Entrepreneurial Friendly designation program. Their program is still under development and we will be receiving more information later. The question was raised about the Economic Development Certified Communities (EDCC) program and how this new concept would differ. Linda briefly explained and remarked that Linda Black, DED, is now the EDCC coordinator due to the RDC workload. The following cities are certified: Auburn, Holdrege, Norfolk, Ord, Fremont and South Sioux City.

Discussion took place as to what produces the best outcome or benefits for communities. Would the RDC like to sponsor a program similar to Georgia's, in Nebraska? Motion to give Linda the approval to develop a concept of Entrepreneur Friendly was made by Chuck and seconded by Bryce Neidig.

A copy of the 2007 Farm Bill was distributed to each Commissioner. Linda advised that the Farm Bill does not include any funding for state RDCs. Discussion took place and it was decided that the RDC staff should start researching other sources of funding.

Discussion took place as to whether or not the RDC would like to request re-allocation of funds for the RDC and the VAA and BECA grant programs. It was decided not to request any funding increases in any of the programs until we have success stories to share.

Linda clarified some of the VAA grant eligible activities and entities. This grant now allows for the purchase of equipment and construction. Discussion took place as to whether or not the RDC would like to request a change in grant eligible activities to eliminate construction and increase the match on equipment. It was decided issues

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needed to be looked at further before making any decisions. The Legislative committee will bring recommendations for legislative changes to the next meeting.

Education of senatorial candidates was discussed once again. It was determined that the candidates need to be presented with the history of the legislation that brought about the RDC, the intent of that legislation and which applicants in the candidate's areas have received grants.

Meeting adjourned at 2:17 p.m.

Next RDC meeting is scheduled for October 11, 2006 in Hastings.

Minutes were prepared by Sandi Kaskie, reviewed by Linda Fettig, and are presented on behalf of Senator Stuhr, Commission Secretary.

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COMMISSIONER	PRESENT	MOTION #1 Consent Agenda	MOTION #2 Treasurer's Report	MOTION #3 URL	MOTION #4 Entrepreneurship Program
	ABSENT	Y-N-A	Y-N-A	Y-N-A	Y-N-A
Richard Baier	A				
Marcia Baumann	A				
Scot Blehm	P	Y	Y	Y	Y
Ross Garwood	P	Y	Y	Y	Y
Mary Gerdes	A				
Chuck Hassebrook	P	Y	Y	Y	Y
Edgar Hicks	P	Y	Y	Y	Y
Dan Hoffman	A				
Greg Ibach	A				
John Jordison	A				
Tim Kenny	EXCUSED				
M.L. Martin	P	Y	Y	Y	Y
Gayle McClure	P	Y	Y	Y	Y
Marilyn Mecham	A				
Jane Morgan	A				
Lance Morgan	A				
Bryce Neidig	P	Y	Y	Y	Y
Christine Peterson	P	Y	Y	Y	Y
Heidi Phillips	EXCUSED				
Jamie Renshaw	A				
Tim Shafer	P	Y	Y	Y	Y
Sandy Scofield	P	Y	Y	Y	Y
Bob Stowell	P	Y	Y	Y	Y
Senator Elaine Stuhr	P	Y	Y	Y	Y
Gary Warren	A				
Matt Williams	A				
Kyla Wize	A				

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