

## Buffalo County Minutes

**Committee/Board:** Economic Development Committee  
**Date of Meeting:** Thursday, June 18, 2020  
**Electronic and Hard Copy Filing Date:** Tuesday, June 23, 2020

Mr. David Schmidt called the meeting to order at 11:40 a.m.

**Economic Development Committee Members Present:** Mr. Tom Taylor, Ms. LeeAnne Bulman, Mr. Brad Schmidtknecht, Mr. Max Weiss, and Mr. David Danzinger.

**Others Present for All or Parts of the Meeting:** Ms. Sonya Hansen, Mr. Dennis Bork, Ms. Roxann Halverson, and Mr. David Schmidt.

**Review/Discussion/Action regarding Election of the Chair and Vice Chair:** Mr. Schmidt called for nomination for the Chair of the Economic Development Committee. Mr. Taylor nominated Mr. Schmidtknecht. Mr. Schmidtknecht nominated Mr. Weiss. Mr. Schmidtknecht requested to withdraw his nomination to be Chair. Mr. Schmidt asked for any further nominations. Mr. Schmidtknecht made a motion to declare Mr. Weiss Chair of the Economic Development Committee, seconded by Ms. Bulman. Carried.

Mr. Schmidt asked for nominations for the Vice Chair position. Mr. Weiss nominated Mr. Schmidtknecht as Vice Chair. Mr. Weiss made a motion to declare Mr. Schmidtknecht as Vice Chair of the Economic Development Committee, seconded by Mr. Taylor. Carried.

**Public Comments Regarding Posted Agenda Items:** None.

**Review/Discussion/Action regarding minutes of the previous meeting:** Mr. Schmidtknecht made a motion to approve the minutes, seconded by Mr. Danzinger. Carried.

**Review/Discussion regarding the Visitor's Guides:** Mr. Danzinger explained we have had three brochures printed so far. Ms. Cathy Goodman was instrumental in its creation. There is no brochure printed this year due to COVID-19 but a link to the guide is on the county website. The advertisement that is sold for the brochure covers the costs of creation and printing. Work will begin this Fall for the 2021 brochure and at that time good photos of the county will be needed as well as a review of the businesses to keep that up to date.

**Review/Discussion/Action regarding a Proposal from Ducks Unlimited:** Ducks Unlimited contacted Mr. Schmidt regarding a lookout area over the Mississippi. There is to be no cost to the county for this project. Mr. Schmidtknecht made a motion to have Ducks Unlimited create a full-scale plan including costs and responsibilities of maintenance to bring back to the committee, seconded by Mr. Danzinger. Carried.

**Review/Discussion/Action regarding a Joint Meeting with Trempealeau County Economic Development:** Mr. Schmidt explained there had been a meeting set up

previously but with COVID-19 it was canceled. He would still like to have the meeting to see what projects Trempealeau County is working on and if there is anything that can be done collaboratively. Mr. Danzinger made a motion to tentatively set the joint meeting on August 20<sup>th</sup> at 1:00 p.m. at the Buffalo Town Hall, seconded by Mr. Schmidt. Carried.

**Review/Discussion/Action regarding the Appointment of the Broadband Committee:**

Mr. Schmidt explained the history of the Broadband Committee. This committee applied for and were awarded grants to expand broadband in the Town of Milton. They continue to look at other areas to find funding for as there is a great need for broadband in Buffalo County. Mr. Schmidt made a motion to reappoint the Broadband Committee and all members, seconded by Mr. Danzinger. Carried.

**Review/Discussion/Action regarding the Appointment of the Loan Committee:**

Mr. Schmidt explained how funds had come in from the Federal Government for a revolving loan fund and then the Federal Government wanted to recall all the money as they felt it was not being monitored correctly. It was worked out that the money could be loaned out to the City of Mondovi for a wastewater treatment facility and then when paid back would be free of the Federal requirements. Money has also been loaned out to Together Farms for a food truck and payments are coming in as expected. The Loan Committee would be responsible for loan approvals, looking for grants to expand on the loans, and policies regarding loans. It is important to have individuals with business and financial backgrounds. Ms. Hansen and Mr. Schmidt will gather a list of interested individuals and bring it back to the committee.

**Review/Discussion regarding Rustic Roads:** A Rustic Roads route was developed and sent to the State for approval. The State changed the route without our approval and the County Board and Highway Committee did not approve this change. Citizens living in the areas of the routes felt they were not properly notified of this change and are not interested in having a Rustic Road in their area.

**Review/Discussion/Action regarding the Great River State Trail Winona Connector (Capital Fundraising Campaign, FLAP Grant, Opening of Trail):**

Currently \$700,000.00 has been raised by the Capital Fundraising Campaign and is still ongoing. A FLAP grant has also been applied for and awarded. These funds will be used toward the second phase of the trail. Phase two will connect the trail with Trempealeau County and allow people to travel all the way to Madison. Maintenance of the trail will fall to DNR Parks, the county and Winona. Work will need to be done to create a group of interested persons that want to take part in the upkeep of the trail. Trail passes could also be sold to help raise funds for upkeep. The trail will have a soft opening on June 19<sup>th</sup>.

**Review/Discussion/Action regarding Future Direction of the Committee:** Mr. Schmidt would like to know how the committee sees the future of Economic Development and what things should be worked on. The committee would like to see more research done on Ag and manufacturing, ways to invite businesses to come to Buffalo County.

**Chairperson Report:** None.

**Economic Development Coordinator Report:** None.

**Public Comment:** None.

**Next Meeting Date:** The next meeting will be August 20<sup>th</sup> at 1:00 p.m.

Ms. Bulman made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Mr. Taylor. Carried.

Respectfully Submitted,

Roxann Halverson  
County Clerk