**RUGBY JOB DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY**

**UNAPPROVED MINUTES REGULAR MEETING**

**WEDNESDAY July 8th, 2020 -12:00PM**

**Members Present:** Chairmen Blair Brattvet, Susan Selensky, Terry Hoffert, Susan Steinke, Jodi Schaan

**Members Absent:** Gary Kraft, Rob St. Michel

**Also Present:** Executive Director Liz Heisey, Sue-Sitter Pierce County Tribune

**Call to Order/Roll Call:** Brattvet called the meeting to order at 12:05

**Consideration of Agenda - amendments, additions, deletions to the agenda:** There were no amendments, additions, or deletions to the agenda. Motion by Steinke to approve the agenda. Seconded by Selensky, no further discussion was held, vote was unanimous to approve, motion carried.

**Consider Approval of Minutes for June 10th JDA regular meeting:** Motion by Selensky to approve the minutes for the June 10th, 2020, JDA regular meeting. Seconded by Steinke, vote was unanimous to approve, motion carried.

**Consider Approval of Minutes for June 19th special meeting:** Motion by Schaan to approve the minutes for the June 19th, 2020, JDA special meeting. Seconded by Steinke, vote was unanimous to approve, motion carried

**Treasurer’s Report:** Bills/finances were reviewed by the board. Heisey stated that $10,000 went out for the physician recruitment this month as well as the annual PACE commitment for K & H Carwash. $125 was paid for EDND virtual conferences. Motion by Hoffert to approve the bills and financials. Second by Selensky, vote was unanimous to approve, motion carried.

**Director’s Report:**

Optimism remains strong within the community in spite of downturn resulting from COVID-19. We have had multiple inquiries on starting new businesses. We also have had increased inquiries on available properties, available utilities, and workforce. The Dept of Commerce has asked our community what we are doing to attract those fleeing urban areas to live in rural areas?

**Surveys, Surveys, Surveys – Your input matters**

Multiple surveys have been circulating gauging the impacts of COVID-19 on community and business. Data is still being collected, compiled, and analyzed. Your input, concerns, ideas, suggested solutions, greatest needs, and how you or your business are or expected to be impacted by COVID-19 are being heard. Those who recently took the opportunity to be heard and to shape policies are helping to ensure funding programs are designed to address the needs voiced through direct feedback. Your voice, your feedback does matter in the development of policies. We are continuing to work to identify needs and promoting the development of effective programs through the data we have collected from these surveys. This can only be accomplished through participation. If our community does not provide input, policies and funding programs may not adequately be addressed or they may be missing the vital elements still needed to aid our community in recovery efforts. The significance of economic injury still may be grossly underestimated if information from our community is excluded, this lack of conveyed information can have long lasting impacts through decreased funding opportunities. Thank you again for encouraging participation within our community.

**Site Selection: How do we attract new business?**

From time to time, we get an opportunity to showcase what our community has to offer. This includes our ability to provide accurate up to date information on our capacity to provide services. We need to be able to readily provide information on all available utilities. Companies looking to relocate or build a facility need know if we provide enough clean water, carry away waste and storm water, and that we can provide adequate electricity. They want to know if we have access to natural gas, how much land is available for development, what access we have to highways, if we have rail, and where the nearest airport is. They also need to know local zoning, permitting regulations, and property taxes. Are we a business friendly community? They also look at our schools, available housing, recreation, access to healthcare, and regional location. We must be able to give site selectors the complete package.

We must to recognize the inter-relationship and interdependence between Rugby as a municipal corporation, and areas contiguous or adjacent to us. We also need to maintain an awareness of all accessible resources including: local, regional, state, and federal assets in addition to our public and private relationships.

Conducting an inventory of our resources is part of a continuous process and it is a vital part of community and economic development. We need to be ready, prepared, and knowledgeable when the opportunities arise. Rugby is positioned for growth. Studies, comprehensive planning, partnerships, and strategic alignment are valuable tools in creating a sustainable path forward.

When planning for the future and growth of Rugby, annexation studies should also be a priority. What is the purpose of annexation:

1. To encourage natural and well-ordered development of municipalities of the state;

2. To extend municipal government to areas which form a part of the whole community;

3. To simplify government structure in urban areas; and

4. To recognize the inter-relationship and interdependence between a municipal corporation and areas contiguous or adjacent thereto

A large portion of our community has not been annexed which has resulted in higher property taxes for those within the city limits. A larger tax base results in lower taxes per capita. The City also loses out on sales, restaurant, and lodging tax. More information is needed. Rugby has continued to grow in the contiguous and adjacent areas. Can you tell where the Rugby’s boundaries start and end?

**ND Dept of Commerce Economic Resiliency Grant (ERG) Program**

The North Dakota Department of Commerce announced that the agency has developed the which was approved at today’s Budget Section hearing to assist businesses with COVID-19 response and recovery efforts.

The Budget Section approved $69 million to administer the ERG Program which is geared to enhance revenue in both the immediate and long-term future by growing consumer confidence. To achieve this, applicants may qualify to receive grant funding of up $50,000 for investments that will encourage customers to get back into the marketplace by ensuring businesses are equipped to mitigate the spread of COVID-19.

In addition to assisting businesses be successful, the grant is also designed to reduce the burden on the unemployment insurance system by getting people back to work in a safe environment.

Importantly, the ERG is a grant – not a loan. The expenses allowed for through the ERG did not previously qualify under both the Economic Injury Disaster Loan and the Paycheck Protection Program.

More information to be released soon….

Liz Heisey, Executive Director

**Old Business**

1. **Consider Approval of 2021 Preliminary Budget**

Heisey stated that with consulting with the city auditor and the city finance committee, they want to keep the revenue projections for sales tax the same. Home of Economy is coming so this hopefully keep the sales tax stable. The rent on the Johnson’s Clinic will stay the same unless there is any further negotiation. Heisey recommended increasing the Flex PACE program budget to $30,000 in case we get a few more loans. Further explanation occurred on each element of the budget. Discussion was held on the maintenance of the Chalmer’s lots. Heisey explained that the budget for student loan repayment programs is higher because we are hoping to recruit more individuals for the North Dakota University System Career Builders program. Schaan also reiterated that the hospital is searching for mental health professionals as well and these programs are great recruitment tools. Motion by Hoffert to approve the preliminary 2021 budget. Seconded by Selensky, vote was unanimous to approve, motion carried.

**New Business**

1. **BND Flex Pace Agreement—Clifton and Alicia Mattson (Rugby Livestock Auction)**

Galen Mack reviewed the Flex PACE agreement as well as the BND. There were no further questions from the board members. Motion by Hoffert to approve the Flex PACE agreement for Clifton and Alicia Mattson on the purchase of Rugby Livestock Auction. Seconded by Steinke, vote was unanimous to approve, motion carried.

**Correspondence Received, Special Meetings and Reminders**

1. **2020 Regular Meeting – August 12th, 2020**

**Adjournment:** 12:46