

December 12, 2018

Souris Basin Planning Council Meeting – 3:00 PM

ATTENDANCE

Bottineau County: Margo Helgerson
Burke County: Tony Pandolfo
McHenry County: none
Mountrail County: Amanda Dennis
Pierce County: none
Renville County: Kristy Titus, via phone

Ward County: Dwight Flygare
City of Minot: none
Special Interest: George Withus
Staff: Lyndsay Ulrickson, Briselda Hernandez, Connie Wilson, Emily Berg

Chairperson Margo Helgerson called the Souris Basin Planning Council board meeting to order at 3:00 pm.

SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

Ulrickson shared with the board members that Briselda had been chosen by Prairie Business Magazine as one of 40 business professionals under the age of 40 in 2018 in a three-state region.

MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

Motion was made by George Withus to accept the minutes from the previous meeting. Motion seconded by Dwight Flygare; motion carried.

FINANCIALS

Connie Wilson presented financials for the period ending November 2018.

The ending balance for local monies was \$139,735.43. Receivables were \$65,003.07. The cash balance for NVCI was \$87,097.19.

The SBRLF account balance was \$460,390.10 and balance available to lend was \$328,627.41. The SBIRP account balance was \$74,614.08 with a balance of \$16,298.00 available to lend.

Motion was made by George Withus to accept the financials. Motion seconded by Alan Walter; motion carried.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT

Lyndsay Ulrickson provided the following ED Report:

- **Event grant award:** SBPC has been granted \$20,000 to develop and host a Regional Economic Development Summit in 2019 (Date and details TBD)
- **Building Resilient Farm Country grant applications:** SBPC presented with Strengthen ND to the APUC Board on November 15. The reviewing team was very supportive of the project but unfortunately, we were not approved for this application. We are continuing to seek other funding avenues for this project.
- **Downtown Minot Strategic Plan/grant award**
 - SBPC has been asked to serve on the Downtown Minot Technical Team and assist with strategic planning, in partnership with Strengthen ND.
 - SBPC has been granted a \$25,000 grant from the ND Partners in Marketing Program to help fund this activity. A portion of the funds will be used for travel, supplies and a contract with Strengthen ND.
- **Entrepreneurial Resources**
 - Ulrickson and Hernandez have been planning the development of an easy-to-use online guide for entrepreneurs and existing business owners to have access to a comprehensive list of resources

to start or expand a business. We plan to apply to the Consensus Council in February to fund this project.

- Ulrickson was asked to Chair the Minot Financial Toolbox Technical Team
- **Economic Development Assistance**
 - Ulrickson and Hernandez prepared proposals for Rugby JDA, Burlington EDC and Mountrail County JDA in October to provide technical assistance for local lending programs and strategic planning. Rugby JDA should provide a response sometime in January.
 - SBPC's NDR agreement with the City of Minot was amended for an additional \$14,500 for continued support in 2019. Additionally, the contract amendment included \$36,000 for development and management of a loan program for Minot.
- **Pierce County Housing Rehab:** FY17 funding: one home is under construction and estimates are in the negotiation stages for another. We should have enough money to assist two additional homeowners.
- **MAFB JLUS Implementation:** We held the final stakeholder meeting on August 15 and one final Comprehensive Plan training on December 4. We will begin the grant closeout process in January.
- **2019 Budget**
 - Entered a new agreement with ABM with decreased costs – should save roughly \$800/year
 - New phone system should save roughly \$2,000/year
 - Have several other projects/funding proposals in the works that we won't hear back on until 2019
 - Switched from a 401k benefit to a Simple IRA benefit, saving \$1,300 per year
- **Other**
 - SBPC received two hours of assistance from a Magic Day of Giving volunteer in October.
 - SBPC staff has been brainstorming additional ways to build our capacity to offer more services to our communities, along with discussions about how CDBG can be better utilized to meet the needs of our communities.
 - SBPC staff completed the final CEDS and is currently out for public comment.
 - Ulrickson presented at Strengthen ND's nonprofit certificate program on how to build an organizational culture and recruit and retain talent with small budgets
 - Ulrickson is assisting Emerging Prairie to recruit entrepreneurs to travel to Bismarck in January to attend Entrepreneur Day at the Capitol

ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY REPORTS

Briselda Hernandez provided the following economic report:

- **Business Retention & Expansion (BR&E) Training**
 - Hernandez is completing a six-week BR&E training course through the University of Oklahoma Economic Development Institute.
 - Hernandez received a scholarship from the Economic Development Association of North Dakota to pay for half of the training expenses.
- **Interest Buydown Program:** Hernandez and Ulrickson met with the Rugby JDA Executive Board to discuss the interest buydown program. A board meeting will be held in January to determine the amount that can be invested in the program. We also met with First Western Bank & Trust in Minot to discuss the program.
- **EPA Brownfields Assessment Grant:** The FY19 National Brownfields Grant competition is officially open. A coalition meeting is scheduled for December 13 to discuss the application. Applications are due January 31.
- **USDA IRP Rating:** We received an "A" rating from USDA for our IRP loan program.
- **Main Street Initiative- Rugby:** Hernandez and Ulrickson attended the Mainstreet Initiative meeting in Rugby. Hernandez and Ulrickson toured Rugby Manufacturing and World Rugby Museum and were part of the community discussion panel.

- **Business Training in Mountrail County:** Hernandez, in partnership with SBDC, Mountrail JDA, Parshall Promoters, New Town Chamber of Commerce and Stanley Commercial club, is coordinating a succession planning training for businesses in Mountrail County.
- **Minot Technical Team Meetings:** Hernandez attended several technical team meetings (Minot Incubator, Downtown Investment, Minot Toolbox and Downtown Minot).

Emily Berg provided the following community report:

- **2018 CDBG Round 2 Pre-Application Assistance**
 - Mountrail County: Conducting HQS inspections in Stanley December 17 and hopefully Plaza the same week. There is a low-income apartment complex in each building that needs a roof replacement. Each roof is estimated at roughly \$27,000 to replace
 - Upham: They are looking to replace all the water meters in town. The ones they currently have are at the end of their usable life and as they are breaking down, they are so old they can't even buy parts to replace them any longer. They are looking to ask for roughly \$30,000 for this project.
 - Rugby: There are 4 low-income apartment complexes in town in need of updates. Berg assisted in HQS inspections December 6 along with the city building inspector and representatives from Affordable Housing Developers who are the owners of the buildings. They need structural work as well as siding, gutters, a water heater, and new a/c units.
 - Tolley: Berg has assisted in guidance for an income survey to help the City of Tolley qualify to do some sewer work within the city.
- **Current Open Projects**
 - Sawyer sanitary sewer improvements is near completion but has stopped construction for the winter. All that is left is to pave the road where the work was done. However, it was too cold to lay asphalt by the time construction completed in November, so the project will finish in the spring.
 - Berthold submitted their housing application. Just waiting on final approval from the state.
 - Bowbells submitted their housing application. The state removed the ADA bathroom portion of the application but approved the windows portion of the application.
 - Flaxton water system improvements project is complete. Working on closeout documents with the City to have the project closed out by month end January 2019.
 - New Town sidewalks bids came in very high, so they are waiting to back out to bid again this upcoming spring.

AMERICORP VISTA & STATE PROGRAMS

Briselda Hernandez shared that SBPC had submitted a concept paper to AmeriCorps to serve as a VISTA Intermediary. AmeriCorps will review the concept paper and notify SBPC if they will be invited to complete a full application. If successful, SBPC may apply for AmeriCorps VISTA members and partner with area non-profits to supply a VISTA member to those organizations for a one-year period with very low cost to those organizations. SBPC would provide all administrative oversight, grant reporting and general assurance that the VISTA's are performing based upon the requirements of the program. Briselda served as a VISTA for one year, so this program is something she's very passionate about.

The Board of Directors expressed interest and support of serving in an intermediary capacity to meet the needs of regional organizations to continue and expand their missions. Margo Helgerson, Board Chairperson, stated if this is a service we can provide to fill a need, we should move forward, if we're invited to do so.

PIERCE COUNTY HOUSING REHAB – FY2018 AWARDED

Ulrickson reported that SBPC was awarded a \$70,000 grant this month for FY18 from USDA for the rehabilitation of multi-family apartments for low-income families and individuals. This will be SBPC's third funding year in this program.

CDBG APPLICATION UPDATES

Emily Berg provided the following CDBG application updates:

Governor's Fund Applications:

- City of Bowbells Emergency Application: Bowbells was placed on a boil order by the Department of Health in October 2018 due to high levels of bacteria confirmed in the water. Berg and Ulrickson worked with the city and the engineer on a project application to the Governor's fund to assist the city with the expenses to upgrade the water system to alleviate water contamination. The Department of Commerce and Governor's staff ultimately denied the project stating it was not "urgent need."
- City of Powers Lake PF Application: Powers Lake applied for special funding to make a building handicapped accessible. This building houses the community's food pantry in the basement. The city applied for \$275,000 to install a platform lift and to make the bathrooms and entry ADA compliant. The application did not score high enough to receive funding.
- City of Minot Park South Phase 2: Minot applied for special funding to install infrastructure support for low-income housing units and fix drainage issues in the area. The city requested \$300,000 and was not scored and ranked, as the state deemed it a housing project instead of a public facilities project, and stated it was ineligible for this set-aside.

Regional Fund Applications:

- The City of Velva applied for bathroom upgrades in a low-income apartment complex to install walk-in showers and raised toilet stools. SBPC scored and ranked this application in 2018 and recommended approval. The Department of Commerce, Division of Community Service (DCS) denied the application, stating that the entire apartment must be made ADA compliant to qualify for CDBG funds, and could only be done for one of the apartments, not all of them.
- Berg worked with the City of Towner for an application for fire hall funding. Fire halls are an eligible activity if the service area is 51 percent (51%) low- to moderate-income. DCS stated they could not apply for funding, as they did not have data on five of the townships that receive service from the Towner Fire Department, therefore it would be ineligible.

BORROWER REQUEST: LIBERTY SQUARE

Ulrickson and Hernandez shared a request from a borrower and the recommendation made by the Souris Basin Loan Review Committee (SBLRC). The borrower, Liberty Square, requested permission to refinance its loan with Peoples State Bank to an increased amount for the purpose of paying taxes and a balance owed for a tenant buildout. The SBLRC recommended approval of the request with the following contingencies: receipt of Peoples State Bank's credit presentation; a copy of the current lease agreements; future monthly escrow amount; Peoples State Bank re-certification of the existing property appraisal; a detailed equipment list and/or detailed depreciation schedule; and an in-person discussion with property owners and Peoples State Bank to assess business health and evaluate the option to re-amortize the SBPC loan after review of all contingency items.

Motion was made by George Withus to approve as recommended by the SBLRC. Motion seconded by Alan Walter; motion carried.

2019 EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING TIMES

The Board of Directors determined they would like to keep the regular monthly executive meeting time of 3:00 pm.

2019 CEDS REVIEW & ADOPTION

Ulrickson reminded the Board that the 2019 CEDS and 5-year strategic plan is within its 30-day public comment period. At the time of the meeting, SBPC had not received any written comments, however several members of the community reached out to share verbal support of the strategy.

Motion was made by Amanda Dennis to adopt the 2019 Strategic Plan and CEDS, pending that any public comments received would be included in the appendix. Motion seconded by Dwight Flygare; motion carried.

ORGANIZATIONAL HANDBOOK UPDATE

Ulrickson presented revision suggestions to the organizational handbook to support changes to the retirement benefit. The proposed revisions had previously been emailed for review.

Motion was made by Dwight Flygare to approve the revisions. Motion seconded by Alan Walter; motion carried.

HEALTH INSURANCE OPT-OUT OFFER

Ulrickson proposed offering SBPC employees an incentive to opt-out of SBPC's health insurance plan, if they can get insurance through a spouse's plan at a less expensive rate. For 2019, the offer could be made to Emily Berg, as the remaining staff would not be eligible at this time to switch insurance policies. The offer proposed is \$300 per month, which is on the lower end of an incentive offer of this type, however would save SBPC a minimum of \$1,200 per year for each employee who opted to utilize the incentive. Each employee currently costs SBPC more than \$400 per month for insurance, which increases each year, as we offer an age-based premium health insurance policy.

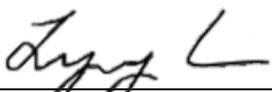
After robust discussion and weighing pros and cons, a motion was made by Alan Walter to approve the incentive offer to Emily. Motion seconded by George Withus; motion carried.

2019 BUDGET ADOPTION

Ulrickson presented the final 2019 budget draft and shared line item explanations and discussion.

Motion was made by George Withus to approve the 2019 budget as presented. Motion seconded by Amanda Dennis; motion carried.

There being no further business, meeting adjourned.



Lyndsay Ulrickson, Secretary

Meeting notes are included on the following pages from October 10, 2018 full council meeting in which quorum was not met.

October 10, 2018

Souris Basin Planning Council Meeting – 3:00 PM

ATTENDANCE

Bottineau County: Margo Helgerson
Burke County: Tony Pandolfo
McHenry County: Shawn Vedaa
Mountrail County: Amanda Dennis
Pierce County: Susan Steinke
Renville County: none
Ward County: Dwight Flygare

City of Minot: Shannon Straight
Special Interest: George Withus, Susan Ogurek, Sheila
Many Ribs, Bruce Johnson
Guests: Cindy Bitz, Joleen Steele
Staff: Lyndsay Ulrickson, Briselda Hernandez, Connie
Wilson, Emily Berg

MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

Minutes from the previous meeting were emailed ahead of time for review. No action taken

FINANCIALS

Connie Wilson presented financials for the period ending September 2018.

The ending balance for local monies was \$153,591.14. Receivables were \$60,460.20. The cash balance for NVCI was \$87,008.10.

The SBRLF account balance was \$417,303.72 and balance available to lend was \$290,093.93. The SBIRP account balance was \$74,446.53 with a balance of \$17,511.74 available to lend.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT

Lyndsay Ulrickson provided the following ED Report:

- **Phones Update**
 - With the SBPC Personnel Committee, Ulrickson researched suitable replacements for office phone systems offering more service and functionality at a lower price. The team was able to start with Ooma, for an annual cost savings to SBPC of \$2,112.
- **Change Network & Bush Connect**
 - Ulrickson attended the first convening of Change Network at the end of September for five days.
 - Ulrickson attended bushCON in Minneapolis last week.
- **Event grant application**
 - Ulrickson applied for a grant through the Bush Foundation to fund a Regional Community Summit in 2019 – we should hear back by November 12
- **Building Resilient Farm Country grant applications**
 - SBPC, Strengthen ND and NCPC submitted the grant application on August 31
 - SBPC submitted a grant application to APUC on September 28 for the match portion
- **Entrepreneurial Resources**
 - Ulrickson and Hernandez have been planning the development of an easy-to-use online guide for budding entrepreneurs and existing business owners to have access to a comprehensive list of resources to start or expand a business.
 - Ulrickson submitted a \$15,000 grant to the MDU Foundation to assist with the development of this resource on October 1.
- **Downtown Minot Strategic Plan**
 - SBPC has been asked to serve on the Downtown Minot Technical Team and assist with strategic planning, in partnership with Strengthen ND.

- Ulrickson submitted a \$25,000 grant application to the ND Partners in Marketing Program on October 9 to help fund this activity. If awarded, a portion of the grant funds will be used for travel, supplies and a contract with Strengthen ND.
- **Proposals**
 - Ulrickson and Hernandez will be preparing proposals for Rugby JDA, Burlington EDC and Mountrail County JDA to provide technical assistance for local lending programs and strategic planning.
- **2019 CEDS**
 - Ulrickson shared a digital survey via e-mail and on social media for input (the survey has been shared on social media more than 30 times)
 - A draft of the document will be prepared by the November meeting for review and public comment period
- **Pierce County Housing Rehab**
 - We have not received an award yet for FY2018 for our most recent application to USDA RD.
 - One home is currently under construction and bids have been requested on a second home.
- **MAFB JLUS Implementation**
 - Held final stakeholder meeting on August 15
 - Requested to extend the grant period to December 31, 2018 and use remaining funds for additional Comp Plan training this year – we are awaiting a response from OEA.

ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY REPORTS

Emily Berg reported she sent out invitation packets to Berthold, Bowbells and Velva for funding the executive board approved. Berg attended the Sawyer pre-construction meeting this week. The Flaxton water systems improvement project should be wrapping up next month as well. Lastly, Berg reported she's assisting the City of Towner in working on determining eligibility for an application to the Governor's Fund for construction of a new fire hall. Powers Lake is also looking to apply for Governor's Funds to help make the building that houses their local food pantry ADA compliant to assist all residents utilize their food pantry. Applications for this pool of funding are due to the state by November 5.

Hernandez provided updates on the Brownfield Assessment Grant. EPA would like the coalition to narrow the target area to 2-3 communities. These communities will be prioritized during the assessment process. SBPC requested for interested cities to contact Hernandez by September 14; five communities contacted Hernandez. Funding availability for the FY19 grant competition cycle has not been announced.

Additionally, this month Hernandez met with: Stanley Commercial Club, Mountrail JDA, Rugby JDA, Parshall Promoters, Kenmare EDC and SBA to discuss partnership opportunities. Hernandez also attended a Vision West meeting in New Town. Attendees were introduced to the Food Hub Study & Tool Kit and learned about the changes taking place at the ND Department of Commerce. Lastly, Hernandez shared that she received a scholarship from the Economic Development Association of North Dakota to take a Business, Retention & Expansion training course offered by the University of Oklahoma Economic Development Institute.

SBPC 401K FEES

Ulrickson reported that the service provider for the SBPC 401k Program was implementing a new annual fee for servicing the program. The fee would be \$1,250 to SBPC, plus a \$25 per user fee that would be pulled out of the staff's contributions each year. Ulrickson shared that she and Connie Wilson had met with Kelly Hayhurst from Raymond James to begin discussing alternative providers, as this added cost is too burdensome. Hayhurst suggested terminating the 401k program and offering a Simple IRA program instead, as SBPC would not incur any processing fees associated with an IRA program. Ulrickson shared that SBPC currently offers a benefit of 6 percent 401k match, and a Simple IRA only allows a 3 percent company contribution. SBPC could provide an additional 3

percent of employee base salaries as a benefit to make up for the difference. This benefit would have no restrictions attached – each employee would determine if they contributed the additional money to their IRA, or not. Ulrickson and Wilson will continue pursuing a revised retirement benefit to avoid taking on an additional burden for SBPC’s funds.

CDBG ADMIN FUNDS

Ulrickson reported that SBPC would provide administrative services at a 7.5 percent rate of grant funds applied for, to any cities or counties applying to the Governor’s fund in 2018. This is half of the policy fee of 15 percent. SBPC charges admin fees based upon the costs associated with servicing the CDBG program and we anticipate we may have one or two applications we administer for the special governor’s fund granting round, which would be unanticipated and unplanned projects.

INTEREST BUYDOWN PROGRAM

Ulrickson and Hernandez reported the Souris Basin Loan Review Committee met last week and made a recommendation to the Board to instruct staff to establish a regional interest buydown loan program to provide the local match as required by the Bank of North Dakota.

Board members in attendance were in favor of this and expressed support for staff to begin researching and putting a draft plan together for capitalization of a program.

CEDS STAKEHOLDER INPUT & SURVEY

Ulrickson presented preliminary data gathered through a community survey, with 195 responses as a part of developing the 2019 CEDS. The data included comments provided by 42 responders. There were no large surprises in the survey. Staff noted interestingly that parks and attractive public spaces was voted as a strength by 37 percent, a weakness by 32 percent and an opportunity by 50 percent of those responding.

The survey will remain open for at least one more week. George Withus had assisted with getting Minot State to share the survey on their social media to boost responses from individuals aged 18 to 24. Ulrickson also asked Dakota College at Bottineau and Nueta Hidatsa Sahnish College to share with students but had not yet received a response. As of yesterday, the survey had been shared on social media more than 30 times.

Staff noted that the final survey results could be broken out by county to take a deeper dive into specific areas to determine any significant differences.