

**Rural Development Council (RDC) Meeting
In-Person (Board Members/DCS Staff /TEAMS
meeting (Public only) May 5, 2023, 10:00 am – 2:30 pm**



MEMBERS PRESENT

Dawn Mandt
Maria Effertz
Gwen Crawford
Jay Doan
Antoinette Heier

Megan Langley
KayCee Lindsey
Lindsey Lipp
Carol Peterson
Daniel Stenberg

GUESTS PRESENT

Melinda Padilla Lynch
Tammy Heick
Emma Cook
Josh Teigen

CALL TO ORDER/WELCOME

Chairperson Dawn Mandt called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m., welcoming members and guests.

ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

Minutes

MOTION: It was moved by Megan Langley, seconded by Dan Steinberg to approve the Rural Development Council minutes of March 9, 2023. Motion carried.

STRATEGIC PLANNING

Sandy McMerty

Under the facilitation of Sandy McMerty, the board brought forth the following issues and ranked them as follows:

Placemaking – Succession

- (#2) Investment in Place – creating the place you want to be – fostering involvement
- (#5) Recommendations for service, schools, others to support rural outcomes

Access to Resources

- (#1) Funding Sources – Eligibility Requirement Changes
- (#7) Property Tax – is this still the right answer for local funding?

Changing Narratives

- (#4) – New North Dakotans – Attracting/Welcoming
- (#6) – What is Rural ED? Redefining Winning for our Communities
- (#8) – Normalize Service
- (#3) – Data related to small town

KEY FACTORS / PRIORITIES --- NEED TO IDENTIFY STAKEHOLDERS FOR EACH

GOAL: Growing awareness and changing requirements for funding resources. STAKEHOLDER: Lawmakers

(sources cited – HIF, CDBG, EDA)

- Creating advocacy to impact the following:
 - o Center value on percentage of impact – investment in rural communities different than larger communities (use data goal to support this)
 - o Smaller quantity to have greater quality impact
- Changing requirements for resource/grants/funding
 - o Rural rules and urban rules should be different
 - o Addressing items like federal requirements for “contractor” vs. volunteer community efforts
 - o Eliminate match requirements and lessen reporting requirements for communities – many do not have staffing to tackle these added hurdles
- Champion pooling of funding to create greater flexibility for communities
 - o Allow communities to “write their own story” and access funding in new ways

GOAL: Foster welcoming communities for new North Dakotans.

- Capitalize on Find the Good Life and provide a story pipeline of rural community stories.
- Work with new Office of Legal Immigration
- Recommend best practices to communities on how to create welcoming environments for new community members – fostering community relationships and engagement
- “new” in rural communities looks different than “new” in urban communities – how do we champion the different and help advocate
- Capitalize on workforce opportunities by connecting with stakeholder groups

GOAL: Identify Data Resources

- Collect key data points to share with stakeholder on rural facing issues.
- Important keys: seek relevant trends in data that related to communities and showcase the “hidden” story of rural North Dakota
 - o Housing, workforce, childcare
 - o Seek the “right” data which influences stakeholder decisions

GOAL: Support community placemaking efforts.

- Create story/advocacy using community stories of placemaking and mentorship (bridging generational gaps, providing service), or develop challenges to generate stories in these areas
 - o Champion authenticity of community through storytelling
 - o Develop a model for good placemaking activities

Discussions that were tabled:

- *Investment in high-paying jobs in rural communities*
- *Find the Good Life and greater showcasing of rural stories*

NEXT MEETING

Commerce will send out a calendar invite for our next meeting in May for RDC strategic planning.

ADJOURNMENT

It was moved adjourn the meeting at 2:30 p.m.