

**Rural Development Council (RDC) Meeting
In-Person (Board Members/DCS Staff /TEAMS meeting (Public
only) November 20, 2023, 1:00 pm – 3:00 pm**

MEMBERS PRESENT

Dawn Mandt (Teams)
Maria Effertz
Gwen Crawford
Jay Doan (Teams)
Antoinette Heier (Teams)

Megan Langley
KayCee Lindsey
Lindsey Lipp
Carol Peterson (Teams)
Daniel Stenberg (Teams)

GUESTS PRESENT

Tammy Heick
Josh Teigen (Teams)
Anya Hondel
Rikki Roehrich
Dani Hopkins

CALL TO ORDER/WELCOME

Chairperson Dawn Mandt called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m., welcoming members and guests. Due to a meeting conflict and not able to join in person, she handed the baton to Megan Langley. Tammy Heick did roll call and we have a quorum.

ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

Minutes

MOTION: It was moved by Gwen Crawford, seconded by Antionette Heier to approve the Rural Development Council minutes of May 5, 2023. Motion carried.

STRATEGIC PLANNING

Maria Effertz

Maria recapped the strategy plan session in May facilitated by Sandy McMerty of top priorities for this committee to enhance moving forward. The top four priorities were: Growing awareness and changing requirements for funding sources, Fostering welcoming communities for new North Dakotans, Identify Data Resource/Coordination of data collection, Support Community Placemaking. Each committee presented their highlights of the outcome request.

- Growing awareness and changing requirements for funding sources
 - Proposal to create an advisory board for the RDC that includes the Ag Department, Tourism, marketing, private sector, conservation community, university system, workforce, economic development, and energy sector. This group can share Best Practices that will inform policy changes/proposals. They can then also work as champions for the policy and advocating for positive change.
 - On the federal side, rural communities should be involved in developing and/or implementing programs, if they are willing to listen (this has been the identified barrier in the past). Many USDA and HUD programs don't work for rural areas. Additional changes, such as a uniform environmental process, could also enhance these programs and make the funding more accessible.
 - Regional councils need additional capacity to help communities navigate grant programs and opportunities.
- Fostering welcoming communities for new North Dakotans
 - Universal Welcoming Communities
 - Universal Messaging
 - State-wide Education

1. Cultural Change for Rural Communities
 2. Creating some kind of program that can be taught at multiple levels of government
- Multilingual City and County Websites
 - Provide an outline or I Framework to help existing websites translate
 - Work with NDIT to assist
 - Provide grants and/or funding assistance to help with website cost
 - (research) Language Study
 - Find out the top three languages other than English spoken in ND
 - Create a “heat” map to show where these languages are being spoken
 - (Program) Resources for Communities to develop a “Welcome Community Program”
 - Hello Neighbor
 - Needs of the community
 - Welcome Video
- Identify Data Resource/Coordination of data collection.
- To create a position (team) within commerce/ND gov as a central source to collect the state’s data (multiple sources- reports from grants, ND compass, economic impact studies, etc.), interpret, and disseminate. (see executive summary)
 - Create a centralized database for reports for people to reference.
 - Data coordinator could provide context for storytelling and driving home the ROI when resources are allocated to rural communities.
- Support Community Placemaking
- Commerce - Vibrancy Grant Increase the award amount - \$2,500 or \$5,000
 - Industrial Commission - Outdoor Heritage Grant
 1. Add an ex-officio member to the board from a rural (community of 5,000 population or less) economic/community development focus
 2. Grant Writing Training to rural communities
 - ND Ag Dept - Agritourism Grant
 - ND Park and Recreation - Community Facilities Grant
 1. This is a federal pass-through grant and it appears ND Park and Rec has little control to change the grant parameters.
 - ND Park and Rec – Park System Grant Program
 1. Create a third population category of 5,000 or less \$500,000 and modify existing categories to Population between 5,001 and 20,000 - \$1,250,000 and the other 20,001 and up - \$3,250,000
 - **NEW** Placemaking Best Practices publication (similar to [this](#)) - \$50-\$100k
 1. Include a variety of placemaking case study projects such as
 2. Stand alone event (not everything has to become an annual event—ND 100 year centennial event)
 3. Events that have been going for 100+ years (celebrate something that has stood the test of time like Killdeer Rodeo)
 4. Things that cost very little/nothing but organization (burgers in the park)
 5. Places that have become special to many (cross ranch state park, peace gardens, Medora, etc.)

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.