

**WALSH COUNTY JOB DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING**

Meeting Held at Park River City Office and via Zoom
April 19th, 2022 – 6:30 p.m.

DIRECTORS PRESENT: Julie Gemmill, Ernie Barta, Diana Hahn, Lawrence Burianek, Wanda Lee, Lucas Kelley, and Jeff Moen.

DIRECTORS ABSENT: Kyle Halvorson, Matt Beneda, Jeane Flaten, Mary Dvorak, and Terri Gorder.

OTHERS PRESENT: Bernie Kringstad (Kringstad Ironworks), Joel & Martha Anderson (Park River Hardware Inc), Chase Heck & Hanna Schneider (Leo's Potato Dumplings), and Heather Barker (Eastside Diner)

ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS

CALL TO ORDER: Gemmill called the Board of Directors meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

MINUTES: Minutes from the February 22nd, 2022 meeting were presented for approval. Hahn made a motion to approve the minutes. Burianek seconded the motion. Motion carried.

ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA: No additions.

BILLS: Expenses incurred since the last meeting were presented for approval. Barta made a motion to approve the bills. Kelley seconded the motion, and it unanimously carried. Expenses and deposits from February 22nd, 2022 through April 11th, 2022 are attached.

REQUESTS FOR FUNDS

KRINGSTAD IRONWORKS: Bernie Kringstad presented a Flex PACE Interest Buydown Loan request for a new Python X Robotic plasma cutter. This cutter is 8x faster than a human and is more accurate. Wants to automate this process due to labor market conditions as this would reduce time spent cutting metal and create more efficiency and less waste. Will also work with NVCTC to have students come over and learn on the machine.

Request was for \$12,574.47 for the community portion of the Flex PACE Interest buydown loan. Motioned by Barta to approve the \$12,574.47 loan. Seconded by Lee. Motion carried.

PARK RIVER HARDWARE: Joel and Martha Anderson presented a \$15,705.27 request for a Flex PACE Interest Buydown Loan to purchase Lon's Hardware in Park River. Their family has owned 3-4 Hardware Hanks and has a background in construction. Plan is to improve the building and replace windows (however improvement will happen over a longer timeframe due to fund availability). Six people are currently working at Lon's Hardware and the Andersons wish to keep those people employed there. J. Anderson plans to convert the upstairs back to offices and apartments and live there. Tentative purchase date is May 2nd and Lon will stay on for a few weeks to help with the transition and be on call after that.

Request was for \$15,705.27 for the community portion of the Flex PACE Interest buydown loan. Motioned by Kelley to approve the \$15,705.27 loan. Seconded by Burianek. After roll call vote, motion carried.

LEO'S POTATO DUMPLINGS: Chase Heck & Hanna Schneider were present to ask for the community portion of a Flex PACE Interest Buydown Loan in the amount of up to \$23,000. They plan to purchase the Leo's Potato Dumplings Business since the business was planning to shut down and they didn't want that to occur. Heck would like to expand the business and potentially add new products. Heck mentioned that the current owners would help with the transition.

Request was for up to \$23,000 for the community portion of the Flex PACE Interest buydown loan. Motioned by Lee to approve up to a \$23,000 loan. Seconded by Hahn. After roll call vote, motion carried.

EASTSIDE DINER: Heather Barker was present to ask for a \$5,300 direct loan to fix the heater system, get a new roof liner, purchase a new grill, and purchase a new single serve ice cream machine. Currently Eastside Diner has a 3-part heater system and 1 part is not working, would also need to replace duct work, this would cost \$2,000. They would also like to get a new liner for the roof which costs \$1,100, purchase a new grill which costs \$2,200 which Barker would pay half the cost. Lastly, Barker would like to purchase a single serve ice cream machine for \$1,100. Eastside currently leases the property but would like to purchase in the future, they have a 10-year lease. Barker stated that the building owner is responsible for the repairs but isn't doing the repairs. Barker also said if they would purchase the building, she would like to put in a kid arcade on the other half of the building.

Request was for a \$5,300 direct loan. Motioned by Hahn to issue a \$5,300 direct loan for 1 year with 3% interest (\$448.88 payments per month) with payments beginning a month after loan closing. Barta seconded the motion. Upon roll call vote, motion carries.

WALSH COUNTY CAREER BUILDERS: The request is for \$50,000 per year, for 5 years to support the Walsh County Career Builders program. The program will provide 50% of the business match to participate in the ND Career Builders program. This program allows student tuition loan repayment or a scholarship for up to \$17,000 for 3 years with a 3-year commitment to live in North Dakota and work in Walsh County.

Gemmill motioned to match the combined totals that Grafton Economic Development and Park River Development Corporation contribute, up to \$50,000 per year for 5 years. Moen abstained, rest voted yes, motion carried.

OLD BUSINESS

UPDATE ON WEBSITE: Website is updated and now live, there still needs to be improvements and content added but the website can be accessed by the public now.

SCRUBS DAY: Scrubs Day was successful with around 700 students from area schools participating.

MARKETPLACE FOR KIDS: Will be on April 20th from 9:15 am to 2 pm at Grafton Public School.

PARK RIVER CHILDCARE UPDATE: The Park River School District was offered the Sunshine Kids Childcare building and they purchased the property.

RAD COOP UPDATE: Schools have been added to the RAD Coop delivery route due to lack of supplies for the schools. Crystal might be added to the route as well as they have expressed an interest to add to their store. WC Health Department would like something to happen in Minto as well, whether that is a locker or a convenience store is to be determined. The lockers should be installed in Fordville and Adams tentatively in mid-May along with launching online shopping. The 1st annual meeting will be Thursday night in Fordville at 6 pm. The 3 grocers involved with this

project will be going to Kansas to be the keynote speakers at the Rural Grocery Conference. The Bush Foundation will also be working on an article about the project, along with Ag Week.

VIBRANCY GRANT UPDATE: The vibrancy grant that was written by French and submitted by Grafton Economic Development was accepted and will be used to paint 6 fire hydrants on main street in Grafton later this summer.

NEW BUSINESS

WEBSITE REQUESTS: French has received a couple requests for website creation. She felt it was in the scope of her position to help cities develop their own websites without charge. The board agreed with this assessment.

BEAUTIFICATION DAY: 1st Annual Grafton Beautification Day will occur on May 15th hosted by the Grafton Community Group, all volunteers welcomed.

QUARTER 1 LOAN UPDATES: Were presented to the board and are attached to the minutes.

AUDIT UPDATE: The 2021 audit has been completed without issue or incident.

CATALYST FUND: The Red River Regional Council received funds during the COVID pandemic to help businesses. They have finished the first round of funding and the loan will now become a revolving loan fund.

ANNOUNCEMENTS/COMMENTS: None

ADJOURNMENT: Hahn made a motion to adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 8:40 p.m.

Reported by,

Signed,

Angelle French
Director

Julie Gemmill
Chair