

**NORTHEAST ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, INC. – NED, INC.  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING  
WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 23, 2022 – 7 P.M.**

*NENEDD Office – Conference Room, 111 S. 1<sup>st</sup> St., Norfolk, NE 68701  
West Point Chamber of Commerce – 200 Anna Stalp Ave. West Point, NE 68788  
City of Columbus Offices – 1<sup>st</sup> Floor Mayor’s Office, 2424 14<sup>th</sup> St., Columbus, NE 68601*

**MINUTES**

**I. Call to Order:** The Northeast Economic Development, Inc. (NED, Inc.) Board of Directors meeting was called to order at 7:01 p.m. by NED, Inc. President Brad Albers. who informed the public about the location of the Open Meetings Act LB 898 and that it was accessible to the public.

**II. Roll Call:** NENEDD Planning & Administrative Assistant, Grace Petersen, read roll call.

**Board Members Present:**

Brad Albers, President, Business Owner (Norfolk)  
Shannon Stuchlik, Vice President, Midwest Bank of Pierce (Norfolk)  
Jerry Engdahl, Secretary/Treasurer, Platte County Supervisor (Columbus)  
Jim McCarville, Northeast Community College (Norfolk)

**Board Members Absent:**

Megan Weaver, Wakefield Progressive, Inc.  
Rich Jablonski, Columbus City Council

**NENEDD Board Members Present:** Charlie Bahr, Columbus City Council (Columbus);  
Tina Biteghe Bi Ndong, West Point Chamber of Commerce (West Point).

**NENEDD Staff Present:**

Thomas L. Higginbotham, Jr., Mandy Gear, Jeff Christensen, Kristen Rosner, and Grace Petersen.

**III. Introduction of Guests:** None.

**IV. Secretary’s Report**

**A. Consideration for approval of the February 23, 2022, agenda and the January 26, 2022, meeting minutes.** Jerry Engdahl made a motion to approve the February 23, 2022, agenda and the January 26, 2022, meeting minutes. Jim McCarville seconded that motion. **AYES:** Shannon Stuchlik, Jim McCarville, and Jerry Engdahl. **NAYS:** None. **ABSENT:** Megan Weaver and Rich Jablonski. Motion carried.

**V. Treasurer’s Report**

**A. Consideration for acceptance of the January 2022 Treasurer’s Report as presented.** NENEDD Fiscal Officer Kristen Rosner presented the report. Shannon Stuchlik made a motion to accept the January 2022 Treasurer’s Report as presented. Brad Albers seconded the motion. **AYES:** Shannon Stuchlik, Jim McCarville, and Jerry Engdahl. **NAYS:** None. **ABSENT:** Megan Weaver and Rich Jablonski. Motion carried.

## VI. Action Items

**A. Consideration to approve accepting \$125,000 CDBG RLF funds from Knox County for a loan to Jhett and Morgan Avery, d/b/a Avery Welding near Verdigre.** NENEDD Business Loan Specialist Jeff Christensen presented. Jhett and Morgan Avery are planning the purchase of a building at 88182 Highway 14 near Verdigre to expand their welding business. It was formerly a welding shop called Zimmel and Welding. The 72-foot-by-144-foot building sits on 4.20 acres next to the Verdigre Sale Barn on Highway 14. There is no equipment with the purchase and no renovation is needed. Jhett provides portable welding services, cattle equipment manufacturing, and repair shop. The total project costs are estimated to be \$316,000. Knox County will lend \$125,000 for this project. These funds will be sub-granted to NED, Inc. as a Non-Profit Development Organization (NDO), who will in turn lend the \$125,000 to Jhett and Morgan Avery for this project. The \$125,000 NDO loan will also have a 20-year term at 4.50% (fixed). Payments will be made to NED, Inc. This is the process approved by the Nebraska Department of Economic Development (DED) to de-federalize CDBG funds in our local communities. NED, Inc. will file a subordinate deed of trust on the business real estate being purchased at 88182 Highway 14, Verdigre, have a subordinate UCC lien on the business personal property at Avery Welding, and require a life insurance assignment from Jhett for the amount of the loan for the life of the loan. NED, Inc. will also file a deed of trust on the Avery's 14-acre farm/rental property in Antelope County. Jim McCarville made a motion to approve accepting \$125,000 CDBG RLF funds from Knox County for a loan to Jhett and Morgan Avery, d/b/a Avery Welding near Verdigre. Jerry Engdahl seconded the motion. **AYES:** Shannon Stuchlik, Jim McCarville, and Jerry Engdahl. **NAYS:** None. **ABSENT:** Megan Weaver and Rich Jablonski. Motion carried.

**B. Consideration to approve a \$114,515 loan to Nihira-SAN, LLC d/b/a NoFo Pizza & Café – Norfolk.** NENEDD Business Specialist Jeff Christensen presented. Caleb Nihira and his wife, Jody Gibson, are planning to open NoFo Pizza and Café at 501 W. Norfolk Ave. in downtown Norfolk. Project costs are for renovation and equipment purchase. NoFo will be a one-of-a-kind casual dining bakery, pizzeria, and all-day café specializing in handcrafted pizzas, breads, pastries, deli sandwiches, and a small menu of items produced using locally-sourced organic products whenever possible. The total project costs are estimated to be \$286,288. NED, Inc. will lend \$114,515 to Nihira-SAN, LLC to purchase equipment and for renovation to a building to start NoFo Pizza & Café in downtown Norfolk. This loan will have a term of 10 years at an interest rate of 4.50% (fixed). NED, Inc. will file a UCC lien (subordinate to the bank) on all business assets of Nihira-SAN, LLC, d/b/a North Fork Bread Co. and NoFo Pizza and Café. NED, Inc. will require a personal guaranty from Caleb Nihira and his wife, Jody Gibson, and life insurance assignment from Caleb Nihira for the amount of the loan for the life of the loan. NED, Inc. will also file a subordinate deed of trust on their residence in Stanton. Shannon Stuchlik made a motion to approve a \$114,515 loan to Nihira-SAN, LLC d/b/a NoFo Pizza & Café - Norfolk. Jim McCarville seconded that motion. **AYES:** Shannon Stuchlik, Jim McCarville, and Jerry Engdahl. **NAYS:** None. **ABSENT:** Megan Weaver and Rich Jablonski. Motion carried.

**C. Recommendation to approve direct homebuyer assistance applicant #101720.** NENEDD Housing Loan Specialist Mandy Gear presented. NENEDD staff have reviewed the application and are recommending approval for direct homebuyer assistance in the amount of \$30,000 for applicant #101720. This is a 0% Deferred Interest Loan, due upon transfer of title. Shannon Stuchlik made a motion to approve direct homebuyer assistance applicant #101720. Jim McCarville seconded that motion. **AYES:** Shannon Stuchlik, Jim McCarville, and Jerry Engdahl. **NAYS:** None. **ABSENT:** Megan Weaver and Rich Jablonski. Motion carried.

- VII. President/Board Comments:** NED, Inc. President Brad Albers asked about the upcoming Broadband Workshop on March 21, 2022, being hosted by Nebraska's eight Economic Development Districts. NENEDD Executive Director Thomas L. Higginbotham, Jr. said participants will discuss broadband issues in rural Nebraska and ways to improve internet access.
- VIII. Next Meeting Date:** The next NED, Inc. Board of Directors meeting will be held on Wednesday, March 30, 2022, at 7 p.m. The meeting will be held at via conference call.
- IX. Adjournment:** Shannon Stuchlik made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Jim McCarville seconded the motion. **AYES:** Shannon Stuchlik, Jim McCarville, and Jerry Engdahl. **NAYS:** None. **ABSENT:** Megan Weaver and Rich Jablonski. Motion carried. NENEDD President Brad Albers adjourned the meeting at 7:21 p.m.