

**NORTHEAST NEBRASKA ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT – NENEDD
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 30, 2022 – 7:15 P.M.**

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

MINUTES

I. Call to Order: The Northeast Nebraska Economic Development District (NENEDD) Board of Directors meeting was called to order at 7:24 p.m. by NENEDD Chairwoman Judy Mutzenberger 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 Administrative Assistant, Grace Petersen, read roll call.

Board Members Present:

Judy Mutzenberger, Chairwoman, Cuming County Supervisor (West Point)
Charlie Bahr, Vice Chairman, Columbus City Council (Columbus)
Tina Biteghe Bi Ndong, West Point Chamber of Commerce (West Point)
Troy Uhlir, Madison County Commissioner (Norfolk)
Sally Ganem, Fremont City Council (West Point)
Blake Denton, MetLife Investment Management (West Point)
Loren Kucera, Nebraska Business Development Center (NBDC), Wayne (Norfolk)

Board members absent:

Gary Jackson, Secretary/Treasurer, Norfolk City Council

NED Inc. Board Members Present:

Shannon Stuchlik, Midwest Bank of Pierce (Norfolk).

NENEDD Staff Present:

Thomas L. Higginbotham, Jr., Tina M. Engelbart, Martin Griffith, Mandy Gear, Andrea Larson, Riah Deane, Kirk Brown (West Point), Jeff Christensen, Kristen Rosner, and Grace Petersen in Norfolk unless otherwise stated.

III. Introduction of Guests: Jon Roberts, Senior, Location Strategies with MarksNelson.

IV. Secretary’s Report

A. Consideration to approve the March 30, 2022, agenda and the January 26, 2022, minutes:

Charlie Bahr made a motion to approve the March 30, 2022, agenda and the January 26, 2022, minutes. Tina Biteghe Bi Ndong seconded the motion. **AYES:** Troy Uhlir, Charlie Bahr, Tina Biteghe Bi Ndong, Sally Ganem, Blake Denton, and Loren Kucera. **NAYS:** None. **ABSENT:** Gary Jackson. Motion carried.

V. Treasurer’s Report

A. Consideration to accept the January and February 2022 Treasurer’s Report as presented.

NENEDD Fiscal Officer Kristen Rosner presented the reports. Tina Biteghe Bi Ndong made a motion to accept the January and February 2022 Treasurer’s Report as presented. Sally Ganem seconded the motion. **AYES:** Troy Uhlir, Charlie Bahr, Tina Biteghe Bi Ndong, Sally Ganem, Blake Denton, and Loren Kucera. **NAYS:** None. **ABSENT:** Gary Jackson. Motion carried.

VI. Discussion Items

A. Quarterly Staff Reports. NENEDD staff listed their activities from January-March 2022. Board members were encouraged to read through the reports and contact staff if there were any questions.

B. Presentation from Jon Roberts, Senior, Location Strategies with MarksNelson on Project Connect. In June 2020, NENEDD received a CARES ACT grant (24 months 7/1/2020 to 6/30/2022) from the U.S. Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration (EDA) Denver Regional Office to hire a consultant to provide technical assistance to NENEDD's 16-county region that would prevent, prepare for, and respond to the coronavirus. Requests for proposals were sent to 27 firms; we received 2 proposals that were forwarded to board members for their review and scoring. In August 2021, the board approved entering into a contract with MarksNelson, LLC to conduct a Co-Working and Virtual Meeting Space Analysis for NENEDD's region. The goal of Project Connect is to establish and grow a network of coworking spaces throughout NENEDD's region. This network will help support the existing remote workers in the region who have been forced to adapt to a new type of work due to the pandemic. These spaces will also help the region continue to attract new professional talent and retain existing residents. Roberts said six communities are actively pursuing coworking spaces. They are: the City of Norfolk, City of Fremont, City of Columbus, City of Wakefield, Cuming County, and Pierce County.

VII. Action Items

A. Consideration to appoint a budget and nominating committee. NENEDD Executive Director Thomas L. Higginbotham, Jr. presented. On an annual basis, a budget and nominating committee is appointed to review and recommend to the full board of directors the next fiscal year's budget as prepared by staff and to review and recommend to the full board of directors new board members and new officers. Sally Ganem, Loren Kucera, and Charlie Bahr were nominated. Troy Uhlir made a motion to appoint a budget and nominating committee. Tina Biteghe Bi Ndong seconded that motion. **AYES:** Troy Uhlir, Charlie Bahr, Tina Biteghe Bi Ndong, Sally Ganem, Blake Denton, and Loren Kucera. **NAYS:** None. **ABSENT:** Gary Jackson. Motion carried.

VIII. Chairman's/Board Comments: None.

IX. Next Meeting Date: The NENEDD Board of Directors meeting will be held on Wednesday, April 27, 2022, at 7:15 p.m. or following the NED, Inc. meeting. The meeting will be held at the following location: City of Norfolk Offices – Training Room, 309 N. 5th St., Norfolk, NE 68701.

X. Adjournment: Troy Uhlir made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Sally Ganem seconded the motion. **AYES:** Troy Uhlir, Charlie Bahr, Tina Biteghe Bi Ndong, Sally Ganem, Blake Denton, and Loren Kucera. **NAYS:** None. **ABSENT:** Gary Jackson. Motion carried. NENEDD Chairwoman Judy Mutzenberger adjourned the meeting at 8:09 p.m.