

**Q4 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FOUNDATION MEETING
WSI BOARD ROOM & VIA TEAMS CONNECTION
1600 EAST CENTURY AVENUE
BISMARCK ND
NOVEMBER 6, 2025**

Economic Development Foundation members present: Brandon Bochenski, Keith Lund, Spencer Marchand, Kevin Müller, Vicki Monsen, Tyler Neether, Anna Nelson, Matt Perdue, Jaci Praska, Mike Seminary, Paul Steffes, Thomas Stromme.

Commerce staff present: Katie Ralston Howe, Tracey Miller, Maria Effertz, Alison Widmer, Corby Kemmer, Rikki Roehrich, Tammy Heick, Sherri Frieze

CALL TO ORDER/WELCOME MEMBERS

Chairman Mike Seminary called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m., welcoming the Economic Development Foundation members and guests in the room and online via the TEAMS connection.

MINUTES/FINANCIAL SUMMARY/REQUEST FOR FUNDS

MINUTES

Motion: It was moved by Kevin Müller, seconded by Paul Steffes, to approve the August 7, 2025, Minutes. No discussion, all in favor. Motion carried.

FINANCIAL SUMMARY

Motion: It was moved by Matt Perdue, seconded by Spencer Marchand, to approve the October 31st, 2025, Financial Summary Report for \$57, 934.79. No discussion, all in favor. Motion carried.

REQUEST FOR FUNDS

Appreciation Dinner for a departing board member had a request for funds from the Foundation. Discussion and vote by Roll Call was recorded.

Motion: It was moved by Brandon Bochenski, seconded by Spencer Marchand, to deny the NDDF Request for Funds.

Brandon Bochenski – deny; Cassidy Hjelmstad – absent; Megan Langley – absent; Robbi Lauf – absent; Keith Lund – deny; Kevin Müller – deny; Vicki Monsen – deny; Lindsey Narum – absent; Tyler Neether – deny; Anna Nelson – deny; Matt Perdue – deny; Jaci Praska – deny; Mike Seminary – deny; Zac Smith – absent; Paul Steffes – deny; Thomas Stromme – deny. All in favor, Motion carried.

WELCOME NEWLY APPOINTED MEMBERS

Deputy Commissioner Ralston Howe

Deputy Commissioner Ralston Howe recognized newly appointed members; Keith Lund, Matt Perdue, Tyler Neether, and Zac Smith.

GOVERNOR'S WORKFORCE SUMMIT

Deputy Commissioner Ralston Howe

The Governor's Workforce Summit, held on October 2, at the Bismarck State College Advanced Technology Center, was the first of its kind event, that had more than 100 in attendance. With more than 80 workforce development programs currently in place, the event served as a launchpad for deeper collaboration, strategic alignment and innovation in workforce readiness.

Governor Armstrong emphasized the importance of aligning state efforts to meet the needs of both employers and job seekers in a rapidly evolving labor market. The Workforce Development Council (WDC) has been the owner of the state's workforce strategy, but it is becoming more strengthened, with the industry at the table more.

Nine or more agencies are working in a shared space, offering different programs and services with no true alignment. Subcommittees have identified a shared vision for a skilled workforce that fuels ND's economy, a need to support thriving and open communities, anticipating the needs of the future, attracting employers and industry to the state, and valuing diverse work contributions.

Thirteen state agencies have met every other week over the summer and are currently meeting monthly. Three new taskforces were activated with shared goals:

- A shared landing page for all workforce programs, to be listed as services, not listed by agency
- The work needed to create the back end of the landing page.
- Identifying shared measures of success

LEGISLATIVE TASK FORCE ON GOVERNMENT EFFICIENCY

Deputy Commissioner Ralston Howe

Deputy Commission Ralston Howe talked about Governor Armstrong's Department of Governmental Efficiencies (DOGE) plan. Commerce, NDIIT, and HHS met with the DOGE taskforce in July to focus on creating efficiencies.

Commerce's presentation to the taskforce focused on administration of grant management throughout the agency, and programs that were legislatively introduced into Commerce. It has been noted that some of those programs have taken away from the true mission of Commerce and future investments should be aligned within the mission of Commerce and the Executive budget to increase those efficiencies.

Next meeting will be in December, but Commerce may not be part of that agenda. The Foundation will be kept aware of Commerce presentations to the taskforce.

COMMERCE DIVISION UPDATES

Emailed to all members – Q & A

Discussion ensued on various topics including government tariffs, tourism stats., workforce programs and economic development across the state.

BOARD MEMBER AROUND THE ROOM UPDATES/LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

All

Topics of discussion included:

Childcare, Housing, Safe Communities, Higher paying jobs, Quality of Life, Tax Breaks for Primary Residence, Recruiting students from Minnesota.

OTHER/Q&A

Members discussed 2026 quarterly meeting dates with agreeance on the third Thursday of the month, starting with a virtual meeting in February 2026. Sherri will email members the anticipated meeting dates.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was unanimously adjourned at 3:10 p.m.