



**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FOUNDATION  
TEAMS MEETING  
Tuesday, June 7, 2022  
1:30 - 4:00 p.m.**

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**Economic Development Foundation members present:** Kyle Blanchfield, Douglas Bolken, Tom Campbell, Ron Day, Erik Diederich, Bruce Gjovig, Lyn James, Tommy Kenville, Vicki Monson, John Nagel, Lindsey Narum, Jamal Omar, Mike Seminary, Paul Steffes, Thomas Stromme, Eric Trueblood

**Commerce staff present:** Shawn Kessel, James Leiman, Joshua Teigen, Maria Hansen, Katie Ralston, Cortnee Jensen, Sherri Frieze

**Guest present:** Nathan Schneider

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**WELCOME and ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS**

Chairperson Lyn James called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m. welcoming the Economic Development Foundation members and guests.

**APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES  
APPROVAL OF THE FINANCIAL REPORT**

**Motion:** It was moved by Mike Seminary seconded by Ron Day to approve the minutes of March 1, 2022. Motion carried.

**Motion:** It was moved by Tom Campbell, seconded by Bruce Gjovig to approve the financial report for \$83,884.20, as of May 31<sup>st</sup>. Motion carried.

**LEGISLATIVE POLICY MEMBER OPEN DISCUSSION**

**Commissioner Leiman**

**Deputy Commissioner Kessel**

Commissioner Leiman discussed the projects advancing, and the prospective projects. The projects touch every part of the state, utilizing existing assets and joining with technology to meet global production.

Recommendations brought forth by the Workforce Development Council (WDC), have a structural change; economic development for energy, ag, and aerospace, and the need to market the state within community development.

Secondly, is the importance of the state to position itself to possibly have the highest GDP per capita in the country. The need to think unconventionally on where the state needs to go for the future of workforce, carbon neutrality, unmanned aerial systems, and the branding of North Dakota. The upcoming legislative session will be pivotal for ND, as well as the Commerce Department. To be agile and competitive, the ND Commerce strategy will need to become individual.

Deputy Commissioner Kessel spoke on the return on investments and taxes for communities. Members discussed the need for more investment for venture capital and angel capital for the LIFT program, and the Innovate program.

## **INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENT AND JOBS ACT (IIJA) GRANTS**

### **STATE ENERGY PROGRAM – IMPLEMENTATION FOR EFFICIENCY AND RESILIENCE**

**Maria Effertz**

\$5 million for fiscal year 2022 – 2026 will be disbursed, in addition to the regular allocation of state energy program dollars.

- Community based only. Anything that will increase energy efficiency will be considered for communities and counties.
- An Energy Efficiency and Resiliency Plan must be written, with draft due in Sept of 2022 to receive funding.
- 1 full time (FT) Commerce position will be needed.

### **STATE ENERGY PROGRAM – CLEAN ENERGY PROGRAM**

**Maria Effertz**

Funding for communities that are not in the corridor for electric charging stations.

### **WEAHERIZATION ASSISTANCE**

**Maria Effertz**

\$15 million for fiscal year 2022 – 2026 will be disbursed.

- 15% issued at time of initial award, and 35% issued upon state plan approval from the Department of Energy.
- 2 FT Commerce positions will be needed.

### **ENERGY EFFICIENCY AND CONSERVATION BLOCK GRANT (EECBG) PROGRAM**

**Maria Effertz**

Old program, funded during the Obama administration.

- 68% of funds are set aside for cities, towns with populations of at least 35,000.
- Cities and towns with a population less than 35,000 will need to apply for the program.
- First round of funds to be released in the fall of 2022.

### **MANUFACTURED LEADERSHIP PROGRAM**

**Joshua Teigen**

\$50 million to invest in smart manufacturing technologies, under the Energy Renewable program.

- Department of Commerce to leverage Impact Dakota to distribute the dollars.
- Application to be open Q4 2022
- Will be funded in the form of grants for smart manufacturing technologies, high performance computing resources to manufacturers.

### **WORKFORCE GRANTS**

**Katie Ralston Howe**

\$20 million in American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) dollars was awarded to ND and will be deployed.

### **REGIONAL WORKFORCE INNOVATION PROGRAM (RWIP) - \$15 Million total**

- Regional partnerships; 1 application per region
- 25% match
- Broad focus
- Sustainable initiatives
- Milestone – based funding model

**TECHNICAL SKILLS TRAINING GRANT - \$3 Million total**

- Two Tracks
- 1:1 match
  - Accelerated reskilling
  - Internal upskilling, safety training
- Multiple funding windows

**WORFORCE INNOVATION GRANT (WIG) - \$2 Million total**

- Three Tracks
- 1:1 match
  - Focus on talent attraction
  - Innovative or unconventional initiatives
  - Recruitment in areas of high unemployment
  - Match for visa costs for industries most impacted by pandemic

**LEADERSHIP REPORTS**

**COMMERCE – Shawn Kessel**

- Budget creation currently and the challenges this legislative session, with the appropriate number of staff to do the work.
- Commerce will provide a policy document to the Governor's office at July end. Foundation members will be asked for their input.

**TOURISM/MARKETING – Shawn Kessel for Sara Otte Coleman**

- Media coverage has been strong
- Business development has led with 1 billion impressions
- 95 media pieces on Bit Zero has reached 226 thousand people recently.
- Social media and paid media search engine optimization have resulted in paid search to web site up over 151 percent through 2021.
- Canadian border crossing is up

**MAIN STREET ND SUMMIT 2022 – Maria Effertz**

- October 24 – Pre-Summit event, social networking with legislators, community leaders
- October 25 – 25, MSI Summit at the Bismarck Event Center
- Theme – Engaging Communities in Workforce
- Summit is free this year
- Sponsorship benefits
- Emma Cook – Commerce new employee as Community Development liaison has been engaged with MSI and communities.

**EDA GRANT – ARPA STATEWIDE PLANNING**

- Placemaking is a multi-faceted approach to planning, designing and managing public spaces and the community assets are critical to economic resilience and workforce attraction and retention across the state.
- Application for communities available in September
- \$100, 000 funding for up to 5 communities, to include the planning for placemaking.

### **DIVISION OF COMMUNITY SERVICES (DCS)**

- Huge influx of federal dollars will come through to Commerce.
- Hiring of temporary admin. staff will be needed to help with the extra dollars that will be dispersed into the many federal programs in DCS.
- HOME program was moved to Housing Finance Agency with the last legislative session.

### **ED&F DIVISION – Joshua Teigen**

- The North Dakota Development Fund (NDDF) has received a significant amount of federal dollars, prompting the hire of an Asset Manager.

### **STRATEGY AND TRANSFORMATION – Cortnee Jensen**

- Working with other agencies for utilization of extra federal dollars.
- The Data/Research Division, looking to hire a third employee.
- Working on Governor Burgum’s Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) trade mission to Japan in October, with a pre mission trip conducted in August.

### **WORKFORCE - Katie Ralston Howe**

- Commerce has partnered with RoleCall to make ND a national leader in talent attraction.
- This month, Find the Good Life (FTGL) 2.0 will relaunch. In the initial FTGL campaign launched in 2016, Commerce was not able to track how many people moved to the state, but will be able to now, by connecting with community champions and employers who are hiring.
- Rollcall will tour the state again, focusing on the western and north central parts, providing training for community champions.
- ND is the only state in the nation to approach talent attraction in this way.
- The Workforce Development Council met last week in Watford City and has approved seven recommendations to recommend legislative policy changes.
  - Three Themes for the legislative recommendations this session is:
    1. Early and More Diverse Career Exploration – 3 recommendations under this theme
    2. Removing Barriers – 2 recommendations under this theme
    3. Recruitment and Retention of ND Workers – 2 recommendations under this theme
- Another batch of recommendations will need approval the September WDC quarterly meeting.
  - Occupation Licensure Reform (OLR)
  - Digital Skills Literacy – ND, along with five other states were selected for the second phase of the NGA’s Workforce Innovation Network (NGA WIN) last year in November. The states will deploy cross-agency teams to identify and implement strategies that advance digital skill development for employees to participate in work, education, or training.

### **FOUNDATION MEMBER DISCUSSIONS**

- Tri State collaboration for workforce
- H1B Visa hiring difficulty of foreign workers
- Tommy Kenville, retirement from the Foundation at end of June.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was unanimously adjourned at 4:00 p.m.