



**COUNTY OF BECKER**  
**Economic Development Authority**  
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**BECKER COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY BOARD MEETING - REGULAR MEETING MINUTES**

**February 17<sup>th</sup> 2022 (Draft)**

**3:00 p.m.**

**1<sup>st</sup> Floor Board Room**

**Becker County Courthouse**

**ATTENDEES:** Larry Knutson, Hank Ludtke, Karen Mulari, Sean Felker, Richard Vareberg, Abby Anderson, Tom Klyve (V)

**OTHER ATTENDEES:** Mary Hendrickson, Laura McKnight (V), Guy Fischer, Pat Oman, Robyn Beck (V), Stephanie Poegel (V), Dale Story, Steven Schumacher, Pat Peterman, Lonnie Neuner, Karen Pifher, Bryan Christensen.

1. **Call Meeting to Order:** Hank Ludtke called the Regular meeting to order at 3:00 p.m.
2. **Approval of Board Agenda Motion by Mulari, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Vareberg, motion carried.**
3. **Approval of December Meeting Minutes: Motion to approve by Anderson, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Mulari, motion carried.**
4. **Consent Items: Check Registers/Paying Bills/Financials: Motion to approve December Bills and Accept Financials by Felker 2<sup>nd</sup> by Mulari - motion carried.** Workshop \$664.14, Hwy 34 Group Home \$0.00, Low Income Public Housing \$18,205.72; Willow Property \$960.67; Maple Ave. Apts. \$6,258.20; Hidden Hills Group Home \$0.00, West River Townhomes \$20,943.35 and Section 8 Voucher \$19,401.00.
5. **Housing Update**
  - **Public Housing-** 2 vacant units in Audubon. Well put in on Highland Drive Property. 2 estimates reviewed (Krueger/Elsner); review comments: look at existing pump re-use – have staff determine viability of using the existing pump per conversations with the bidders and how that would adjust their quotes. Motion to table making a vendor decision by Mulari, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Anderson. Motion carried.
  - **MURL** – One borrower is non-compliant due to past due account and late inspection, may be sending to Becker County Attorney for cancellation of contract.
  - **WRT** - 2 evictions; staff discussion with Mn Housing exploring Continuum of CARE and Phase II options/opportunities: not a good site for a Phase II, but came away from the conversation with an idea to re-utilize the interior courts space and develop a small building structure to provide onsite office space for management (MMCDC) and services delivery (Mahube) and also would include a gathering space for activities, consults, training/education. Per EDA discussion and concerns with the cost of building a new structure, staff was directed to explore utilizing one of the single-story units (part of the 8 plex) that would soon be vacated. Staff mentioned potential issues with invalidating the unit’s HUD voucher and related operational agreements but would look into it.
6. **Economic Development**
  - **ARPA Projects:** Representatives provided a Q&A session for their respective projects and ARPA funding requests:
    1. **Becker County Food Pantry** (presenter Dale Story): requesting \$250,000 in County ARPA funds; anticipate receiving \$250,000 from City of Detroit Lakes. Total Project cost is \$925,000; interest in requesting ARPA contributions from townships and other potential donors once they know what the County has decided.

2. **Lake Park Water Treatment Plant** (presenter Lonnie Neuner, city admin.): A 26 year old water plant (a 20 year operational lifespan) that is overdue for needed repairs/improvements. Bids will go out in April/May; qualified for PFA bonding, but interested in reducing the bonding request and taxpayer burden. Requesting \$350,000 in County ARPA funds. Total Project costs are estimated at \$1,280,000.
3. **Audubon Water Tower** (presenter Stephanie Poegel, city admin.): Older water tower in need of rehab/improvements. Requesting \$350,000 in County ARPA funds. They will be spending \$54,000 from their ARPA funds. Total Project cost is \$406,000.
4. **Cornerstone** (presenter Karen Pifher): revamp of an existing church to provide a gathering place for area youth with various services (office, tech services, lower level youth center, volunteer projects). Requesting \$128,258 in ARPA funds for making needed ADA accessibility, touchless water/light/bathroom and HVAC/air filtration improvements. Total Project cost is \$870,000 of which \$610,000 has been raised.
5. **Callaway Affordable Housing Infrastructure (water/sewer):** infrastructure has already been completed; Requesting \$152,758 in County ARPA funds which would be used to make 2 annual bonding payments starting in 2022 and ending in 2026. Total project cost \$563,637.
6. **Boys and Girls Club** (Pat Peterman ex. Dir., presenting); Requesting \$225,000 in County ARPA funds for developing an outdoor playground. Total project cost is \$450,000; \$50,000 committed from Detroit Lakes (non ARPA dollars).
7. **Sugarbush Fire Hall** (Bryan Christensen, presenter); 4 bay Phase 1 Fire Hall. Requesting \$300,000 in County ARPA funds for Phase I building. Drastic reduction in response time est. approx. from 45 minutes to 5-10 minutes (fire, rescue and medical); currently would use existing/used vehicles, Phase I would include pouring Phase II slab for future multi-purpose room. Phase II costs are being sought from White Earth for (multi-purpose addition/building (2 additional bays), new engine and water tender) an estimated Phase II total cost of \$1,170,000.

Per EDA Board deliberation a motion was made (Felker) and 2<sup>nd</sup> (Vareberg) to move all 7 projects forward for ARPA funding consideration to the Finance Committee and County Board.

7. Balance Sheet – Budget to Actual; motion to approve by Mulari, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Anderson, motion carried.
8. EDA Board – Open Forum:
  - Childcare: Pat Oman (Co. Admin.) mentioned a meeting with HS Director about looking at changing the spending guidelines for the Start Up Grant (\$100,000) which has to-date not been utilized; brief relational discussion about a group that has been looking at space at Ecumen for a childcare setup and potential to use start up funds to equip. new day care space (same amount/purpose as would go to an individual provider - \$10,000). Will be explored/discussed at future Finance committee meeting.
  - CCCLT: Staff discussed recent conversation with Director of the CCCLT (Cass-Clay Community Land Trust) to explore building affordable housing in Becker County. Staff has connected them with a local builder who has expressed interest in the program. The CCCLT has 70 homes that have been built or are in the queue in the Fargo-Moorhead area which is quite impressive as the CLT has only been operational 1-2 years. They will go back to their board and see if they can extend their mission/operations to include Becker County.
9. Adjournment (4:34 p.m.)

**ATTEST:**

Respectfully submitted:  
/s/ Guy Fischer  
 EDA Coordinator

/s/ Hank Ludtke  
 EDA Board President