



**Visions Northwest Regional Economic Development Group**  
A Division of the Wisconsin Business Innovation Corporation

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**MEETING MINUTES**  
**VISIONS NORTHWEST REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GROUP**  
**WITC - Hayward, WI**  
**September 9, 2015 – 10:00 AM**

Meeting called to order at 10:08 AM by Chairman Kelly Klein.

- 1. Roll Call:** Scottie Sandstrom – Representing Bayfield County, Kelly Klein – Representing Iron County, Ariga Grigoryan – Representing Sawyer County, Geri Dresen – Representing Chambers of Commerce, Mike Bebeau – Representing Private Industry (Xcel Energy), Dale Kupczyk – Representing Economic Development Organizations, Dale Heikkinen (via ITV) – Representing Price County, Andy Albarado (via ITV) – Representing Rusk County

**Members Absent:** Renee Watcher – Representing Education (NorthWERD Group), Mari Kay-Nabozny – Representing NWWIB, David Minor – Representing Douglas County, Mike Spafford – Representing Washburn County, Brent McFarland – Tribal Representative,

**Others:** Patrick Drinan – WEDC, Tim Weber – WEDC, Ben Popp – American Birkebeiner, Sheldon Johnson - NWRPC Staff, Crystal Rohde – Visions Northwest staff

**Vacant Seats:** Ashland County, Burnett County, Taylor County

- 2. Introductions of Tim Weber – WEDC Regional Account Manager for Northwest Wisconsin**  
The members each introduced themselves and Patrick Drinan from WEDC introduced Tim Weber as the new RAM for the region. He explained that Tim Weber would be fully into his new position within the month.

- 3. Approval of August 12, 2015 Meeting Minutes**

A motion to approve the August 12, 2015 meeting minutes was made by Scottie Sandstrom, a second was made by Dale Heikkinen. Motion carried unanimously.

- 4. Update on WEDC FY16 Base Funding Application and Contract**

Crystal Rohde explained to the group that the application for the FY16 \$50,000 base funding through WEDC is due on September 11. The draft application had been disbursed to the group through email in the packet prior to the meeting and was reviewed and discussed thoroughly by the Visions Northwest members. The group decided upon necessary additions and revisions to the application and a motion was made by Mike Bebeau for Crystal to continue writing the application with comments included and submit by the September 11, 2015 deadline. A second was made by Dale Heikkinen. Motion carried unanimously.

- 5. Capacity Building Grant Project Ideas**

Crystal Rohde reviewed some of the discussion that occurred at the August 12<sup>th</sup> meeting regarding Capacity Building Grant project ideas. At that time, conversation focused on the possibility of Visions Northwest submitting a Capacity Building Grant application on an infrastructure project. Sheldon proposed a project of doing a sewer/water/(possibly)natural gas inventory within the region including the age/type/DNR reports/water tower maintenance, etc. and an analysis of the history of the systems in place and the projected costs of the upgrades. This study would incorporate the economic development aspect and how these communities can allow for potential expansion of industry given their current infrastructure. Mike Bebeau brought up the topic of broadband and the group discussed including it as an element in the study. Dale Kupczyk also discussed the possibility of a rail-related project and mentioned that the Northwoods Rail Transit Commission is proposing to do a study on

Actionable Shipper Data and will likely be pursuing a WEDC Targeted Industry Projects grant. Mike Bebeau made a motion for Crystal to proceed with application for a Capacity Building Grant on the proposed utility project through WEDC. The application would likely be submitted sometime in the month of November.

#### **6. CEDS Project List Review**

Crystal Rohde updated the group on the current project list including responses submitted by communities resulting from the letter that was sent out last month. She explained that there was limited response and an email follow-up had been sent out on 9/8/2015 to remind those communities that had not submitted their projects to please do so by 9/16/2015. Once the final project lists are collected, NWRPC staff will condense the list and highlight three of the projects that are EDA eligible for the completed CEDS (marketing) document.

#### **7. Visions Northwest Group Members Term List and Vacancies Discussion**

Crystal Rohde reviewed the current list of members and term lists that Wayne Lindemans had in the Visions files. She explained that it was outdated; however, it was the most current list that was on file. She asked the group if any of them recalled the way the term limits were restructured in 2014 when the Visions Northwest Administrative Guidelines were changed. The group recalled that they were all moving to three year terms and could serve two consecutive terms although none of them were clear as to whether or not their term limits started over in 2014. Members decided that these guidelines once again needed review and possible editing. Discussion around the lack of participation and ability to fill vacancies took place and it was questioned whether or not term limits may not be necessary or productive for the group. Crystal will send out the Administrative Guidelines to the members and restructuring discussion will occur in the next conference call scheduled for October 14, 2015. The group asked WEDC staff about the regulations of the way REDO is structured. They were questioning if the current regulations are the same as they were back in 2012 when the group was created. At that time, representation of different industries and subsectors was necessary to comprise the REDO. Patrick Drinan agreed to check into the regulations and to get back to Crystal with the information. She will let the group know when they meet for the conference call in October.

#### **8. Next Meeting**

Conference Call – Wednesday, October 14<sup>th</sup>, 2015 10AM

Meeting - Wednesday, November 11<sup>th</sup>, 2015 - 10AM to 12PM, WITC - Hayward

#### **9. Adjourn**

A motion was made to adjourn the meeting at 12:15 PM by Dale Heikkinen, second by Mike Bebeau.