

**Q4 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FOUNDATION**  
**via TEAMS MEETING**  
**Wednesday, April 3, 2024**  
**1:30 – 4:30 p.m.**

**Economic Development Foundation members present:** Ron Day, Cassidy Hjelmstad, Megan Langley, Spencer Marchand, Frank Matus, Kevin Müller, Vicki Monsen, John Nagel, Anna Nelson, Mike Seminary, Paul Steffes, Thomas Stromme

**Commerce staff present:** Joshua Teigen, Rich Garman, Sara Otte Coleman, Katie Ralston Howe, Maria Effertz, Alison Widmer, Anya Hondel, Sherri Frieze

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**WELCOME and ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS**

In the absence of Chairperson Lyn James, the meeting was called to order by Vice Chairperson Mike Seminary at 1:30 p.m., welcoming the Economic Development Foundation members and guests. Roll call was conducted.

**MINUTES**

**Motion:** It was moved by Paul Steffes, seconded by Cassidy Hjelmstad, to approve the minutes of December 4, 2023.

**Motion:** It was unanimously approved by all to approve the Financial Summary Report, that included travel expenses from January – March 2024 for \$757.70 and the balance sheet as of January 31, 2024, for \$74,055.40.

**BRAZIL MISSION TRIP EXPENSES**

**Commissioner Teigen**

Commissioner Teigen discussed the Brazil Mission Trip that he, Deputy Commissioner Kessel, and other public and private partners attended in January 2024. Commissioner Teigen asked the Foundation to cover travel expenses that would not be covered by the State of ND's normal fiscal allowances. The expenses were reviewed and voted upon.

**Motion:** It was moved by Frank Matus, seconded by Cassidy Hjelmstad, to approve the flight upgrades and meal expenses totaling \$6,202.15. With no further discussion, motion was carried.

**DEPARTMENTAL UPDATES AND STRATEGIC REVIEW**

**Commerce and Global Engagement Office**

**Commissioner Teigen for Deputy Commissioner Kessel**

Commissioner Teigen gave a high-level talk on the Department of Commerce's Foreign Direct Investment Strategies for the upcoming legislative session that will help drive the Foundation's strategic policy discussions.

**Governor led Japan Mission in 2022**

- A direct result from the Japan Mission is a \$1.5 - \$2B project that could be announced publicly by the end of 2024.

**Brazil Mission in 2024**

- \$100M possible project(s)

**DIVISION OF COMMUNITY SERVICES**

**Maria Effertz**

**GOAL – SLUM & BLIGHT REMOVAL**

- Create communities where investment in housing and commercial property become feasible with urban areas.

**Resource Requirements**

- Increased professional staffing to provide technical assistance on funding options to support rural community finance options and layering of federal and state programs.
- Based on pilot programs \$10M for housing studies and implementation funding to continue to clean up and support for implementations.

**Action/Execution**

- Complete housing studies and access regional opportunities for housing in rural areas (2023 – 2025).
- Programmatic funding to support rural areas where planning has been completed (2025 – 2027).
- Support housing studies in rural areas providing realistic view of housing needs (2025 – 2027).

**GOAL – SUSTAINABLE FOODS**

**Resource Requirements**

- Continued support of Sustainable Food Program for study and implementation.
- \$5M

**Action/Execution**

- Complete \$1M pilot program and analysis of best practices (2023 – 2025).
- Study and Implementation dollars to support additional rural areas (2025 – 2027).

**TOURISM**

Sara Otte Coleman

- **Annual Report 2023**
  - 18.2 million trips
  - \$3.5 B spent
  - \$9.7 M spent
  - \$531.3 M in room night sales
  - 379 million paid impressions
  - 8.7 billion reached through earned media
  - 2.1 million social engagements
  - 2.77 million web site visits

**GOAL – TALENT ATTRACTION**

- Continue to invest in Find The Good Life.

**GOAL – DESTINATION DEVELOPMENT GRANTS**

- Continue Destination Development Grant Program

**GOAL – TOURISM DESTINATION MARKETING**

- Increase investment in marketing our state to visitors, to elevate all commerce work.
- Additional focus on increasing in-state awareness and pride.

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & FINANCE**

Rich Garman

**GOAL – PROJECT ATTRACTION**

- Proactively target and pursue key projects to diversify and expand wealth in ND

**GOAL – ENERGY POLICY**

- Develop & implement both near- and long-term energy policy in ND

**GOAL – SITE READINESS**

- Implement software and incentive packages to assure the immediate and long-term availability of sites ready for a multitude of development configurations.

**GOAL – NATURAL GAS WALL**

- Focus on attraction of industries that utilize significant volumes of natural gas

**GOAL – MONETIZATION OF LEADING – EDGE SECTORS**

- Monetize the sectors in which ND leads the nation. (UAS Tech & CO2 utilization)

## **ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES**

**Alison Widmer, Director**

- Working to finalize financial closeout for the fiscal year, July 1, 2023 - June 30, 2024.
- Working on the budget for submission to OMB over the summer.

## **WORKFORCE**

**Katie Ralston Howe**

### **GOAL – FIND THE GOOD LIFE**

- Actively recruiting talent from out of state to address workforce shortage.

### **GOAL – REGIONAL WORKFORCE IMPACT PROGRAM (RWIP)**

- The RWIP addresses the need to address the financial ability to deploy meaningful workforce solutions by bringing in local match to instill deeper buy in in the community.
- The Workforce Development Council (WDC) is considering a recommendation to transform the RWIP structure and align it more closely with WDC priorities and strategy.

### **GOAL – OFFICE OF LEGAL IMMIGRATION**

- Many employers struggle to find resources for recruiting foreign-born talent and the most appropriate pathways/programs for their business regarding how to integrate workers due to cultural difference and language barriers.

## **STRATEGIC SESSION DISCUSSION**

**Commissioner Teigen**

Commissioner Teigen stressed the value of the Foundation to come together with an independent viewpoint, that is not exclusively driven by Commerce. He discussed a path to move priorities into recommendations; and write policy with the use of the Policy Form, that was sent to all members via email.

## **SUBCOMMITTEE REPORT OUTS**

Subcommittee Chairs walked through their most recent updates from their subcommittee meetings. Subcommittee members will continue to meet through June and their updates will be discussed at the Q3 meeting, bringing forth their final three recommendations for each subcommittee.

## **NEXT STEPS**

- Subcommittees will continue to meet and rework their priorities.
- Q2 June meeting – Pull together 3 recommendations from each subcommittee and discuss.
- July – Rework the recommendations through the Commerce Leadership team.
- Q3 August meeting – Draft language on the 3 recommendations of each subcommittee that have been reviewed by the Commerce Leadership Team.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

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