



**MINUTES OF THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY  
HJEMKOMST CENTER AUDITORIUM - 202 1ST AVE N  
July 7, 2025 - 11:45 AM**

1. Call to Order/Roll Call

Roll call of the members was made as follows:

Present (8): Evan Balko, Sheri Larson, Nate Anderson, Chad Cota, Rob Sobolik, Kim Schlotfeldt, Emily Moore, Deb White

Absent (3): Chris Howell, Joel Paulsen, Vacant Position

2. Agenda Amendments

There were no agenda amendments.

3. Approval of Minutes

A. May 5, 2025, Meeting Minutes

**Motion to Approve made by Deb White and seconded by Emily Moore.**

For 8: Evan Balko, Sheri Larson, Nate Anderson, Chad Cota, Rob Sobolik, Kim Schlotfeldt, Emily Moore, Deb White

Against 0: None

Abstain/Recuse 0: None

**Motion Passed**

4. Citizens To Be Heard

Stacia Sytsma, MBA Executive Director, provided an update of past and future events on behalf of the Moorhead Business Association. For more information, visit <https://mhdmba.org/>.

5. Commissioners' Report

6. Presentations

A. West Central Initiative - Ben Schierer, Director of Civic Partnerships

i. 2024 Annual Report - [The Current](#)

ii. The View from Here: [An Almanac of Life and Land in Our Region](#)

Ben Schierer, WCI Director of Civic Partnerships, highlighted areas from the 2024 Annual Report, such as the Rural Democracy Project, which increases civic participation and leadership development (pg. 8), focuses on Economic Development (pg. 14), and a page which thanked individuals and organizations who have supported the mission of West Central Initiative through the years (pg. 26). He finished up by highlighting grant recipients - businesses located in Moorhead - who have received grants or loans through the West Central Initiative since 1986.

Derrick LaPoint added the work that Greg Wagner, Director of Business & Economic

Development, completed for the Promise Grant and the funds received by the three projects located on Highway 10 within the Moorhead Center Mall Redevelopment area really kick-started downtown redevelopment. He also mentioned his monthly engagement meetings with economic development professionals to discuss economic trends within the region as being valuable.

B. Spark Center for Entrepreneurship - Laura Caroon, The Luminarie

Dan Mahli, City Manager, provided an update on the Community Center Library project which is currently under construction and scheduled to open in Spring 2026. He stated that the Spark Center for Entrepreneurship will be a big part of the new library's offerings to the community.

Laura Caroon, founder of The Luminarie, is contracted to develop a vision for the Spark Center for Entrepreneurship, provided strategic objectives for the new entrepreneurial center in Moorhead and why it matters. She showed how those objectives align with Onward Moorhead Comprehensive Plan and its strategic goals. She shared a rendering of the physical space describing how the space could be used, partnerships that could be built, and access to various resources. Finally, she shared a roadmap for the next 12 months to prepare the center to open with programming and events when the library opens in 2026.

Commissioner White commented on the synergy that could be created between the "Global Market" event held at the Hjemkomst Center, the future "Cultural Mall" to be located on Center Avenue, and the Center for Entrepreneurship.

C. 2025 Legislative Recap - Lisa Bode, Government Affairs Director, City of Moorhead

Lisa Bode, Governmental Affairs Director, provided a final update on the outcomes of the 2025 Minnesota Legislative Special Session. She stated that the TIF extension request for the Moorhead Downtown TIF District 31 was approved which increases the time to capture increments to 10 years. She added that Moorhead's other legislative priorities were largely unsuccessful including flood mitigation, LGA, Sustainable Aviation Fuel (DG Fuels), Cultural Mall Capital request, Border City Enterprise Zone language changes, and City Hall sales tax exemption.

7. Business Items

A. 2026 Preliminary Budget & Tax Levy Discussion

Amy Thorpe, Economic Development Program Administrator, provided a general overview of the budget process including key dates for the approval of the 2026 EDA budget. LaPoint and Mahli provided additional details. The preliminary budget is anticipated to be approved by the EDA and City Council in September.

B. Economic Development Report

Derrick LaPoint, DMI/Economic Development, provided highlights from the Economic Development report as found in packet materials.

8. Information/Update

A. 11th Street Underpass Project - [Link to MnDOT Project Details & Updates](#)

B. Downtown Moorhead Vision - [Link to More to Moorhead Website](#)

C. Community Center and Regional Library - [Link to More Information](#)

D. Building & Housing Updates - [Sign up for e-Notifications](#)

9. Adjourn

Meeting adjourned at 12:31 pm.

The proceedings of this meeting are digitally recorded and are available for public review.

APPROVED BY:

ATTEST:



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Nate Anderson  
Chair

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Kim Schlotfeldt  
Secretary