**Wednesday, September 13, 2023, 6:00 p.m.**

**221 Main ST. N., Renville, MN 56284** (Renville Community Center)

**Members Present:** Commissioners Mike Brouwer, Kevin Crowley, Doug Erickson, Jon Hawkinson, Jill Hoff, José Luciano, Maureen Melgaard-Schneider, Robert Moller, Shawn Mueske, Rollie Nissen, Kiza Olson, Lorallen Schmeling, Dave Sebesta, Carl Shuldes, Berit Spors, and Jeff Vetsch.

**Members Absent:** Commissioners Tiffany Barnard, Tony Hausladen, Roger Imdieke, Doug Krueger, Tom McDonnell, Christopher Rowan, Steve Schmitt, Paul Simonsen, and Steve Stotko.

**Staff Present:** Executive Director Eric Day, Finance Director Darla Bajari, Economic Developers Michelle Marotzke and Nate Reuss, Regional Community Planner Ben Dolan, Transportation & Community Planner Mike Nicholas, and Communications Specialist Ben Carlson.

**Staff Absent:** Regional Transportation Resource Coordinator Terry Smith.

**Guests:**  None

**Call to Order:** Chairperson Shawn Mueske called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

**Pledge of Allegiance:** The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by all Commissioners and staff in attendance, led by Chairperson Mueske.

# **Introductions:** All present Commissioners and staff provided introductions. Additional introduction time was given to Commissioner Mike Brouwer and MMDC Transportation & Community Planner, Mike Nicholas, as this was their first Commission meeting.

# **Approval of Agenda:** Chairperson Shawn Mueske presented the agenda and called for any additions. Executive Director Day offered tow additions, including:

* New Business M: Consideration of Brent Guyan for Commission Appointment
* New Business N: Consideration of 2024 Commission Meeting Dates

# Commissioner Rollie Nissen moved to approve the agenda, with the additions from Day. Commissioner Maureen Melgaard-Schneider seconded the motion, which carried with no dissent.

# **Approval of June 21, 2023, Full Commission Meeting Minutes:** Commissioner and Commission Secretary Dave Sebesta informed the Commission that he had reviewed the minutes form the June 21, 2023, Commission meeting and found them to be in order. He then made a motion for approval of the minutes, as presented. Commissioner Robert Moller seconded the motion, which carried with no dissent.

**Treasurer’s Report:** Commissioner and Commission Treasurer Kevin Crowley provided an overview of the Treasurer’s Report. The checking account balance, as of June 9, 2023, was $21,421.50. Receipts since that date totaled $130,255.79 and expenditures totaled $135.319.45. The checkbook balance as of August 31, 2023, was $16,357.84. Commissioner Crowley pointed to investment account information that was provided in the meeting materials packet. He also pointed to savings account information. MMDC’s savings account balance, as of June 9, 2023, was $256,640.47. Receipts totaled $235,930.57 with payroll and transfers totaling $216,552.29, leaving a balance of $276,018.75.

Commissioner Crowley then made a motion to approve the treasurers report, as presented. Commissioner Lorallen Schmeling seconded the motion, which carried with no dissent.

# **Consent Agenda:** The meeting materials packet contained minutes from the following recent meetings for the consent agenda:

* 1. ARPA Loan Approval Board Notes – July 14, 2023
  2. Notes from the Joint Meeting of MMDC Loan Approval Boards – July 18, 2023
  3. MMRTCC Subcommittee – August 22, 2023
  4. MMDC Personnel Committee – August 24, 2023
  5. MMDC Bylaws Committee – September 5, 2023

Commissioner Kevin Crowley made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda. Commissioner Lorallen Schmeling seconded the motion, which carried without dissent.

# **Correspondence and Announcements:** Executive Director Eric Day shared and passed information on several noteworthy items, including:

* The 2023 Connecting Entrepreneurial Communities Conference will be held in New London on September 14 and 15. This annual conference will attract entrepreneurs, economic development leaders, and others from across the state. MMDC was happy to play a small role in bringing the conference to New London.
* The West Central Tribune published a recent article on a potential new hemp processing facility, which might come to fruition in Willmar, bringing up to 60 jobs. Netherlands-based Dun Agro would like to open five such facilities across the United States. MMDC may be able to offer assistance if there is city or county interest in a related EDA infrastructure-focused grant, to add a rail spur, acceleration lane, or some other public amenity.
* The Minnesota Realtors Association recently shared their market update. Generally speaking, year over year, prices are up, as is time on the market (though this remains historically low).
* A free CDL (Class B) permit preparation class is being offered by the Glacial Lakes Consortium of Adult Basic Education (Willmar location, though the training will be available online).
* A free suicide prevention training will be offered, virtually, by Central Minnesota Jobs and Training Services, Inc. on Friday, September 22. This training is for the lay person and is intended to provide tools needed to connect those in crisis with the assistance they need to avoid self-harm. Day encourages all staff to attend and recommended it for all Commissioners as well.

**Staff Reports:** Chairperson Mueske referred to the written director and staff reports that were provided within the meeting materials packet and provided an opportunity for Commissioners to ask questions. There were no questions.

# **Old Business**

There was no Old Business.

# **New Business – Action Items & Commission Business**

**Revolving Loan Fund Update:** MMDC Economic Developer Michelle Marotzke provided a brief overview of the status of MMDC’s revolving loan funds.

* MMDC’s Legacy RLF balance is approximately $110,000, $100,000 of which has been reserved for the capitalization of a fourth RLF, contingent upon a grant from the U.S. Economic Development Administration. The application process for this fourth RLF has been lengthy, with a good deal of back and fourth between MMDC and the US EDA. A decision on this grant application is expected later this fall, as EDA is currently focusing on a different/uninvolved funding stream that is tied to their fiscal year, which ends on September 30.
* MMDC’s CARES RLF has a balance of about $50,000 available for lending, at present.
* MMDC’s ARPA RLF has a balance of about $16,000 available to lend. Of this, about $6,500 is from the original capitalization. It would be good to get that money out the door so the fund is considered completely disbursed and is revolving. MMDC’s lending minimum is $7,000.
* All loans are currently in good standing.
* Economic Development staff are checking in with all borrowers to get updates on their current number of employees, insurance information, and general status of operations. This is to ensure good file maintenance and to inform staff of any lenders who might be on the verge of trouble.

This item was informational only.

**Approval of Prospective Legacy LAB Member Brigetta Hammer:** MMDC Economic Developer pointed to the biographic information provided for Brigetta Hammer, which was included in the meeting materials packet. MMDC was informed by Legacy Loan Approval Board member Nick Dalton that he no longer had capacity to effectively serve on the LAB. MMDC staff identified Brigetta Hammer as a potential replacement. MMDC’s Economic Development staff have collaborated with Hammer on loans previously and she has been very effective. She also provides some needed geographic representation from McLeod County.

Day asked for a motion to approve Brigetta Hammer to the MMDC’s Legacy Loan Approval Board. Commissioner Robert Moller offered a motion to approve. Commissioner Doug Erickson seconded the motion, which carried with no dissent.

**Consideration of Personnel Policy Updates:** Day informed that MMDC’s Personnel Committee met on August 24 to consider Day’s recommended changes to MMDC’s Personnel Policy Manual. Day pointed to the changes which were included in the meeting materials packet. The most significant of these changes included:

* An update to language to include cannabis along with alcohol in workplace impairment related policies.
* An update of the vacation accrual schedule to align with previous action taken by the Commission.
* An update of MMDC’s holiday schedule, to align with previous action taken by the Commission.
* A change to sick leave payout – if less than $1,000, the change allows MMDC to simply direct funds to the employee’s existing HSA account, rather than opening a second post-employment HSA account.
* Other smaller changes to clarify or improve existing verbiage.

Day noted that he would request a motion to approve changes, as recommended by MMDC’s Personnel Committee. Commissioner Berit Spors, a member of the MMDC Personnel Committee, reiterated that the policy change recommendations largely catch MMDC’s policy up to actions previously taken, with nothing new of significance. With that, Commissioner Spors made a motion to approve and adopt the recommended policy updates, as presented. Commissioner Robert Moller seconded the motion, which carried with no dissent.

**Presentation of Suggested MMDC Bylaw Revisions:** Day informed that MMDC’s Bylaws Committee met on September 5 to review his suggested revisions to MMDC’s Bylaws. Day pointed to a version of these bylaws, which included suggested revisions from Day as well as a couple of additional suggested revisions from the Bylaws Committee. Day stated that the biggest changes, if adopted, would include:

* The elimination of MMDC’s Board of Directors. This body includes all elected Commissioners but no public interest members. An MMDC Board of Directors meeting has not been called during Day’s tenure as executive director and Day noted that he and the Bylaws Committee had trouble coming up with a good reason to call a Board of Directors meeting, rather than a full Commission meeting.
* Allowance for Commissioners serving in the public interest to reside outside of the MMDC region, provided their work is performed within the MMDC region. Day noted that it is unlikely this would come to pass very often but noted that it is important to find the best people to serve our Commission and region, even if they reside in adjacent areas. He pointed to the fact that there was a time when Commissioner Maureen Melgaard-Schneider, who does a fantastic job representing aging individuals in the public interest, resided outside of MMDC’s region. At that time, she was able to serve only in an ex-officio capacity.
* Other changes include some clean up of language and minor adjustments to increase practicality and reflect typical practice.

Day informed that the Bylaws Committee approved Bylaw revisions to be brought forward to the full Commission for a first look at this evening’s meeting, with the intent of giving all Commissioners ample time to review and then take action in December. Day reiterated that no action was needed at this meeting.

Chairperson Mueske, a member of the Bylaws Committee, noted that Day’s description of the Bylaws meeting was accurate. Chairperson Mueske noted that there was also some discussion about the personal liability of elected Commissioners. Day noted that, while he didn’t have anything to reference at this meeting, his understanding, after discussion with another regional development commission director, was that tort liability protections extend to Commission participation for elected Commissioners. Day will look for more substantial documentation of this and will share the information with MMDC’s Commissioners at a later date.

Commissioner Jon Hawkinson noted that, with the allowance of Commissioners to serve while residing outside of the MMDC region, a commissioner who did not reside within the region would have opportunity to vote on the MMDC levy, which they would not pay. Day and Chairperson Mueske agreed that this was something to consider, with Commissioner Mueske noting that the preference would always be to find a qualified individual from the MMDC region. Commissioner Spors added that any public interest representing member would need to be considered and approved by the full Commission in order to participate. The full roster is then approved by the Commission during the June Commission meeting.

Other discussion included a breakdown of MMDC’s elected officials and note of the fact that a majority of Commissioners will always be elected officials, per statute and per MMDC’s bylaws.

Chairperson Mueske asked that all Commissioners review the suggested Bylaw revisions prior to the December meeting, so that the matter could be considered at that time.

This item was informational only.

**Consideration of MMDC Mission Statement:** Day informed that MMDC’s Bylaws Committee met on September 5. The Committee was largely supportive of keeping MMDC’s existing mission statement. However, there was agreement that adding the words “and support economic development” would be appropriate. If adopted as recommended, the new MMDC Mission Statement would read as follows:

“To administer state and federal programs and coordinate multi-jurisdictional activities, and to provide technical assistance to government, business, and local organizations to maintain and enhance the quality of life and support economic development.”

Day then asked for a motion to approve the updated mission statement, as presented.

Commissioner Rollie Nissen made a motion to approve the updated MMDC Mission Statement, as presented. Commissioner José Luciano seconded the motion. During discussion, Commissioner Maureen Melgaard-Schneider recommended that the words “in order” in front of the word maintain, for additional clarification The statement would then read:

“To administer state and federal programs and coordinate multi-jurisdictional activities, and to provide technical assistance to government, business, and local organizations in order to maintain and enhance the quality of life and support economic development.” Chairperson Mueske, a member of the Bylaws Committee, expressed his support for Commissioner Melgaard-Schneider’s addition.

* Commissioner Robert Moller made a motion to modify the motion so that the amended mission statement would incorporate Commissioner Melgaard-Schneider’s addition (adding “in order” before “to maintain), for consideration. Commissioner Mike Brouwer seconded this motion, which carried with no dissent.

The Commission then returned to the motion, originally made by Commissioner Nissen and seconded by Commissioner Luciano, to approve the updated mission statement, now modified to include the words “in order”. This motion carried with no dissent.

Therefore, MMDC’s updated mission is as follows:

“To administer state and federal programs and coordinate multi-jurisdictional activities, and to provide technical assistance to government, business, and local organizations in order to maintain and enhance the quality of life and support economic development.”

**Aging Update:** Commissioner Maureen Melgaard-Schneider provided an overview of aging-related items for the Commissions information. These updates included:

* Commissioner Melgaard-Schneiders statement that a “perfect storm” is at hand, as demographic changes increase the need for senior supporting services while, at the same time, we are experiencing workforce shortages. The Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development projects that Region 6E (i.e. the MMDC region) will lose population over the next 20 years, due to an aging population (-12,822 residents between 2023 and 2043, or – 11.2%). This while the State of MN is projected to grow by 9.4%. However, Region 6E. However, during that same period, the 6E region is expected to gain over 2,500 people ages 75 and older, a 22.5% increase. Commissioner Melgaard-Schneider shared that this will mean our region will have more people who require assistance due to one or more conditions. Staffing and paying for this assistance will continue to be a growing problem.
* The Legislative Task Force on Aging held its initial meeting on August 24, 2023. This Task Force was legislated in 2023 to review and develop state resources for an aging demographic. At the initial meeting, the task force heard from Dr. Susan Brower, Minnesota State Demographer. Key points include:
  + The state is already experiencing some of the impacts of aging. Other impacts will unfold in the coming years.
  + The shift to an older state will be permanent. Policies put in place to address aging today will position the state to be in better alignment with future populations.
  + Among the most pressing issues is how Minnesota will care for its older adults.
* Task Force Members (provided to Day by Commissioner Melgaard-Schneider following the meeting)
  + Representative Ginny Klevorn -Speaker of the House
  + Representative Natalie Zeleznikar -House Minority Leader
  + Senator Kelly Morrison -Senate Majority Leader
  + Senator Karin Housley -Senate Minority Leader
  + Maureen Schneider -Minnesota Board on Aging
  + Jen Foley -Minnesota Council on Disability
  + Agatha Armstrong -Minnesota Indian Affairs Council
  + Joe Gaugler -U of M Center for Healthy Aging
* Those interested in watching monthly Legislative Task Force on Aging meetings online, can use the following YouTube livestream link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cK74v5cuBqo>. Meeting agendas and presentation materials can be accessed on the task force’s webpage: <https://www.lcc.mn.gov/aging/meetings.html>.
* The Age Friendly Minnesota Conference and Regional Exchange September 27-29, 2023. The first two days of the conference will be held via ZOOM. Attendees will then help shape our state's future, network with people in their respective areas, and gain insights from local and national experts at the Exchange Session, which will be held in one of eight locations throughout the state. All are welcome who envision a Minnesota that is supportive and inclusive for residents of all ages. There is no charge to participate/attend. Conference (agefriendlymn.org)
* Some federal officials are proposing new nursing home standards to Increase staffing. Citing worker shortages, nursing home operators are saying the standard cannot be met without additional funding to support higher wages. The nation’s most thinly staffed nursing homes would be required to hire more workers under new rules proposed by the Biden administration, the greatest change to federal nursing home regulations in three decades. The proposed standard was prompted by the industry’s troubled performance earlier in the coronavirus pandemic, when 200,000 nursing home residents died. But the proposal falls far short of what both the industry and patient advocates believe is needed to improve care for most of the 1.2 million Americans in nursing homes. The proposal, by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), would require all facilities to increase staff up to certain minimum levels, but it included no money for nursing homes to pay for the new hires. CMS estimated that three-quarters of the nation’s 15,000 homes would need to add staff members. But the increases at many of those facilities would be minor, as the average nursing home already employs nurses and aides at, or very close to, the proposed levels. The government said it would exempt nursing homes from punishment if they could prove that there was a local worker shortage and that the facilities had made sincere efforts to recruit employees.
* In August 2023, Medicare announced that it intends to cover Alzheimer’s disease medications if they are fully approved for usage by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA). This would impact two new Alzheimer’s drugs, Aduhelm and Leqembi.

* In 2021, approximately 530,000 family, friends and neighbors provided caregiving for an older adult, estimated to be worth $10 billion per year.

**Items of interest from other MMDC Commissioners:** Following Commissioner Melgaard-Schneider’s report, Commissioner Berit Spors, who is employed as McLeod Counties Director of Health and Human Services, informed the Commission that, for older adults (60+) a trio of immunizations – influenza, Covid-19, and RSV, are recommended this season. Commissioner Melgaard-Schneider inquired as to whether the vaccines are available in clinics. Commissioner Spors informed that the COVID vaccine was just approved on September 12. However, influenza and RSV vaccines should be readily available.

Chairperson Mueske then offered an opportunity for other MMDC Commissioners to share items of interest.

Commissioner Rollie Nissen provided an update on the Highway 23 gap projects. The north gap will be completed by approximately November 8. The south gap will require a major culvert that won’t be in place this year. Drivers should follow all detours and drive with extra caution to preserve personal and worker safety. Both the north and south gaps remain construction zones for the time being. More information can be found on MnDOT’s website.

Commissioner Doug Erickson asked a question on whether the new COVID vaccine will be available to uninsured individuals without cost. He shared his understanding that this new shot will be very expensive and that the shot will not be automatically cost free, as it was previously. Director Day informed that he understood both private insurance and Medicaid will cover the shot and that the federal government has somewhat of a “bridge program” to assist uninsured individuals. Commissioner Spors offered that uninsured and underinsured individuals will likely access the vaccine via public health agencies for a small fee. Commissioner Kiza Olson, who is employed as Health Administrator for Meeker McLeod Sibley Community Health Services, added that she understands more information will be forthcoming in the near future.

**Budget and Opportunity Updates:** Day provided a progress update on MMDC’s projected deficit for the 2024 fiscal year. High points included the following:

**Background:** In June 2023, MMDC had a projected deficit (expenditures over revenues) of about $102,000. This is not uncommon for a Regional Development Commission and is very similar to how most tradespeople are unaware of every job they’ll be doing a year in advance – work comes up throughout the year.

**Progress:** Since June 2023, MMDC received a USDA Rural Business Development Grant to help small-midsize businesses discover and connect with energy savings opportunities (rebate programs, etc.). This grant brings MMDC about $19,000 in staffing dollars (also some for supplies, etc. but those dollars would have minimal effect on our budget as those supplies, etc. would be used for the grant effort).

Additionally, MnDOT directed MMDC to include indirect expenses in our RTCC budget. This change brings MMDC roughly $26,000 additional this fiscal year.

MMDC will likely enter a service agreement for a Buffalo Lake Active Living project. This small project will bring an additional $6,300 to MMDC, plus expenses (this project is contingent upon $5,000 SHIP Grant to Buffalo Lake EDA, which is considered very likely).

In total, this additional work and revenue will reduce MMDC’s projected deficit down by approximately $51,300

**Potential Opportunity on the Horizon:** The Minnesota Department of Commerce will be issuing a Request for Proposals in the next couple of weeks. Regional Development Commissions are among a small group of organization types that may apply for up to $100,000 per year, for three years ($300,000) total, to provide technical assistance to public entities within our region who are interested in pursuing federal dollars for energy improvements via the CHIPS, Inflation Reduction, or Infrastructure Acts. This would be a compliment to the newly approved Statewide Assistance Fund, intended to help local governments with the matching funds needed to go after federal energy-focused dollars. Additionally, the McKnight Foundation may be interested in adding dollars to this effort, to ensure the RDCs can ensure sufficient staff capacity.

If the Department of Commerce grant comes to fruition, and especially if McKnight is willing to add dollars, MMDC will look to replace the departing Ben Dolan with a full-time grant writer/administrator, rather than a more traditional community planner.

**Fall-back position:** If the Department of Commerce Opportunity does not come to pass, then MMDC may pause the filling of the vacancy left by Mr. Dolan until which time MMDC’s workload demands it. Not filling this vacancy would largely wipe out any remaining projected deficit. It will however, mean that MMDC is able to provide less assistance to our communities, and so we would want to refill this vacancy as soon as budgets allow and workload demands it.

Commissioner Maureen Melgaard-Schneider expressed her support for providing local units with the technical assistance needed to pursue federal grant applications, as a lack of know how and capacity is often a major barrier to smaller organizations.

Day reiterated that it is very common for RDCs to start a fiscal year with a projected deficit, as all work and projects are not yet identified.

**Staffing Update:** Director Day provided an update on Kyle Ten Napel’s departure from MMDC (former Transportation & Community Planner) as well as the new addition of Transportation & Community Planner Mike Nicholas, who started with MMDC on September 6. Nicholas will be receiving some onboarding and training from MnDOT’s Megan Deschepper, along with UMVRDC and SRDC’s new transportation-focused planners. Day expressed his confidence in Mike’s ability to join with local governments and staff to achieve good outcomes.

Day also visited the fact that Regional Community Planner Ben Dolan, who has a degree in law, will be departing MMDC before the Christmas holiday to pursue a career as a lawyer. Day noted that Dolan plans to continue a career in public service as a public defender. Day thanked Dolan for the work he has accomplished during his tenure with MMDC. Day will spend his remaining time at MMDC wrapping up the McLeod County Solid Waste project and taking care of other, shorter term projects and efforts.

**Consideration of Staff Investment Recommendations:** MMDC Finance Director Darla Bajari informed that MMDC has a maturing CD in October. She then presented an investment recommendation. The maturing CD will have a value of $250,000. Bajari has checked on interest rates, which ranged from as low as 2.8% to the 4M 180 day rate 5.38%. Bajari noted that she and Day had considered this 4M rate and determined that this would be the recommended investment. MMDC’s current rate of interest on the maturing CD is 4.09%

Commissioner José Luciano made a motion to accept the investment recommendation from staff. Commissioner Kiza Olson seconded the motion, which carried with no dissent.

**Note: Should rates drop dramatically, or should another, stronger investment opportunity become available between this meeting date and the fund’s October maturity, staff can bring the matter back for further consideration.**

**Recent Mid-Minnesota Regional Transportation Coordinating Council (MMRTCC) Updates:** Day provided an update on MMRTCC efforts in MMDC Mobility Manager Terry Smith’s absence (Smith was attending a statewide meeting of RTCC mobility managers).

Day informed that Smith has seen significant success with volunteer and professional driver recruitment, to the point that Central Community Transit is bringing back evening services in the Willmar Community.

Smith has also been very busy with outreach related to the Fare-Free ride opportunity, which is made possible by a grant from the Willmar Area Community Foundation. Any person who boards and departs the bus at an established Willmar CCT bus stop will ride without paying a fare. This reduces financial barriers to transportation while also driving riders to the established route, thereby creating some service efficiencies. Day noted that hundreds more bus rides were provided in Willmar during the month of July, 2023, and that August saw another dramatic increase.

Day noted that Smith has also been invited to sit on CCT’s Operations Board (Day incorrectly said Board of Directors during the meeting). Day stated that this will add legitimacy to MMRTCC efforts while also providing that board with more valuable perspective. Day then offered to take questions on the MMRTCC program, which is intended to help address gaps so that non-drivers can fully-participate in their communities.

Commissioner Kiza Olson inquired as to if the MMRTCC is providing ride/route/schedule information to health providers in the area. Day informed that Smith has been keeping these organizations abreast of changes, including additions to service, as they occur.

Commissioner Berit Spors noted that she attends the MMRTCC Advisory Council meetings and she noted that the meeting attendance has grown in recent months. She also noted that the meetings are full of good content. Commissioner Spors also noted that her niece, who attends college in the Twin Cities, was shown how to use public transit as part of her orientation. Spors suggested this as a possible strategy at Ridgewater College.

**Consideration of Licensed Professional Clincical Counselor Reagan Quinn, for Commission Appointment:** Director Day pointed to the biographic information included within the meeting materials packet. He explained that he was able to meet with Quinn, via Zoom, on August 24 and was extremely impressed by her. Day noted that he was referred to approach Quinn by MMDC Commissioner Kiza Olson and thanked Commissioner Olson for this referral. Day noted that Quinn was well-qualified to represent the mental health sector in the public interest and urged the Commission to appoint her. He then asked for a motion to that effect.

Commissioner Melgaard-Schneider made a motion to approve Reagan Quinn and appoint her to the MMDC Commission, representing the mental health sector in the public interest. Commissioner Carl Shuldes seconded the motion, which carried with no dissent.

Day will inform Quinn of her appointment on September 14 and she will be invited to attend, beginning with the December Commission meeting.

**Consideration of Brent Guyan for Commission Appointment:** Day informed that he had opportunity to meet with Brent Guyan, via Zoom, on September 7. Day pointed to the handout provided prior to the start of the Commission meeting and stated that he found Guyan to be extremely qualified to represent the renewable energy sector in the public interest. Day stated that Guyan’s notable experience includes high level work on natural gas, ethanol, wind, and solar projects and stated that he would certainly be able to offer the perspective needed for guidance on energy-related work. Day then asked for a motion to approve Guyan and appoint him as Commissioner, representing the renewable energy sector in the public interest.

Commissioner Berit Sports offered a motion to approve Brent Guyan and appoint him to the MMDC Commission, representing the renewable energy sector in the public interest. Commissioner Rollie Nissen seconded the motion, which carried with no dissent.

Day will inform Brent Guyan of his approval and invite him to the December Commission meeting.

**Consideration of 2024 Commission Meeting Dates:** Day pointed to a handout, circulated prior to the beginning of the meeting, which listed possible meeting dates for the 2024 calendar year. These dates included:

* Wednesday, January 24, 2024 (6:00 p.m.)
* Wednesday, April 10, 2024 (6:00 p.m.)
* Wednesday, June 12, 2024 (4:00 p.m.)
* Wednesday, September 18, 2024 (6:00 p.m.)
* Wednesday, December 4, 2024 (6:00 p.m.)

Day noted that these dates avoid conflict with the lent season, the Juneteenth holiday and, hopefully, the September AMC conference. Day informed that the Commission could either move to approve these dates this evening, if they are deemed appropriate, or said these dates could be considered at the December Commission meeting.

Commissioner Robert Moller made a motion to act on the matter at this meeting and approve the 2024 Commission meeting dates, as presented. Commissioner Lorallen Schmeling seconded the motion, which carried with no dissent.

During discussion on this matter, Chairperson Mueske asked Director Day if he would like to share an idea regarding the format of the annual Commissioner Appreciation Dinner, held in June. Day informed that the idea was to make the dinner much less formal and possibly a picnic-style function, possibly including some grilled items or similar. Day then asked Commissioners what they thought about a more casual meal. Day said that he would make sure an indoor space is available if the weather is inclement. Day also stated that this format would likely reduce the cost of the meal. While no formal motion was made on the meal format, Commissioners generally expressed that a less formal meal would be enjoyable.

**Other:**

There was no other business.

**Adjournment:**

With no further business, Commissioner Carl Shuldes moved to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Kevin Crowly seconded the motion, which carried with no dissenting votes.

Chairperson Shawn adjourned the meeting at approximately 7:40 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

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Eric Day, Acting Secretary

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Dave Sebesta, Secretary

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Shawn Mueske, Chairperson

**The Next Full MMDC Commission Meeting Will Occur on Wednesday, December 6, at 6:00 p.m.**

(Likely in Litchfield. Specific Location to be Determined)