



Economic Development Authority

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
MEETING AGENDA
TUESDAY, OCTOBER 28, 2014 @ 6:00 P.M.
Council Chambers**

1. Call to Order.
2. Pledge of Allegiance.
3. Approval of Agenda.
4. Discussion Regarding Seneca Plant Closing.
5. Adjourn

There may be a quorum of the City Council present at this meeting.

**MEETING MINUTES
OCTOBER 28, 2014 @ 6:00 PM**

The meeting was called to order by President Lundstrom at 6:00 pm.

Members Present: Bergersen, President Lundstrom, Sorenson, Thomes, Councilmember Nuesse, Councilmember Ruehling

Member Absent: Kloeckl

Also Present: Director Smith-Strack, Mayor Kreft, Kurt Menk, Mayoral Candidate Bruce Anderson

Motion by Bergersen, seconded by Sorenson, and passed by unanimous vote to approve the agenda as presented.

Discussion was held on the recent announcement that the Seneca Foods Plant would be closing. Smith-Strack provided to those in attendance some information that she had been given:

- Market based decision made at corporate level; firm decision – non-reversible; nothing we did locally would have altered the outcome. Earnings down due to excess inventory.
- Following announcement to employees all resultant communication directed to CFO of corporation, no comment/direction allowed locally.
- 46 full time employees, 200+ seasonal workers; 264,000 sf of structure plant/warehouse, 31.5 acres in City limits and 541 acres associated with the plant operation.
- Plant and warehouse to be shuttered next spring.
- City Adm. Donabauer, EDA Dir. Smith-Strack and Mayor Kreft did Outreach to: Tim Benjamin Seneca Foods CFO, Senator Klobuchar, Representative Peterson, Senator Franken, State Rep. Gruenhagen, State Sen. Newman, County Commissioner Pinske & DEED Business Specialist.
- Corporation reportedly making effort to reassign workers within the company (alternate locations).
- DEED's Dislocated Worker Program available to all employees. Free service where affected employee works one-on-one with a counselor to develop a plan for reemployment.
- DEED has "Rapid Response Team" that brings Dislocated Worker Program and unemployment office representatives to local site. Dependent upon employer cooperation. (It was noted that at this time, Seneca's CFO was denying the need for this.)
- Workforce Center in Mankato is access point for DEED services: 12 Civic Center Plaza, Suite 1600A.
- Future use of buildings/reoccupation: Completely dependent on Seneca's future decisions; no plans for property currently; no timeline for making such decisions.

There was considerable discussion. It was noted that the City really cannot do anything at this point, until Seneca is willing to work with it (the City). The next steps are to maintain focus on assisting workers/employees and building re-occupancy at highest levels.

Motion by Nuesse, seconded by Thomes, and passed by unanimous vote to adjourn the meeting at 6:25 P.M.