

BOTTINEAU COUNTY EDC & GREATER BOTTINEAU CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
REPORT of ANNUAL MEETING for 2017

January 17, 2018, 5:30 pm - Dakota College at Bottineau Alumni Center

Appetizer trays with crackers, meats, cheeses, and fruits with dip were available prior to the meal served Buffet style at 6:20 pm by Sodexo – green salad, beef stew, biscuits, roasted vegetables, rice and assorted desserts; water, coffee, iced tea. Meals provided this year by EDC.

Attendance totaled 47+ from EDC and Chamber membership plus other interested locals, four from the governor's office (Lt Gov Brent Sanford, Holly Holt, Jace Beehler and Jesse Hanson) as well as District 6 Senator Vedaa and Representatives Dick Anderson and Craig Johnson.

Newly Elected Chamber President Kayla O'Toole welcomed the attendees and opened the Chamber portion of the business meeting at 6:45 p.m. Board members were recognized, Director Trudy Marum introduced and newly elected board members Joel Bickford, Rick Gustafson and Brett DeMontigny were announced. Trudy presented a report of the past year's business growth, of past and current events and future promotions to activate the community 250 days a year, and the restructure of membership dues, in hopes to increase membership from the current 92 members. Julie Mears and Janet Carnahan reported on the year's activities of Retail Alliance and their success in bringing people into Bottineau. The four major activities are Crazy Days, Trunk or Treat, Christmas Fest and Bunny Fest. Kayla adjourned the Chamber portion at 7:05 p.m.

Immediately following, EDC Board President Chuck Neubauer called the EDC business meeting to order. Current board members were recognized and Director Whitney Gonitzke was introduced. Board members with expiring terms Chuck Neubauer, Julie Mears and Jon Beyer all agreed to serve again; no nominations were offered from the floor. A motion for unanimous consent was made, seconded and approved. Whitney presented a report on upcoming projects including Business Retention, I-Crowd meetings, place branding, and Child Care Center analysis and encouraged participation in supporting these and other projects. The EDC portion of the meeting was adjourned at 7:20 p.m.

Update from Jodi Atkinson, CEO of St Andrews Health Care, noted the facility is currently in a positive financial position; she credited assistance from the DCB nursing program and reported on placement in the top 100 hospitals in the nation. Local economic impact of SAHC is estimated as \$7,871,100.

Update from Jerry Migler, Dean of Dakota College at Bottineau, presented the challenges and opportunities for the second oldest higher education facility in the state and one of the oldest community colleges nationwide. Online learning has expanded offerings and student numbers; Career Technical Education continues as a focus along with ease of credit transfer to 4-year ND colleges. Economic impact in 2015 was estimated at \$33.7 million total with support for 70 indirect jobs.

Keynote speaker Lt Governor Brent Sanford was invited to promote the Main Street Initiative, Gov Burgum's plan to envision the future of ND towns and cities. Sanford noted the idea is to enhance Community Vibrancy by supporting Parks, Daycare, Affordable Housing – a means of providing Gathering Points for Inclusion by offering smart efficient infrastructure that helps to create Community. Drawing 'Millennials' into small towns is a key to growth, since where people come to live business will follow. Public water (NAWS) and natural gas supplies are needed for businesses to be attracted to a community; this is a drawback for Bottineau, but this area has nature as a draw which other areas don't have. A vibrant Main Street needs Communities, Workforce and Economics. He shared that Watford City directs its 1-1/2% share of sales tax to an Events Center and replacement healthcare complex. One way to help growth he said is to 'create the most livable community in the area.'

A Roundtable had been held earlier in the day with assorted local business people and leaders who contributed their assessments of local economic impacts. Sanford directed the discussion by asking “Why would someone want to live in my town?” and said to draw more on things like housing, daycare, walking paths, indoor recreation facilities, and less on first attracting employers and businesses, again with the idea that business follows people.

Submitted by Glenore Gross, EDC Administrative Assistant