

Southwest Regional Development Commission FISCAL YEAR 2001

CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

Fiscal Year 2001 represents twenty-seven years of service to the nine counties, eighty municipalities, and one hundred sixty-three townships, which make up the Southwest Regional Development Commission. The confidence that continues to grow between the staff and the Commission can be attributed to our many accomplishments. Recognition by local units of government on the quality of products prepared by the SRDC is another reason for our success.

Since its inception in 1973, the SRDC has developed a broad base support from the governmental units, organizations, and agencies it serves. Its reputation for strong leadership is nurtured by a very competent and professional staff.



SRDC Chairman Craig Rubis

It is also the result of a dedicated and responsible Commission. Commissioners and staff should be commended for giving of their time and talents in carrying out the mission of the Southwest Regional Development Commission.

As Board Chairman, the past two years have not only been difficult and time consuming but also the most rewarding time in my nine years of serving the Commission. I have very much enjoyed working with staff and fellow Commissioners to resolve issues at hand.

The things that are important to the SRDC continue to remain the same: local units of government and our desire for their continued growth and improvement. The Commission works for the local units of government and collaborates with other agencies to bring funding to the region and to develop, coordinate, and implement programs on behalf of the nine counties. The SRDC appreciates the confidence that government entities have placed upon us and we look forward to working with them during the coming year.

I am proud of the quality of assistance the Development Commission has provided to its local units of government in Fiscal Year 2001. Staff have been kept busy with a challenging work program; many of these work program activities are highlighted in the Annual Report.

On behalf of the Southwest Regional Development Commission, I would like to take this opportunity to thank all present and past commission members, staff, and committees for their continued contributions to the success of the SRDC.

Sinferely,

Craig Rubis, Chairman

Southwest Region

- Minn. Stat. 462.393 Subd. 1

DEVELOPMENT

Strategic Planning

The Southwest Regional Development Commission provides staff support to a number of regional and statewide committees, boards and programs. The goal of these activities is to provide long range planning strategies to the area public and private organizations. Some of the activities include:

- ♦ Economic Development Association of Minnesota
- American Planning Association Membership
- Southwest Minnesota Housing Partnership Board of Directors
- Southwest Regional Solid Waste Commission
- Economic Development Professionals of Southwest Minnesota
- ♦ Regional Welfare To Work McKnight activities
- ♦ Sustainable Energy for Economic Development (SEED)
- Regional School to Work Advisory Board
- Southwest Minnesota Energy Task Force (Ridge Task Force)
- Area Transportation Partnerships
- Prairie Ecology Bus Center
- Lewis & Clark Project
- Planning Technical Assistance Program
- County Councils on Aging
- Southwest Senior Advocacy Network
- Ombudsman Advisory Committee
- ♦ Legal Services Advisory Committee
- ♦ Minnesota Rural Health Association
- Seniors Agenda for Independent Living (SAIL)
- Alzheimer's Association Advisory Council
- Senior Nutrition Project Council
- Southwest Minnesota Intergenerational Task Force
- ♦ Senior Nutrition Services
- Aging Advisory Council
- ♦ Murray County Alternative Care Team
- Nobles County Senior Concerns
- ♦ Southwest Regional Multi-Use Trails Task Force
- ♦ AMC District 8 Environmental and Land Use Task Force
- ♦ Senior LinkAge Line® Network
- ♦ Health Insurance Counseling Program (HICP)
- RSVP Advisory Council
- Murray County Hospice Board
- Minnesota Area Geriatric Education Center (MAGEC)
- Regional Resources for Rural Minnesota (RRRM, a Cultural Diversity Group)
- Prairie Health Purchasing Alliance
- ♦ Solid Waste Administrators of Southwest Minnesota
- West Fork Des Moines River CWP

ALTERNATIVE ENERGY

During FY 2001, the Southwest Minnesota Ridge County Task Force expanded its members and changed its focus and structure. It is now the Southwest Minnesota Energy Task Force and covers ten counties in Southwest Minnesota. Its scope and focus is on a range of renewable / alternative energy sources. The Task Force chose a lobbyist to carry its' legislative agenda this session. The Task Force continued to have informational meetings on windpower and other renewable energy sources to help fully educate elected officials and staff in the region on the issue.

Events Sponsored

- Southwest Minnesota Rural Groundwater Summit
- Newly Elected Officials Workshop
- ♦ Trainings for Health Insurance Counselors
- ♦ Regional Conference on Aging
- ♦ Forums on Affordable Health Care
- State Transportation Improvement Program Public Meeting
- ♦ Cultural Diversity Conference
- ♦ Senior Housing & Services Workshop

The SRDC serves as the State and Federally designated Economic Development District for the Southwest Region. As a result of this designation, the SRDC is charged with the duty of providing primary staff necessary to implement the U.S. Economic Department of Commerce, Development Administration's (EDA) Comprehensive **Economic** Development Strategy (CEDS). During this fiscal year a grant of \$55,000 from EDA for economic development planning included the following work program elements:

- SRDC works cooperatively with adjacent Development Districts to increase efficiency.
- SRDC coordinates activities with State, Federal and local agencies.
- SRDC provides technical assistance and advisory services to units of government, development agencies, and others. This includes efforts to plan and implement economic development projects to diversify the district's economy, to increase business activity, and to upgrade infrastructure within the district.
- ♦ SRDC maintains economic, demographic and site databases and make them available to public and private users.
- ♦ SRDC assists local agencies and region wide programs in obtaining private foundation grants and assistance.
- ♦ SRDC supports a permanent economic development process capable of meeting the planning, coordinating and implementation requirements of the district.
- ♦ SRDC supplies the EDA with timely information on plant closures or prospective plant closings, as well as the number of employees affected by these actions.
- SRDC serves as a Regional Census Data Center. There have been 90 Census data requests completed by our office. Approximately 44% of the requests were by Units of Government, 20% by the business sector, and the remainder by Private Citizens, schools, the public non-profits, and media.
- SRDC assisted in the development of many loan packages, financing structures and program referrals in conjunction with numerous funding sources including: DTED Minnesota Investment Fund, Tax Increment Financing, Federal Rural Development Agency Rural Business Enterprise Grant and the Business and Industry Loan Guarantee Program, Prairieland EDC 504 and IRP referrals and local development dollars.
- Communities with specific economic development projects included: Chandler, Mountain Lake, and Luverne.

DEVELOPMENT (continued)

Community Driven Planning.

The SRDC is designed to assist local units of government on a wide range of services. These services include grant and loan writing, grant administration, community surveys, business subsidy plans, public facilities planning and housing studies, and the development of plans and ordinances. Some of the accomplishments and activities that have been conducted by the SRDC Development Program over the last fiscal year are:

- City of Lismore application to the Public Facilities Authority Drinking Water Revolving Loan Program.
- ◆ City of Heron Lake in securing loan dollars from Rural Development for a major water and sewer improvements project.
- City of Okabena in securing a grant and loan from Rural Development for a water systems improvements project.
- ◆ City of Avoca in acquiring placement on Minnesota Pollution Control Agency's Project Priority List.
- Prepared environmental reviews for Heron Lake, Okabena, Magnolia, Currie and Dovray for Rural Development funding of infrastructure projects.
- ◆ Submitted applications to Rural Development for the Cities of Okabena, Heron Lake, Magnolia, Currie and Dovray.
- City of Dovray in applying for grant and loan funds from Rural Development for the Dovray Fire Department.
- City of Okabena in submitting a pre-application for Rural Development funds for the Okabena Fire Department.
- ◆ Staff assists communities in grant and loan development. During this fiscal year a number of communities have been assisted in the project and funding development.
- City of Round Lake Business Subsidy Plan.
- Nobles County Community Based Plan.
- ◆ Lincoln County Sustainable Development Plan and Development Code.
- ♦ Pipestone County Planning Documents and Ordinances.
- Murray County Comprehensive Plan update.
- Regional Review of Solid Waste Alternatives update.
- ♦ Ordinance Book revisions or codifications for the Cities of: Mountain Lake, Belview, Currie, Storden, Chandler, Hendricks, Slayton, Bingham Lake.
- Land Use and / or Zoning Maps were developed for the Cities of Russell, Currie, Redwood Falls, Lake Wilson, Lynd, Marshall, Storden; Pipestone, Murray and Nobles Counties; and loan activity maps for Prairieland EDC.

DTED Small Cities Projects

The Southwest Regional Development Commission contracts with communities who have received funds from the Department of Trade and Economic Development under the Small Cities Development Block Grant Program. Grant administration includes numerous federal compliance areas. There were four (4) Small Cities projects in various phases of completion: Wanda, Rushmore, Leota and Woodstock. The City of Currie has recently received SCDP funds that the SRDC will administer.

- City of Wanda construction of a wastewater treatment and collection system
- City of Rushmore housing rehabilitation and storm sewer construction.

- City of Woodstock housing rehabilitation and construction of a wastewater treatment and collection system.
- Leota Sanitary District wastewater treatment and collection construction
- ♦ City of Currie construction of a new primary lagoon

During the fiscal year the Wanda and Leota Wastewater Treatment and Collection projects were closed.

The SRDC provides assistance to the Southwest Minnesota Housing Partnership in administering SCDP grants for housing, rental and commercial rehabilitation projects. Staff also assisted the Southwest Minnesota Housing Partnership in developing applications for the Cities of Pipestone, Heron Lake, Okabena, Lamberton and Lakefield. Staff contracted through the Southwest Minnesota Housing Partnership to work with the City of Kasson, MN for Uniform Relocation.

SW MN PURCHASING ALLIANCE

The Southwest Minnesota Health Care Purchasing Alliance (SWPA) has seen many accomplishments since its beginning. Negotiations continue to take place with a local licensed entity with plans to establish a "consumer ready" health care product by October 2001. The SWPA also continues to strengthen its partnership with the Northwest Purchasing Alliance. Provider meetings were conducted to educate local hospital administrators and hospital boards about the SWPA's concept and goals for the region. The sessions were successful in gaining needed confidence of local providers. recently received \$50,000 in grant funding through the Board of Government Innovations to conduct marketing and technical assistance in the upcoming year. The SWPA continues to focus on providing an affordable, accessible, quality health care product for small businesses, local government entities and nonprofits, and farm families. The SWPA will soon be called Prairie Health Care Purchasing Alliance.

Southwest Minnesota Purchasing Alliance Accomplishments 1997-Present

- ♦ Held County-wide forums in Region to gather input
- ♦ Developed Guiding Principles, Bylaws, and Membership Criteria
- ♦ Active and supportive Board of Directors
- ♦ Strong partnership with Northwest Purchasing Alliance
- Designed a Benefits Package specifically for SW Minnesota Residents
- ♦ Distributed a Request for Information to over 70 licensed entities to pursue negotiations on the benefits package
- Ongoing support from local Legislators
- Distributed surveys to regional businesses
- Ongoing working relationship with Carlson School of Business and Center for Rural Policy and Development in evaluation of project
- Developing a Debit Card system
- ◆ Received high ranking on pre-application for Board on Innovations Grant for funding of marketing and technical assistance for 2001-2002
- Committed, with DHS, to helping the working uninsured/underinsured transition off of public health care programs

TRANSPORTATION

There were thirteen voting members on the SRDC Transportation Committee representing Local Units of Government during FY 2001. Ex-officio or advisory members to the Committee included: the County and City Engineers in the Region; a Lower Sioux Community Representative; Regional Public Transit Systems, and staff from MnDOT Districts 7 and 8.

The SRDC Transportation Committee met on the following dates: November 9, 2000, February 14, 2001, April 5, 2001, and June 5, 2001. Major topics of discussion included: Legislative Agenda and Priorities; Stable funding for roads, bridges, transit; Transportation Enhancements; Transportation **Partnerships** Transportation Improvement Program development for 2001, 2002, 2003, & 2004 in Willmar and Mankato State-Aid Districts; District Transportation Improvement Plans; the SRDC Transportation Work Program for FY 2002; Regional Significance Rating of road and bridges, and safety projects; Economic Activity in the Region, Transit operations and facilities; Interregional Corridors; Welfare Reform; Regional Trail Planning, DM&E Rail expansion; Rail Crossing safety; and specific road projects /issues - TH 268, TH 19, TH 14, TH 60 (Windom, I-90 to Iowa, Prairieview Corridor and coordination with Iowa development groups), TH 86 (MN/IA border), and TH 59.

Some of the SRDC Transportation Activities included: planning assistance to local units of government, transit systems, and organizations as it related to transportation activities; monitoring transportation legislation; coordination of trail planning groups; TH 60, Worthington to the Iowa state line upgrade study; revision of the state functional classification change request process; development of an MOU with the Mn/DOT to clarify roles of both MnDOT and the RDC; participation in the Mn/DOT TEA 21 committee which reviewed and commented on federally proposed statewide planning regulations. The SRDC coordinated with the SW Area Agency on Aging to assist with Regional Transit Coordinators with: the Welfare to Work McKnight Grant initiatives (marketing, car seat purchase, and the development of the McKnight Emergency Rides to Work Loan Fund), regulations & coordination issues; concern for delivery of transit service; legislative issues; regional training needs; coordination with vehicles in the Region, transit brochure update, border crossing issues, transit capital funding, and bus storage needs. SRDC participated in the development of the Greater Minnesota Transit Plan. The SRDC annually submits a report to the Minnesota Department of Transportation on transportation activities the Southwest Regional Development Commission has conducted throughout the fiscal year.

Area Transportation Partnerships (ATP)

The Southwest Regional Development Commission has membership in two ATP's (Mn/DOT State Aid Districts 7 & 8). The Region, in continuing its strong commitment to serving local units of government and working along side the Minnesota Department of Transportation, has been active in the following ATP activities. The SRDC co-sponsored a Transportation Public Information meeting with the Willmar and Mankato Area Transportation Partnerships regarding the Draft Transportation Improvement Program FY 2002-2004. The SRDC represen-

tatives and staff served on ATP Task Forces and Technical Committees as requested by the ATP's and shared information between the two ATP's on issues and projects the Willmar and Mankato ATP's were involved. The SRDC brought requests and comments from governmental units in the Region to the Area Transportation Partnerships.

Current and Emerging Transportation Issues

Over the past year various issues, problems, and concerns to our Region have been identified, these include: the sustainability and the deterioration and maintenance of roads, bridges, and rail lines and rail grade crossings, and the impact of energy generation and development and improvement of transportation lines on the transportation network; DM&E expansion and rail speed; stable sources of transportation funding; the need for transit and its coordination; TH 60 projects; distribution of Federal Transportation Funds reauthorization.

REVOLVING LOAN FUND

The purpose of the SRDC Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) is to directly loan funds to assist existing retail, service, manufacturing, and distribution businesses with gap financing for fixed asset and working capital. Businesses in Cottonwood, Jackson, Murray, Nobles, Pipestone, Redwood, Rock, Lincoln, and Lyon counties are eligible to apply. Loans range in size from \$5,000 to \$100,000 but must be matched by private funding.

The Revolving Loan Fund was originally capitalized through primarily Economic Development Administration funds; but also from funds from the nine counties, the State of Minnesota, Southwest Minnesota Foundation, and from the SRDC.

Since the capitalization of the SRDC Revolving Loan Fund in 1995, the SRDC has made 48 loans for a total of \$3,181,230. Over \$334,900 was lent during FY01. The program has been so successful for the SRDC there is only \$27,000 not committed to new projects at the end of FY01. As repayments are made to the fund they will be relent to small businesses throughout the region.

MISSION STATEMENT

"It is the mission of the Southwest Regional Development Commission to address the economic, social, physical, and governmental needs and opportunities of Southwestern Minnesota; while transcending traditional jurisdictional configurations. Further, to apply a regional perspective to problems, allowing for a coordinated effort by local units of government to address the needs of the region's citizenry and the activities of area agencies resulting in the sharing of regional private and public resources while increasing the efficiency of government in general.

In addition, the Commission shall serve as the mechanism for initiating change in local, regional, State, and Federal policy, programs and regulations translating the region's concerns into a blueprint of action."

LEGISLATIVE

AGENCY AND LEGISLATIVE ADVOCACY

The SRDC Legislative Committee traveled to St. Paul to visit and present the SRDC's 2001 legislative agenda to our area legislators.

The following is a list of major legislative activities that occurred this fiscal year:

- Sought resolution of issues and/or concerns between local units of government and state department and agencies.
- Supported the continuation of planning grants to RDCs.

SRDC 2001 Legislative Priority Issues

Aging Issues

- Prescription Drugs
- Transportation (Transit)

Development Issues

- ♦ Local Government Aid (LGA)/Mandates
- · Recapitalization of Regional Revolving Loan Funds
- ♦ Communications/Technical Investments
- ♦ Community Planning Program
- ♦ Legislative Review of Agency Rules
- Support Lewis and Clark Rural Water Project
- Prevailing Wage
- Minnesota Investment Fund
- Planning Coordination
- ♦ Non-Profit Development
- Economic Impact Studies
- ♦ Minnesota Office of Tourism
- ♦ Promote the Use of Recycled Products
- Modify the Definition of Waste Processing
- Solid Waste Funding and Program Management
- Modify County Solid Waste Planning and Management Requirements
- Revise State Solid Waste Rules
- More Adequately Fund the MPCA Tire Clean-up Program
- ♦ Rural Area Network (RAN)
- ♦ Keep Drivers Exam Stations Open

Tax and Utility Issues

- ♦ Electric Industry Restructure
- Location of Wind Power Mandate
- Funding Wind Monitoring Project
- Utility Personal Property Tax Exemption
- ♦ Resale of Xcel Energy Mandate
- ♦ Local Ownership of Renewable Energy Development

Transportation Issues

- Transportation Funding
- Railroad Rehabilitation Funding
- · Recreational Trails Funding

County Issues

- ♦ Funding for Out of Home Placement
- Allow Counties to Levy Aggregate Material Tax

Purchasing Alliance Issues

- ♦ Increasing Health Care Coverage for Super Small Businesses and Farm Families
- Continuing Support for the Rural Purchasing Alliances

General Issues

- ♦ Continued Operation of the Prairie Ecology Bus Center
- Opposition to County Wide School Districts

SW MN ENERGY TASKFORCE 2001 LEGISLATIVE AGENDA

- Ensure that Minnesota taxes on renewable energy facilities do not become more restrictive than neighboring states.
- Promote sustainable energy use: ethanol, soy diesel, methane, wind power, etc.
- Funding for infrastructure impacted by renewable energy facilities.
- ♦ Partner with other groups to promote renewable energy usage.
- Work with neighboring states to install needed distribution lines.
- Establish a state and federal planning guide for energy transfer lines.

REGION EIGHT STATE & FEDERAL LEGISLATORS

REPRESENTATIVES

Representative Marty Seifert, Marshall	District 21A
Representative Richard Mulder, Ivanhoe	District 21B
Representative Ted Winter, Fulda	District 22A
Representative Elaine Harder, Jackson	District 22B
Representative James Clark, New Ulm	District 23A

SENATORS

Senator Arlene Lesewski, Marshall	District 21
Senator Jim Vickerman, Tracy	District 22
Senator Dennis Frederickson, New Ulm	District 23

FEDERAL

- U.S. Senator Mark Dayton
- U.S. Senator Paul Wellstone
- U.S. Representative Mark Kennedy

PROJECT REVIEWS

During Fiscal Year 2001 the Southwest Regional Development Commission reviewed 54 projects from within the Region to avoid duplication and insure wise use of public funds. If you are interested in receiving a complete listing of the project reviews for FY01, please contact the SRDC Office.

NOAA – WEATHER RADIO SYSTEM

Over the past year, the SRDC has worked with the Murray County Emergency Services Director to obtain funding through a Hazard Mitigation Grant Application for NOAA coverage in Southwest Minnesota and matching funding from Lincoln, Lyon, Redwood, Pipestone, Murray, Cottonwood, and Jackson Counties to install a weather radio transmitter system. In April-June 2001, the long awaited weather radio system was installed and is now operational.



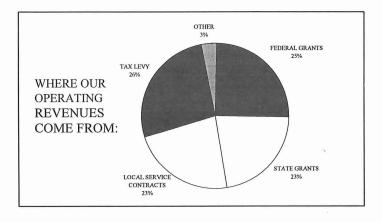
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OPERATIONAL BUDGET

The audit for Fiscal Year 2001 of the SRDC's finance and contract compliance was completed by the certified public accountants in September of 2000. Copies of that audit and all prior audits are available for review at the SRDC office. No negative findings were produced by the audit.

	FY01	FY02
	<u>ACTUAL</u>	BUDGET
REVENUES (Slayton Site)		
Tax Levy	\$220,745	\$220,000
MN Board on Aging	103,700	101,000
Senior LinkAge®/Insurance Counsel-MBA	47,928	51,000
State – Health Insurance Counsel-MBA	37,000	37,000
Medicare Awareness/Empowerment	7,468	1,571
Dept. of Human Services-MN Care	55,732	49,849
Economic Development Administration	55,000	55,000
State Planning Grant	34,245	~ =
MN Department of Transportation	50,000	50,000
Foundations	24,983	-
Interest Earned & Miscellaneous	22,949	10,865
Contracts	215,402	188,130
Dept. Health-Purch. Alliance	55,328	50,000
Labor Force Assessment	66,727	-
Reserves for Equipment Purchases	3,327	_15,000
TOTAL REVENUES	\$ <u>1,000,534</u>	\$829,415



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	ACTUAL	BUDGET
EXPENDITURES (Slayton Site)		
Committee Expenses	\$62,271	\$61,000
Salaries & Fringe	490,645	548,100
Staff Travel	36,977	50,000
Office Space	31,243	31,000
Postage	12,680	17,000
Communications	16,806	18,000
Printing/Publication	11,340	31,000
Supplies	5,230	7,000
Insurance	5,049	6,000
Depreciation (Non-Building)	23,604	23,000
Audits	4,400	4,900
Computer	15,027	17,000
Equipment	3,327	15,000
Other	54,317	36,000
Consultant/Contract Payments	187,056	70,000
Office Building Principal Payment	15,502	16,394
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	\$975,474	\$ 951,394
Balance	25,060	(121,979)
Equipment Reserve Change	23,604	8,000
Operating Reserve Change	(8,453)	(139,688)
Building Reserve Change	9,909	9,709
	25,060	(121,979)

FY01

FY02

NOTE 1: Estimates are included for final payable and receivable amounts on revenues and expenditures in FY01.

NOTE 2: EXPO site revenues/expenses not included.

NOTE 3: Receivables of \$367,444 from PEDC/PEBC/EXPO.

NOTE 4: Reserves for Equipment & Building have been transferred to operating.

PRAIRIE EXPO

The doors of Prairie Expo were officially opened August 19, 2000. Grand Opening activities were conducted September 15 with Joseph LeTendre, Slayton, serving as master of ceremonies. Program participants included Worthington Mayor Robert Demuth, Dean Barkley representing the Governor's office, Schwan's CEO Lenny Pippin, Rep. Ted Winter, former SRDC Director, Facility Director Grant Lloyd, and SRDC Board members Jack Keers and Craig Rubis.

Prairie Expo markets and promotes the amenities of the nine counties of southwest Minnesota. Prairie Expo features nine exhibits detailing varied aspects of southwest Minnesota, as well as the Whistle Stop café and The Depot gift shop. The heart of the Prairie Expo experience is "Voices of the Prairie" movie in the Buffalo Ridge Town Hall theater that explains life on the Minnesota prairies.

Highlights of the first ten months of operation include: Southwest Minnesota Foundation's Paul and Alma Schwan Aging Trust Fund Anniversary celebration; Pumpkin Decorating Contest; the first wedding at Prairie Expo; Holiday Open House; Millennium Trees display; Gov. Jesse Ventura's Budget Proposal meeting; University of Minnesota Sesquicentennial Alumni meeting; area-wide Brownie Scout spring activity; National Tourism Week open house; Rally Day; Old Tyme Flea Market; craft demonstrations by area artists; and the Minnesota Association of Watershed Districts picnic.

Year-to-date attendance is more than 32,500, of which 1,400 were school students. A number of motor coaches have visited Prairie Expo, as have 4-H, Extension, church, club and other groups and organizations. Nearly 60 percent of visitors were from outside the region, and 25 percent were from outside the state. Comments from visitors to Prairie Expo are unanimously complimentary and positive.

Prairie Expo is owned and operated by the Southwest Regional Development Commission. Members of the Prairie Expo Operations Committee are Claire Gerber, Chair, Nobles County; Craig Rubis, Jackson County; Jack Keers, Pipestone County; Bob Fenske, Lyon County; Marlowe Nelsen, Cottonwood County; Jim Malters and Gerald Turbes. Ex-Officio member: Dave Paskach, Schwan's; and Staff to the Committee/Board is Grant Lloyd, Prairie Expo Director.

SOUTHWEST AREA AGENCY ON AGING

The Southwest Area Agency on Aging is dedicated to providing services to southwest Minnesota's aging population. Many events were held during the year. The Area Agency on Aging celebrated its 21st Annual Regional Conference on Aging in June 2001. The conference was well attended and was recorded as one of the agency's best.

Advisory Council members within the nine county service area are actively involved in assisting the Area Agency on Aging in making funding recommendations to the SRDC, planning the Regional Conference on Aging, and participating in site and contract assessments. Advisory Council members also assist with outreach to individuals who may be interested in services provided by the Area Agency on Aging.

The Area Agency on Aging has also been actively involved with the cultural diversity group, Regional Resources for Rural Minnesota (RRRM). The RRRM focuses on minority issues within the region. The group also hosts an annual cultural diversity conference. The conference was held in October 2000. Various cultural displays were shown. A Minority Resource Guide was developed and is available to individuals and agencies.

The year brought many changes to funding disbursements for contracts and grantees of the Area Agency on Aging. Funding allocations were reduced for applicants; however, some amendments to disbursements were made during the year.

Total Funding Contracts in 2001		
Transportation:		
	Φ	4.500
- Murray County	\$	4,500
- Pipestone County	\$	4,500
- Western Community Action, Inc	\$	24,000
LLMP Public Health Respite Care Program	\$	14,000
Southern MN Regional Legal Services:		
- Casework	\$	30,000
- Education	\$	9,196
Senior LinkAge Line®/		
Health Insurance Counseling Program	\$	51,000
Lincoln, Lyon, Murray Family Services:		
- Homemaker	\$	24,000
Nobles County Coordinator on Aging	\$	10,000
Western Human Development:		
- Peer Counseling Program	\$	13,070
Western Community Action, Inc:		
- Congregate Dining	\$	234,300
- Home Delivered Meals	\$	96,800
Ellsworth Senior Center	\$	4,433
TOTAL	\$	519,799

The Area Agency on Aging continually seeks program development and funding opportunities to benefit the region. The Area Agency on Aging advocates legislatively throughout the year to increase knowledge of needed services for the regions residents. The Southwest Area Agency on Aging has also looked into possible collaborations with Regions 6W, 6E, 9, and 10.

Health Insurance Counseling Program

The Health Insurance Counseling Program saw an increase in services provided. By expanding sites throughout the nine

county area, staff and volunteers (21) assisted 1,996 clients with 1,686 hours being contributed by volunteers. The IRis database is being utilized in collecting client data. Through the Health Insurance Counseling Program, the Medicare F.Y.I. project conducted 15 educational sessions to Medicare beneficiaries regarding Medicare fraud, waste, and abuse. An emphasis on minority outreach was completed this past year. Staff evaluated the effectiveness of the health care journal. The development of the home health care journal took place in 2001. The journals are available for individuals to track personal health care services and home health care services received.

Senior LinkAge Line®

The Senior LinkAge Line® faced new challenges over the year. A total of 1,967 calls were received through the Senior

LinkAge Line®. Topics for calls varied from prescription drugs, Medicare supplement insurance, transportation, nutrition, and much more. A statewide database, IRis, has been implemented for referrals to

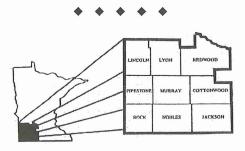


1-800-333-2433

programs/agencies offering services to residents, as well as for client tracking purposes. A statewide television commercial to promote the Senior LinkAge Line® was aired in 2001.

MinnesotaCare Outreach - SW MN Consortium

The Southwest Minnesota Consortium is a collaboration of the Region Eight public health agencies, Western Community Action, Inc., and the SRDC/Health Insurance Counseling Program. A toll-free line was established receiving 633 calls. A total of 33,275 contacts were made via project staff regarding MinnesotaCare during the funding period (July 1999-June 2001). The Health Insurance Counseling Program assisted 449 individuals with MinnesotaCare enrollment and information. Applications were given to 798 individuals without assistance and 276 with assistance provided by consortium members. Various outreach activities were conducted such as: health fairs, pay check and energy assistance stuffers, sending coloring books to day care centers and head start facilities, leaving bookmarks at area libraries, and publishing many press releases. All efforts proved to be successful in different ways. Staff regrets to inform applicants that funding will no longer enable the consortium to conduct its outreach efforts as of July 1, 2001.



The Southwest Regional Development Commission (SRDC) is a nine county planning and development agency providing services to local units of government, non-profit agencies, and various individuals and groups in both public and private sectors throughout the region. Membership is comprised of 35 representatives of townships, cities, counties, school boards, and public interest groups in the counties of Cottonwood, Jackson, Lincoln, Lyon, Murray, Nobles, Pipestone, Redwood and Rock.

SRDC STAFF AND COMMISSION MEMBERS

CURRENT STAFF MEMBERS

Jay Trusty (effective 8-7-01) Ex	xecutive Director
Maddy Forsberg Aging I	Program Director
Dianne Crowley	Finance Director
Annette Bair Physical Deve	lopment Director
Clint Sires	Planner
Robin Weis Program Develo	pment Specialist
Barb Kirchner Community Develop	ment Technician
Kim Bose	Staff Accountant
Rhonda Wynia	. Office Manager
Helen Brinks Financial	l/Grants Manager
Monica Miller P	rogram Assistant
Janet Schaeffer	Secretary II
Kathy Schreiber	Secretary
Linda Tobias	Secretary

Fiscal Year 2001 EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Craig Rubis Chairman
Bob Fenske Vice-Chairman
Jack Keers Secretary
Claire Gerber Treasurer
Marlowe Nelsen Immediate Past Chairman

SOUTHWEST REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION



2401 BROADWAY AVENUE SUITE 1 SLAYTON, MINNESOTA 56172-1142

For more information:

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E-Mail	0	srdc@swrdc.org
Websit	e:	www.swrdc.org

Fiscal Year 2001 COMMISSION MEMBERS

* Bud Ackerman Rock County Town Boards
Joanne Bergman Murray County Town Boards
Ron Bourassa Nobles County Municipalities
Everett Brandenburg Rock County Municipalities
Abner Brandt Jackson County Town Boards
Wally Bucher Pipestone County Town Boards
* Bob Byrnes City of Marshall
* Robert J. Demuth City of Worthington
Sandy Demuth Southwest MN Private Industry Council
Wendell Erickson Rock County Commissioners
* Bob Fenske Lyon County Commissioners
Rick Fey Pipestone County Municipalities
Werner Fischer Redwood County Town Boards
Carol Flesner Southwest Center for Independent Living
* Claire Gerber Nobles County Commissioners
Rafael Gonzalez Region Eight Cultural Diversity
Lori Grant Lyon County Town Boards
* Larry Hansen Lincoln County Commissioners
Erick Harper Lincoln County Municipalities
* Eric Hartman Jackson County Municipalities
Eloise Hauschild Lincoln County Town Boards
Lul Hersi Region Eight Cultural Diversity
Carol A. Hieronimus Nobles County Municipalities
Darrell Holmberg Cottonwood County Town Boards
Heinz Janning Redwood County Municipalities
* Jack Keers Pipestone County Commissioners
Connie Knorr Cottonwood County Municipalities
Walter Kopp Rock County Municipalities
Evert Krosschell Pipestone County Municipalities
Joe McCarvel Nobles County Town Boards
Joanne Myrvik Lyon County Municipalities
* Marlowe Nelsen Cottonwood County Commissioners
Katy Olson Prairie Ecology Bus Center
Richard Peterson Jackson County Town Boards
Alan Rand Cottonwood County Municipalities
* Craig Rubis Jackson County Commissioners
* Bill Sauer Murray County Commissioners
Duane Schalek Lincoln County Commissioners
* Gene Short Redwood County Commissioners
David E. Sturrock Southwest State University
Charles V. Swan Murray County Town Boards
Steve Thoyson Southwest Center for Independent Living
Cal Wurpts Murray County Municipalities
* Dan Zimansky Region 8 School Boards
Dan Zimanoky Region o School Doards

^{*} Current SRDC Board of Directors