



First District News

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First District Assisting with USDA Regional Food Business Center

On May 15, 2023 the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Rural Development State Director for South Dakota Nikki Gronli recognized the North Central USDA Regional Food Business Center, Region Five Development Commission (RFDC), which will serve North Dakota, South Dakota, and Minnesota. Regional Food Business Centers will provide national coverage coordination, technical assistance, and capacity building to help farmers, ranchers, and other food businesses access new markets and navigate federal, state, and local resources. FDALG will support the Regional Food Centers by providing direct business technical assistance to small- and mid-sized food and farm businesses (producers, processors, aggregators, distributors, and other businesses within the food supply chain) and food value and supply chain coordination. FDALG is currently developing its plan to identify priority areas for technical assistance which will begin in January 2024.

FUNDS AWARDED

SDDANR DWSRF Loans:

- Big Sioux Community Water System**— \$2,200,000 loan
- Henry**—\$2,000,000 loan with \$1,405,000 principal forgiveness
- Milbank**—\$12,500,000 loan

SDDANR CWSRF Loans:

- Henry**—\$2,000,000 loan with \$865,000 principal forgiveness
- Lake Norden**—\$500,000 loan

SDDANR Solid Waste Management Program Grant:

- Madison**—\$109,560



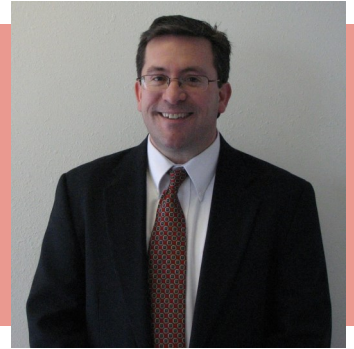
SDPA Annual Conference

The South Dakota Planners Association (SDPA) is hosting its annual conference at the Mitchell Highland Conference Center in Mitchell, SD beginning with a social on the evening of the October 24, 2023. Education sessions will be held on October 25th and 26th. Preliminary agenda topics include Roberts Rules of Order, Ex-Parte contacts and Parliamentary Procedure, Ag Preservation, Platting; Standard Operating Procedures, Streetscapes and Complete Streets, Ethics, Water, and Zoning Legal Issues. For reservation and agenda information go to <https://sdplanners.org/>.

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MY THOUGHTS... By: Todd A. Kays



Last September, the FDALG Governing Body approved its updated Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS). The CEDS is a plan/strategy which is designed to bring together the public and private sectors within the First District in the creation of an economic roadmap to diversify and strengthen our regional economies. The CEDS analyzes the regional economy and serves as a guide for establishing regional goals and objectives, developing, and implementing a regional plan of action, and identifying investment priorities and funding sources. The CEDS document usually has a shelf life of five years. However, to coordinate the CEDS life cycle of all the State's Planning Districts, the Economic Development Administration (EDA) is directing all the South Dakota's Planning Districts to update their current CEDS by September 2024. Therefore, we will begin the process of updating our five-year CEDS later this fall with a regional development survey. The survey is comprised of four sections. The first section pertains to the needs of the community or county. The second section deals with economic issues. The third section focuses on services provided by the First District. The last section pertains to regional issues. I encourage all to respond to the survey as this will assist Staff and the CEDS Committee in establishing background information and benchmarks for the CEDS update.

In the last newsletter I talked about personnel changes here at the First District. Well, three months later, we continue to, as Kevin Cronin of REO Speedwagon sings, "Roll with the Changes". Our Planner, Payton Carda, left FDALG at the beginning of August. During her tenure, she worked on multiple Pre-Disaster and Hazardous Mitigation Plans and managed Hamlin County Zoning. Payton has been a dedicated employee for three and half years. When I say dedicated, I mean it. After getting married and moving to Chelsea, SD, she would make the 90-mile one-way drive twice a week to be here in the office while she worked remotely the other three days of the week. Her new job in Aberdeen will allow her to expand upon her career while spending less time on the road and more time with her husband, daughter and soon to be new child. We wish her well but will also miss her. Replacing Payton will be Jessica Tesch. Jessica, who has been with FDDC for the past five months is transferring to the FDALG side of the office, where she will assume many of the duties Payton previously performed. The other change is something we have been aware of since last July when we celebrated Greg Maag's 30 years of service. At that time, we knew Greg would be retiring in June of 2023. Wow, where did that year go? As I said last year, Greg has always been the "Go to Guy" when it comes to putting together the financing and grant application/project management for community and economic development projects. His knowledge and experience will be irreplaceable. While we had to say "Adios" in June, it hasn't been goodbye, as Greg has agreed to contract with FDALG to assist Alex and Mason in this transition. Speaking of Mason, the District welcomes Mason Weidenbach as the newest employee in the grant administration department. He has been on the job a little over two months. Please read both Jessica and Mason's bios. We are excited to see these two professionals grow into promising careers.

Finally, we are less than two months from our annual picnic which will be held on September 28, 2023. Hope to see you there.

GO GREEN! EMAIL suzie@1stdistrict.org to get the newsletter digitally!

FDALG Welcomes Jessica Tesch

Hi, my name is Jessica Tesch and I am a new Planner for First District. I grew up in the country in Hamlin County just outside of Estelline and moved to Watertown where I attended Lake Area Technical Institute and received an Associate's degree in Ag Banking. After graduation in 2006, I worked in various industries (national guard mechanic, fertilizer sales, crop insurance, signage sales, insurance and financial strategies). In 2008, I married my husband Mark and became more familiarized in the world of dairy farming on a family farm in addition to having an outside career. Throughout my job opportunities over the years, I have been able to meet and start relationships with several people in my home state, learning a variety of skill sets and resources from each.

In my free time, I enjoy various outdoor activities such as camping, riding motorcycle and kayaking with my husband Mark and two boys, Maverick and Vincent.

I look forward to being a part of the First District team and helping communities prosper.



FDALG Welcomes Mason Weidenbach



Hello, my name is Mason Weidenbach, and I am the new Economic Development Officer at First District. I was born and raised in Sioux Falls, SD, where I attended and graduated from Roosevelt High School. I then chose to be a Jackrabbit and spent four years in Brookings acquiring a bachelor's degree in Community and Regional Planning from SDSU. I gained experience in the planning field as an intern with the City of Tea for two summers between school years and learned a lot about local government. During my time at SDSU I became heavily involved in Oasis College & Young Adult Ministry where my brother-in-law serves as a Pastor. I became a part of the leadership team and continue to serve there as a men's small group leader and volunteer, as I get the privilege of seeing the quality and purpose of young adults' lives radically change for the better as they learn who God is and what it means for us.

I currently live in Brookings and will be getting married to my wonderful fiancée Grace in October! We plan to continue living in Brookings for the time being as most of our close friends reside there. Most of my free time is spent either with Grace or my friends, doing a variety of things outdoors (when we're blessed with nice weather). I am an avid fan of pickleball, tennis, basketball, football, golf, or basically any other sport you put in front of me. When the cold South Dakota winter rolls around, I can be found reading anything from books about space to theology and many things in-between, along with going to Kool Beans coffee and enjoying many movie premieres at our local theater. My favorite place to spend time is at Gracepoint Church with hundreds of other young adults choosing to get to know Jesus together. I look forward to learning and serving the communities in eastern South Dakota in various ways with First District.

**First District
Governing Body Officers**

Gary Jaeger.....Chairperson
Deuel County

Mike Bartley.....Vice Chairperson
Brookings County Commissioner

Myron Johnson.....Secretary
Codington County Commissioner

Todd A. Kays.....Executive Director

Upcoming Dates

September 4—Labor Day, Office Closed

September 28—Picnic/Governing Body

October 9—Columbus Day, Office Closed

DEADLINES FOR SUBMITTING DOCUMENTS TO THIS OFFICE MAY BE PRIOR TO DEADLINES LISTED HERE. PLEASE CONTACT OUR OFFICE.

October 15—Bridge Improvement Plan Deadline

April 30, July 31, Oct. 31, & Jan. 31—Deadlines for Local Infrastructure Improvement Program

April 1, July 1, Oct. 1, & Jan. 1—Deadlines for State Revolving Fund (SRF) Applications

April 1 & Oct. 1—Deadlines for CDBG Applications

May 1, Aug. 1, Oct. 1, & Feb. 1—Deadlines for State Water Plan (SWP) Applications

Annual Picnic/Year End Governing Body Meeting

WHEN: September 28, 2023

WHERE: First District Office

INVITATIONS WILL BE SENT OUT SOON
WE HOPE TO SEE YOU THERE!