

## Rural Revival Minutes – November 2, 2015

**Members Present:** Tim Eisenbeis, Larry Eisenbeis, Dennis Jurkovich, John Koch, Todd Koerner, Dennis Lehmann, Dee Millar, Lyle Preheim, Glen Wollman

**Minutes** of the October meeting were reviewed and approved with corrections. Approval moved by Todd Koerner, seconded by Dee Millar and approved unanimously.

**Treasurer's Report.** No Report. July Balance was \$685.94.

**Courier Coverage** – Continuing interest was expressed in seeing more coverage in the Courier. Topic to be continued.

**Turner County Zoning** – There was considerable discussion of proposed changes to Turner County zoning. A public hearing is scheduled for Tuesday, November 7 at 7 pm in the Turner County Courthouse to gather public comment. The proposed changes would decrease setbacks for large confinement operations. This is stimulated by the plans by Sonstegard Foods to establish a 6,000,000 chicken facility west of Parker, but would open up other possibilities. The contention of opponents is that the new zoning would result effectively result in an end to limits on numbers of animals. They note that a ½ mile setback requirement and no restrictions on facilities within 2 miles of any town allows consideration of facilities with no limit on number of animals. A 3/8 mile setback from homes/businesses allows anything under 25,000 swine. The ½ mile setback would allow up to 250,000 turkeys or 30,000 sheep.

**Glen Wollman Subjects** – (1) Education -Good turnout at Homestead Orchard's bee presentation with positive comment all around. Solid family event. (2) Discussion of possible retaliation by USDA against researcher Johnathon Lundgren because of the publication of an article on neonicotinoids being harmful to monarch butterflies. His contention is that he was disciplined/suspended unfairly, USDA's retort focuses on a series of accusations relating to travel, internal complaints against Lundgren, and not following the publications approval process. A whistleblower suit is in progress.

**Dakota Rural Action Meeting** – Tim reported that there was discussion of the food hub possibility. The food hub is conceived to be a mechanism to increase the use of local foods through marketing to institutional buyers such as schools. The model included 25 members with a \$1,000 required investment. Charge for aggregating/marketing would be 15%. There was significant resistance to a model for distributing profits based on number of members rather than volume of product supplied.

**Dordt Visit** – Tim Eisenbeis reported that they had a visit from faculty and students from Dordt College. His reaction to the visit was very positive.

**Agtourism** – John Koch pointed again to the summer 2016 festival being planned and encouraged anyone interested in hosting an on-site experience to contact him.

**Rural Revival Mission** – Tim Eisenbeis again brought forward the idea of spending time reviewing our Mission and presented a set of three questions which might direct this discussion. The sense is that the next meeting would be the time to do this and everyone expressed their continuing interest in this time for reflection and planning. We do need to encourage as large a group as we can to participate.

**Adjournment** – Moved by Dee Millar, Second by Lyle Preheim, accepted.

Respectfully Submitted – John Koch, Secretary