



CITY OF RAPID CITY

RAPID CITY, SOUTH DAKOTA 57701-2724

July 28, 2015

Office of the Mayor

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Dear Councilmember:

I want to bring to your attention what may have been a glitch in the mayoral transition that may have resulted in an oversight of funding support for an important economic development organization.

Black Hills Vision has been funded by the City of Rapid City for the last five years (City funding to end in 2015) apparently through vision funds. They have received \$100,000 each year for five consecutive years. During the formation of the budget and the Mayoral transition period, I came to believe that Black Hills Vision had not requested funding for 2016. Very recently, I discovered that they are in fact, requesting funding for 2016 and beyond.

Black Hills Vision spokesman Mutch Usera has information explaining exactly where Black Hills Vision funds are being spent and how this benefits Rapid City and the greater area. Much of Rapid City's sales tax receipts are provided by neighboring communities, whose members travel to our city to shop and seek services and recreation. Caring for and supporting the economic development in the Black Hills area directly benefits Rapid City's local economy.

I encourage you to study the presentation by Mutch Usera July 28th budget hearing. I also encourage you to contact Black Hills Vision to request any additional information or to hear about their track record.

I believe economic development is essential for Rapid City. I believe Rapid City's financial investment in the various economic development agencies has paid for itself many times over. I think it is our duty as elected officials to make wise and strategic decisions about how our local economy is formed and maintained.

I'm asking you to carefully consider Black Hills Vision's request for the 2016 budget, whether that be from the general fund or vision funds.

If you would like to discuss this issue further please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Steve Allender

Mayor



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