

Growth Fund Committee Minutes
City Hall – Council Chambers
Grand Forks, ND 58203
February 23, 2026 – 4:30 p.m.

1. **Roll Call:** Members Present – Tricia Berg, Russell Crary, Mike Fridolfs, Rebecca Osowski, Matt Walkowiak, Amy Whitney.

2. **Information Only: Chair’s Comments**

Chair Fridolfs thanked Jonathon Holth for his time served on the Growth Fund Committee. Matt Walkowiak was introduced as a new member of the Committee.

3. **Election of Vice Chair**

Conlon informed committee members with Holth’s departure the committee is in need of a new vice chair until the election in July. *Fridolfs nominated Crary, second by Whitney. Motion carried unanimously.*

4. **Minutes: Meeting of November 17, 2025:**

Whitney moved to approve minutes as is, second by Berg. Motion carried unanimously.

5. **PACE Loan Request: Twin State Environmental**

Henningsgard informed committee members this is a PACE request for \$269,231 to buy down the interest rate on a commercial loan. Henningsgard introduced Kevin Hatcher from the EDC.

Hatcher presented this request on behalf of Twin State Environmental (TSE). Hatcher noted that John Walters and Scott Tinsman, representatives from TSE are online. TSE is an Iowa-based, family-owned company established in 1958. The business primarily operates in the agricultural fertilizer area, retail sales, and manufacturing facilities. This request is related to a Raptor Cleaning System. This system eliminates human entry into railcar tanks. TSE is looking to expand into Grand Forks to operate this new system. This project will be on the north end of Grand Forks. TSE is looking to do a 20-year lease agreement on 5 acres. They will construct a 5,700 ft square facility with supporting rail access. The total project is about 4.6 million.

Henningsgard noted to committee members that this project will create 6 new FTE’s with an average hourly compensation of \$28.00 in wages and benefits. The payment and interest accrual will be deferred for 60 months and repaid in a balloon payment with an interest rate of 1.75%. The loan will be subordinate corporate guaranties from 5 companies. The loan-to-value is at approximately 88.27%.

Fridolfs commented that he appreciates TSE expanding into Grand Forks and this is a prime example of what we pride ourselves on.

Feland noted that this company will be proposing to receive county incentive. Feland asked Hatcher to highlight this. Hatcher stated that TSE is going through the county commission for 5-year declining property tax exemption. This would be a collaborative effort to get TSE to expand in the region.

Osowski asked if any type of National Security checks have been done to see who the investors are. Hatcher noted that he met with Scott Tinsman and this is a family-owned operation based out of Iowa. Osowski further asked if the checklist has been completed on this company. Conlon noted that he has not gone through and done a score sheet on this company as they try to learn as much as they can about these companies. Osowski asked if the new FTE’s will come from our area and what type of job that is. Scott Tinsman noted that this company has been family-owned and operated since 1958. He noted that they are primary sector certified. Tinsman noted that these positions are primary blue-collar

focused and they will be hired from the area. Osowski also asked if they normally give out loans that are balloon payments. Conlon noted that typically for this program it is amortized over 12 months. It is not uncommon for businesses to send a balloon payment when the deferral period is over. Osowski noted she has a lot of issues with this request and would rather collect payments on a normal payment schedule and that TSE is also going to the county to try get a tax break.

Conlon went over the logistics of how the PACE loan is operated with the City and with the Bank of North Dakota.

Crary thanked TSE for growing in our community. He noted that TSE provides value to our community. They are making a sizable investment in our region. Crary also noted that he would like to see TSE utilize a local lender for any future investments.

Berg moved to approve the request, second by Whitney. Motion passed with Osowski dissenting.

**Crary exited the meeting at 5:00 p.m.*

6. Loan Modification Request: SafetySpect

Conlon informed committee members that SafetySpect is requesting a loan modification to vie them greater cash flow flexibility. This would reduce their monthly payment to \$10,000 a month over 28 months versus 12 months. Conlon noted that SafetySpect has been timely with their monthly payments and have been excellent at communication through this process.

Whitney noted that SafetySpect has a touch point as a member to the center for innovation where she currently is employed. *Osowski motioned that Whitney can vote. Second by Berg. Motion passed with Osowski dissenting.*

Ken Barton with SafetySpect provided an update to committee members. They have kicked of the ARPA-H grant. They are hitting all their milestones every month. The grant covers the overhead for most of their company. They have been cleared by the FDA, so there is a medical device company in Grand Forks. Barton provided some examples of the equipment and how it currently works.

Osowski asked if they are up to date on their loan and Conlon confirmed that is correct. Osowski is concerned that 300K plus was paid to UND and is asking for clarification on why they are paying UND. Barton explained the partnership with UND and SafetySpect.

Whitney asked what the growth plan looks like for SafetySpect from technical validation to sales of the product. Barton noted he is making modifications on the product. They should have that completely revised in around 4 months and they are selling the products for about \$42,000 apiece. CSI technology is commercial and they are selling the devices right now. Barton wants to sell two products in 2026.

Berg moved to approve the request, second by Whitney. Motion passed with Osowski dissenting.

7. Business Park Utility Easements

Brooks informed committee members that the City of Grand Forks is requesting a utility easement for city utilities as well as a city fiber line along the south side in the Business Park. The easement is not expected to have any negative impact on the value of the land as it will be located within the required setback area.

Berg moved to approve the request, second by Whitney. Motion passed unanimously.

8. Information Only: Past Due Loans Update

Henningsgard informed committee members of loans that are past due: S Olson Holdings and African Arts Arena. Staff have been in contact with those entities, and they will be making payments.

9. Information Only: Repaid Loans Update

Henningsgard informed committee members of loans that were repaid in 2025: Northern Tier Seed, Countrywide Sanitation Co., ODRA LLC, North Sky Construction, Tagnite Building, Try It On, and Krampade.

Loans that were repaid in 2026: Tacho Man, and Paragon Pro.

10. Adjournment

Motion by Berg to adjourn. Voting Aye: All. Meeting adjourned at 5:16 p.m.

Submitted by:

Anna Henningsgard
Community Development

Mike Fridolfs
Chair