

EDA

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that the business says, ‘gee, the numbers really make sense. Not only can I live in this beautiful place, but the numbers make sense, and I can make money here,’” Hanson said.

Apex’s business development model begins with research and staying tapped into what’s going on in the region in order to take advantage of opportunities when they arise, Hanson said. Apex works to find companies that are a good fit, and a good match so they’ll be able to work with them, he said.

Project formation involves meeting a company’s needs in a community, Hanson said, by identifying what it will take to best sell the opportunity to the company. Finally, Apex works to expand its relationships and enhance its current relationships which helps strengthen the organization, he said.

Hanson explained how the company’s business development model works in the real world by applying it to a project on which Apex worked. A 189,000-square foot maintenance facility at Duluth International Air-



STAFF PHOTO BY SPENSER BICKETT

Brian Hanson, Apex president/chief executive officer, addresses the International Falls Economic Development Authority Monday. EDA Director Shawn Mason is in the background.

port was vacant, he said, and Apex identified it as an asset that could be valuable to the right company.

Apex worked with a variety of different companies and organizations to compile a business case for the facility, to make sure it had covered all its bases and had the right people in place to answer any questions a prospective buyer might have. Apex identified AAR Corp., an aviation support company, as its top prospect, he said, which is the company which ended up taking on

the facility.

“They’re a pretty darn good target, and they were on top of that list,” Hanson said. “But the other 25, we had to understand them.”

To show prospective companies a work force existed in Duluth to service the building, Hanson said Apex held a career fair for the potential facility. Many of the attendees had worked for Northwest Airlines in the past, he said, so the work force was there. The event brought 676 resumes between in-person attendees

and people who had sent their resumes, he said. Of that group, 80 percent were qualified applicants.

“We pretty much proved our work force,” Hanson said, “We pretty much proved that could work.”

Apex ended up finding a host for the facility, Hanson said, which today provides nearly 400 jobs.

“This one has been a huge success for our region, and a good project to show that whole business development model at Apex, and how we do what we do,” Hanson said.

SHOOTING

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Beaudoin followed him and lunged at him, at which time Bradley Himes shot Beaudoin.

“I think (Bradley) did what he had to do to protect himself and his mother,” Jespersen said.

At the scene, the deputy administered first aid to Beaudoin, who was taken by ambulance to Rainy Lake Medical Center where he later died from his injuries.

County Attorney Jeff Naglosky declined to comment on the incident as he awaits reports from the Minnesota Bureau of Criminal Apprehension and the St. Louis County medical examiner’s office.

Given rights

While any events like the one in Ray are unfortunate, Jespersen said the families involved acted appropriately.

“We all have that Second Amendment right to protect ourselves in our homes,” he said. “In my book, (Bradley) did what he had to do and it was the right thing...I think all of us would have done the same.”

The sheriff said he couldn’t speculate if Beaudoin was under the influence of drugs or alcohol, but noted that “there were some issues this guy had.”

“He got beat up at one residence and goes to the next and assaults someone,” he said. “There was something there...We don’t know what was going through his mind. We never will.”

According to Beaudoin’s obituary, he was “a proud member of alcoholics and narcotics anonymous for 12 years.”

Other than speeding tickets, Beaudoin did not have a criminal history in Minnesota, according to online records.

The Journal attempted to contact Beaudoin’s family, but messages were not returned.

Isolated incident

Posts on social media sites link Saturday’s incident with recent vandalism cases around the International Falls area, but Jespersen said the two are not connected.

“This was completely random,” he said, noting he didn’t believe it was a burglary attempt, but couldn’t say for sure. “This was an isolated incident.”

NOVA

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and how it will develop in the future. The neutrinos travel the 500 miles in less than three milliseconds.

According to Miller, the \$280 million project is a joint venture between the U.S. Department of Energy, Fermilab and the University of Minnesota along with the NOvA collaboration. While the University of Minnesota operates the NOvA Far Detector Lab, Fermilab operates the detector and ensures that physicists have a steady beam of neutrinos.

Like many present Thursday, Miller was involved with the project when it was a mere dream.

“It’s been a lot of work, but a lot of fun,” he said, joking that the project’s next phase will be “somewhat boring.”

“It won’t really be boring, but I will not have to eat, drink and sleep building the detector since I am only working five, 10-hour days per week now,” he said. “But it is kind of bittersweet because a lot of the challenge is doing something that has never been done before safely and efficiently.”

Still, the atmosphere Thursday wreaked of excitement.

“Most of the collaborators working on the NOvA project have not seen the completed detector,” Miller

said. “They have all helped do their part from writing software to operating the detector or supplying many of the different components of the physical part of installing the modules and electronics was done by the local technicians.”

One of those collaborators was Craig Group, assistant professor of particle physics at the University of Virginia, in Charlottesville, Va. Group made the more than 1,300-mile trip to Ash River to see the detector “open it’s eyes” for the first time.

“This is a major accomplishment for the field of particle physics,” he said. “The UVA group designed the power system of the experiment. We have had dozens of people work on NOvA from the earliest planning phases. Personally, I was here for the collaboration meeting and I had never seen the full detector in person...Going forward, I’ll be one of the scientists who helps lead the analysis of the data that comes from NOvA.”

Group explained many undergraduate students have played and continue to play a pivotal part in the NOvA project.

“They do important work to make the experiment successful,” he said of the students. “Hundreds of undergraduates from University of Minnesota and other institutions were instru-



STAFF PHOTO BY EMILY GEDDE

Cory Kolodji, a tour guide, explains the process to International Falls City Councilor Gail Rognerud.

mental in bringing this project to completion.”

While many of the students won’t become scientists, Group said their involvement in the project will help them develop technical skills that will be important in many other career tracks.

“Being involved in a project like NOvA — even just a little bit — can instill an interest in scientific endeavor that lasts a lifetime,” he said. “These students will learn the importance and the excitement of science through real contributions

to cutting-edge science...

NOvA will answer some of the most fundamental questions of the universe, and as a scientist, I can’t wait to see what surprises we will find in the data...We hope to publish our first results early next year.”

Local reactions

Many local officials, including International Falls Mayor Bob Anderson, could only provide positive remarks about the completion of the one-of-a-kind detector.

“I think the research going on and trying to un-

derstand how the universe was formed is exciting,” Anderson said. “It’s great to have a place this close to International Falls...It’s great to have these folks visiting our community and I know they’ll be back again.”

Faye Whitbeck, president of the local Chamber of Commerce, agreed.

“The chamber considers this an important project for a number of reasons, one of them educational,” she said. “As was mentioned in Thursday’s program, it’s astounding the level at which

Minnesota college students are involved in this discovery...It’s rather mind boggling the magnitude of this facility right in our back yard when there are only a few in the world. Amazing for us, really.”

Koochiching Economic Development Authority Director Paul Nevanen noted the jobs created by the construction of the facility and the detector, adding he recognized some local faces Thursday.

Gino Alleman who was employed by NOvA since May 2012 — before recently being laid off — said the project provided him with the best working environment he’s ever experienced.

“Nobody got hurt and we did it in the half the time they expected us to do it,” he said. “I learned something new every damn day.”

Nevanen continued that as the project moves forward, the economic impact to the area will be felt.

“As (scientists) move into the data collection phase, I would anticipate that visitors and meetings will occur and utilize our airport,” he said. “I’m hoping, too, that there will be an educational component as well with high school and community college tours to get kids excited about physics and science. The big question is what will they do with the facility when it completes the project life cycle? I’ve got some ideas.”

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