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NEWS RELEASE

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Connors Named Dubuque Economic Development Director

DUBUQUE, Iowa – Dubuque City Manager Mike Van Milligen has named Jill Connors as the City’s next economic development director. Connors has worked as the economic development project coordinator for the City since 2014 and replaces Maurice Jones who recently accepted a deputy city manager position with the City of Springfield, Mo.

As Dubuque’s economic development director, Connors will develop, manage, coordinate, and supervise programs to meet the social, economic, and physical development needs of the Dubuque community. The position involves significant coordination, cooperation, and interaction with community groups, private not-for-profit economic development organizations, other city departments, businesses, and citizens. Specific responsibilities include economic development, downtown redevelopment, and riverfront development,

“Working for the City, Jill has proven herself to be a highly skilled, hard-working individual,” said Van Milligen. “She has been an important part of the economic development projects in Dubuque for many years and has demonstrated the ability to create the partnerships that are key to success.”

In her position as project coordinator in the economic development department, Connors coordinated multiple departments and private sector partners to facilitate local, multi-million dollar business-expansion projects, managed state and federal grants and related reporting requirements, synthesized stakeholder input for area-wide development plans, drafted and implemented urban renewal (tax district) plans, and developed and presented policy requests to legislators. Connors is leading strategy development and implementation of an \$8.5 million multi-year redevelopment of the former Flexsteel industrial property. She has also served as the lead coordinator for development of eight urban renewal plans, meeting state compliance requirements and funding over \$11 million annually in City programs.

Before joining the City of Dubuque in 2014, worked as special projects coordinator for two years for Gronen Restoration and the Smart Growth Development Coalition in Dubuque. In that role, she created and managed a statewide coalition of historic tax credit stakeholders, coordinated communication among internal and external partners, recommended strategies for stakeholders when corresponding with their legislators, and advocated policy changes with federal and state legislators and agency/department staff. Connors also organized and conducted site visits and tours, drafted and designed educational literature, and coordinated special projects for a \$40 million building redevelopment.

Her previous experience includes seven years as a middle school instructor in the Dubuque Community School District and six years as an English-as-Second-Language instructor in France. Connors holds a master of public administration degree from Drake University, a bachelor's degree in secondary education/French from the University of Northern Iowa, and a certificate of French Language and Civilization from Université Jean Monnet in France.

Connors' community involvement includes presently serving on the board of directors and chair of the governance and operations committee of Opening Doors and the Dubuque conference steering committee of Iowa Women Lead Change. She previously served on the board of directors of the Women's Business Factory.

Connors' appointment as economic development director will be effective on Monday, Jan. 14. Jones' last day of employment with the City will be Friday, Jan. 11. A farewell reception will be held for Jones from 10 a.m. to noon on Thursday, Jan. 10, at the Multicultural Family Center, 1157 Central Ave.

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Jill Connors