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## **PRESS RELEASE FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **New Economic Development Director to begin in September**

*Tod Faris to lead Kossuth/Palo Alto County Economic Development Corporation*

The Kossuth and Palo Alto County Economic Development Corporation (K/PACEDC) has named Tod Faris as the new Executive Director, effective September 23. Faris will replace Maureen Elbert, who will retire from the position this fall.

Faris is coming to the Kossuth and Palo Alto area from Centerville, Iowa with nearly 16 years of experience in economic development leadership. Most recently, he has served as the Economic Development and Community Relations Manager at Chariton Valley Electric Cooperative (CVEC) for seven years. Previously he served as the Executive Director of the Appanoose Economic Development Corporation (AEDC) based in Centerville.

Faris was introduced to Kossuth and Palo Alto Counties when he met Elbert at a Professional Developers of Iowa conference in 2009. He was impressed then with the activities and programs she had created and became familiar with the area. He is pleased to have an experienced support staff in the office to help get him up to speed and accustomed to the role. Faris anticipates that getting to know the communities, committees and businesses in the area will be his first step when he begins.

“The first thing will just be getting my feet on the ground, but another major priority will be continuing the business call program. I’m looking forward to getting out and around with Maureen, meeting people, and figuring out who the go-to people are. I know it’s going to take some time, but that will really help,” Faris said. “We’re just excited to get into the area.”

Faris brings experience in a variety of leadership roles to the position. He has served on many regional and state boards, including the Chariton Valley Regional Housing Trust as a charter board member, past chair of the Iowa South Regional Economic Development board, and a board member of the Professional Developers of Iowa. He currently serves as a board member of the Iowa Community Development advisory board and on the membership committee of the National Rural Economic Development Association.

“I am very excited that we have an experienced professional that can continue K/PACEDC’s plan to work for the betterment of local businesses and industries, and to build a strong network of professional services to support their economic activities and growth. It was important that we attain someone that has state, regional and (soon) local contacts, to be able to hit the ground running. Tod Faris will bring that to the table. We have a great pool of leaders in both Kossuth and Palo Alto that will assist him through his incubation stage as Executive Director,” said Elbert.

Faris and AEDC were awarded the Silver Shovel Award from the Iowa Area Development Group (IADG) in 2011 and was part of the IADG Impact Award at CVEC in 2017, 2019, 2020, and 2021. He was a member of the Leadership Iowa Class of 2013-2014.

Prior to his work in economic development, Faris was a regional vice president with Primerica Financial Services. He and his wife Hope of 31 years have an adult son, Garrett, who lives in Ankeny and a daughter, Addyson, who will be a freshman in high school.

“Honestly, I feel blessed. It seems like everything has led us to being here,” Faris said.

Elbert announced her plans to retire earlier this spring and the search has been on for a new director to take her place since that time. She has served as the Executive Director with K/PACEDC since 1998.

“I have loved being in this position and working with so many great leaders and companies, that I will miss. I am very confident that we have the individual that will soon do many great things for our area,” said Elbert.

To learn more about K/PACEDC visit [www.kpacedc.com](http://www.kpacedc.com) or call 515-295-7979.