

KANDIYOHI COUNTY AND CITY OF WILLMAR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION (EDC)
JOINT OPERATIONS BOARD OF DIRECTORS (OB) MEETING

MINUTES

May 8, 2014

EDC Office, Willmar

Present: Rollie Boll, Robert Carlson and Gary Gilman

Excused: Beverly Dougherty

Ex Officio: Jim Butterfield and Bruce Peterson

Staff: Steven Renquist, Executive Director and Jean Spaulding, Assistant Director

Secretarial: Nancy Birkeland, Legal & Administrative Assistants, Inc. (LAA)

Vice President Robert Carlson called the meeting to order at approximately 11:00 a.m.

IT WAS MOVED BY Rollie Boll, SECONDED BY Gary Gilman, to approve the following Consent Agenda.

CONSENT AGENDA

- Approve:
1. Minutes of April 10, 2014 meeting
 2. Financial reports as of April 30, 2014

- Accept: Committee Minutes
1. Agriculture and Renewable Energy Development 3/20/2014
 2. Business Retention and Expansion/Recruitment 4/2/2014

MOTION CARRIED.

PROGRESS REPORTS

Willmar. Bruce Peterson reported the city of Willmar completed its portion of the Jennie-O Turkey Store project; the deadline to complete the Willmar Avenue crossing project is June 15, 2014; plans have been received for an ALDI supermarket and a Taco Bell; preliminary drawings for Relco's expansion have been seen; Bethesda Health and Housing will appear before the Planning Commission next week on its \$21 million expansion; the city has received information on rental housing projects; is finishing plans for the Industrial Park 4th Addition and Peterson called a meeting for ordinance changes regarding restaurants and bars extending into downtown sidewalks.

EDC/MinnWest Technology Campus (MWTC). Steve Renquist reported Cargill recently moved from the MWTC and relocated to South Dakota; MWTC remains at 30 companies and is 55% filled. Spaulding reported Dale Wahlstrom, retired Medtronic executive and CEO of Life Science Alley and the BioBusiness Alliance, will be working with communities involved in the Minnesota Angel Network to put together a business plan to move forward on goals. Wahlstrom will assist the EDC and MWTC in getting more exposure for MWTC and developing strategies to attract life science/bioscience companies. A meeting was held between Ted Huisinga, Rick Huisinga, Jim Sandstrom, Steve Salzer, Joanna Schrupp, Doug Allen, Renquist, Spaulding and Wahlstrom on a work plan. Renquist attended the Willmar Area Development Corporation's meeting and reported on projects in the county, including the Jennie-O Turkey Store and assisting Spicer in replacing those jobs; he reported the dairy facility was not included in the bonding bill; he is moving forward with possibly adding a veterans wing to a local nursing home; and the Community-Owned Grocery and Barn shed projects are moving forward. Renquist reviewed with the board his "Dialog on Economic Development Priorities (see attached), which he presented to the city of Willmar and included potential budget requests.

Willmar Area Multicultural Business Center (WAM-BC). Spaulding reported WAM-BC is investigating and evaluating whether there is a good opportunity to purchase the building in which it is located.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railway TIGER II grant. Renquist informed the board the Joint Powers Board approved \$35,000 as the EDC's cash contribution to the TIGER II grant application. The Joint Powers Board determined that with contributions by the city of Willmar of 27-28 acres of land and \$459,000 by Kandiyohi County, this board's recommendation of \$75,000 should be reduced.

Office locations. Gary Gilman informed the board the subcommittee toured nine locations and three properties were excluded right away without being viewed. Spaulding said the locations will be narrowed to three to five for final consideration. As the Joint Powers Board must ratify the location, arrangements will be made for both boards to tour the final selections before making a decision. Rollie Boll stated they are reviewing the costs for each property, some of which are new and include build-out costs.

Status of board members. Renquist reported the Joint Powers Board has not yet appointed new members to this board and will hold a special meeting in May to do so. At the last Willmar City Council meeting, a motion was passed suggesting the Joint Powers Board amend the EDC's Bylaws so the city of Willmar has three undisputed appointments to the Joint Operations Board and Kandiyohi County has three undisputed appointments with the seventh board member being an undisputed appointment that alternates between the two entities. Renquist forwarded this suggestion to the EDC's attorney and Joint Powers Board. Renquist noted

paragraph 12 of the Joint Powers Agreement currently states the Joint Powers Board appoints seven members and, "Membership of the Operations Board shall include representation from communities throughout the county, education providers, business and consumer groups." Jim Butterfield reported he attended an excellent Mayor's Breakfast with speakers from the Word of Faith Church on unity. Butterfield would like to have four or five applicants to review and vote on at the special meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

Vacation for Business Development Specialist. Renquist reported Connie Schmoll was hired with the understanding she would receive two weeks of vacation during her first year, however, the EDC's Employee Handbook states vacation is earned during the 90-day probationary period and that full-time employees with less than three years full-time employment shall earn vacation at the rate of 1.67 hours per pay period.

IT WAS MOVED BY Gary Gilman, SECONDED BY Rollie Boll, to approve two weeks vacation for Connie Schmoll during her first year of employment and that the vacation policy for full-time employees be reviewed by staff. MOTION CARRIED.

Staff will bring a recommendation for a new vacation policy to the June meeting.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Agriculture and Renewable Energy Development. Renquist reported Schmoll has asked the committee if it would like to redo its business retention and expansion survey; the committee was disappointed the dairy facility did not make it into the bonding bill; Schmoll is working on the 10,000 head beef project; they are trying to move forward with Meadowstar Dairy; Schmoll and Renquist toured the West Central Research and Outreach Center with Kathy Schwantes; and the anhydrous ammonia project is presently on hold.

Business Retention and Expansion/Recruitment. Renquist reported the Joint Powers Board has directed the EDC increase its efforts in business retention and expansion/recruitment. The committee will use the EDC's Synchronist database program to do an email business survey and followup with some face-to-face visits. Spaulding stated once surveys are completed, the data is input into the Synchronist program where reports can be created for the board. Spaulding reported Synchronist has built-in surveys based on business sectors. The EDC's Synchronist program is for the PRIME sector, which covers industrial, warehouse and manufacturing. The other program covers the hospitality and retail sectors. A third module, Opportunity Manager, is for lead tracking. Third parties, with the permission of the EDC, can log into Synchronist and enter comments. Renquist indicated the committee may request additional funds for its 2014 budget. Renquist commented on the Grow Minnesota! program done by the Willmar Lakes Area Chamber of Commerce. He attends the Grow Minnesota!

meetings and is informed of the visits and potential red flags, but is not allowed to attend the business visits.

Technology Advisory. Spaulding reported the subcommittee met last week and is struggling with how to move forward as the cost to do a survey of county residents by postcard is prohibitive at approximately \$9,000. It is determining what information is needed and how to obtain it and is now looking at doing a smaller-scale survey of one of the county's townships where it suspects has the worst holes. The state broadband bill was reduced to \$25 million and the committee is hoping it can access some of those funds for the under-served areas of Kandiyohi County. Spaulding informed the board that Joint Powers Board members suggested the EDC provide its board members with iPads so she will be investigating the potential cost. Butterfield noted the county just decided to purchase iPads and developed a policy. Spaulding will contact Larry Kleindl relative to the county's policy.

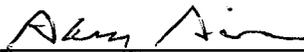
Finance. Spaulding reported the committee will review a loan request at its next meeting.

Marketing and Public Relations. Spaulding reported the committee is placing an ad on available jobs in the next *Business 2 Business* publication; is planning the second insert to be published in the fall; will update the EDC's website; and is working with the city of Spicer on marketing material—she will attend a meeting tonight on moving the concept forward.

Leisure Travel. Butterfield reported the committee met last week. This week is Tourism Week and everyone is asked to wear red on Friday; the Studio Hop is June 14-15; Glacial Ridge Winery is holding a rib fest on June 22 and the committee is looking at installing a tourism sign at the BP station in Spicer. Spaulding announced the Glacial Ridge Winery received the Small Business Administration's Encore Entrepreneur of the Year Award at a banquet yesterday in Minneapolis.

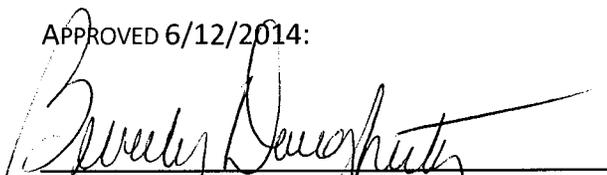
NEXT MEETING—The next regular board meeting is **11:00 a.m., Thursday, June 12, 2014**, at the EDC Board Room.

ADJOURNMENT—There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 1:00 p.m.



Gary Gilman, Secretary

APPROVED 6/12/2014:



Beverly Dougherty, President

Dialog on Economic Development Priorities

It is my opinion that the following strategic actions may have a substantial sustainable impact on the City of Willmar and Kandiyohi County. Please share your thoughts. Respond to steve@kandiyohi.com the more provocative comments – yes, even critical of me or the EDC, will appear in the next. The following priorities are from Steve Renquist – Director of the Kandiyohi County and City of Willmar Economic Development Commission. The rank order of the priorities is not intended to be the order of importance – they are simply how they came out of my notes.

1. The new Waste Water Treatment Facility and Kandiyohi County landfill have potential as economic drivers and/or energy producers. Power production and renewable resource driven industries are built by being in close proximity to waste treatment facilities.
2. Assure job producing construction in county industrially zoned property. Support job producing land development projects that may happen in appropriately zoned and sized land parcels.
3. Set a county wide target for job creation and retention. Keep current with the jobs/housing balance and accumulate 1,000 new jobs over the next five years. A strong collaboration between private and public sectors must occur to ensure the overall success.
4. Continue to expand the strong value-added agricultural base. Explore and ensure that the technical aspects of the agri-economy are pursued. Prepare for all aspects of evolving agri-based opportunities to include locally grown food production and distribution.
5. Continue to grow the capacity and content of the MinnWest Technology Campus to include the attraction of technology based companies and increasing the capacity to commercialize intellectual property.
6. Continue to grow and foster the wellbeing of our excellent health sciences complex. Superior health care delivery will separate our county from other areas when business and people decide where to locate.
7. Guide and foster development of Kandiyohi community's downtown's to include retail, service, office, hospitality and mixed-use residential development. Each community's downtown has a potential to increase the retail and service sector as well as features that enhance that city's quality of life. The identification and empowerment of the notion of downtown success is a matter of local community determination.
8. Adopt a plan and a budget to grow the utilization of the Willmar Municipal Airport. This will include the development of an Industrial /Business Campus to realize the airport's

potential. The impact of full airport utilization will be realized throughout Kandiyohi County.

9. Continue to sponsor business support and retention programs. The benefits of supporting existing business will be realized by the companies we keep and the jobs maintained and created as we learn more about improving our business climate.
10. Assist Ridgewater College as they offer programs that attracts and grows companies by consistently offering a readily available pool of trained workers. The ability to re-train adult workers is also paramount in our rapidly evolving economy with increasingly technical job requirements.
11. Support Willmar and Kandiyohi County by participating in social, cultural and recreational opportunities. Kandiyohi County's population is mixed with different age groups and cultural identifications. We have different backgrounds but find a common purpose because we are family orientated and appreciative of recreational opportunities. We can encourage development of a balanced sense of community and improve our personal and community quality of life by participating in community activities and utilizing public assets. Get busy and be active – be open to new people and new ideas – your life, and our county, will be better because of your effort.