

**KANDIYOHI COUNTY AND CITY OF WILLMAR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION (EDC)
JOINT OPERATIONS BOARD OF DIRECTORS (OB)
MARKETING AND PUBLIC RELATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING
MINUTES
June 18, 2012
EDC Board Room, Willmar**

Present: Heather Anderson, Jean Geselius, Ann Winge Johnson, Julie Redepenning, Joanna Schrupp and Heather Thompson

Excused: Shari Courtney and Liz VanDerBill

Guests: Betsy Bonnema of RedStar Creative; Tim Miller of MCROC; Lacy Solheid, EDC intern

Staff: Jean Spaulding, Assistant Director

Secretarial: Diane Beck, Legal & Administrative Assistants, Inc. (LAA)

Jean Spaulding called the meeting to order at approximately 12:04 p.m.

MINUTES—

IT WAS MOVED BY JULIE REDEPENNING, SECONDED BY JEAN GESELIUS, to approve the minutes of the April 23, 2012 meeting as e-mailed. MOTION CARRIED.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Customer relationship management program. Spaulding introduced Lacy Solheid. Solheid shared a brief bio and explained her intern duties: to create a database of Kandiyohi County businesses and write a marketing program that can be used by other economic development agencies to develop a communications plan and build relationships with businesses. To date, she has compiled approximately 3700 contacts compared with the previous Constant Contact list containing approximately 500 contacts. The contacts will be uploaded into the Synchronist program this week. Spaulding shared a brief overview of the Synchronist software chosen by the EDC. The next step will be to conduct an email survey; the cultural businesses will be surveyed in personal surveys. When the information is complete, it will be shared with this Marketing committee.

Newspaper insert/tab. Betsy Bonnema inquired if anyone would be interested in assisting with the content writing area and conduct interviews. Solheid expressed interest in serving in this capacity; Heather Anderson is also willing to conduct interviews.

Bonnema highlighted the content for the back page that would feature volunteers, i.e., sharing success stories on long-standing volunteers. Spaulding suggested the possibility of bringing back the volunteer of the year program. Volunteer of the Year nomination forms would need to be sent soon to make the August deadline for the insert/tab.

The insert/tab will also feature a section of businesses pertaining to entrepreneurs, recruitment and expansion. A list of businesses could be also featured. Spaulding suggested Willmar Fabrication,

Buhler and Feedlogic. The committee also suggested featuring businesses outside of the Willmar area, i.e., Peaceful Thymes (loan story), possible future grocery store in New London.

Bonnema will set up a meeting at EDC for interested members to assist with the insert/tab content. EDC will send out the meeting notice.

Photo library. Spaulding distributed the EDC photo library idea sheet, explained the need to update/expand the photo library and asked for feedback/suggestions for photos. Mark Peterson has taken several photos of Buhler. Comment from a committee member that photographer should have knowledge for “signature” photo ops. Committee suggested focusing on photos that need updating, i.e., medical related. Bonnema will contact Teresa Behm at Affiliated Community Medical Centers (ACMC). Tim Miller suggested involving the Ridgewater photography department; Bonnema will check with Ridgewater if they could recommend an intern. Additional photo op ideas include: Becker Market shots during Willmar Fest. Spaulding will be a step-on guide with R & J Tours that will make a stop at the Becker Market on June 21. Jean Geselius will prep the group and take photos during the visit. Committee suggested that Mark Peterson take the larger business photos: hospital, ACMC, Prairie Woods Environmental Center, Bushmills (possible aerial photo). Other suggestions for photo ops were: MCROC classroom--Miller stated there will be a full classroom on June 26, LuLu Beans, El Tapatio, Zorbaz, Gracie Margaret's, new ice cream store and box stores (Target). Need to send release forms for photographer; Bonnema will send release forms to EDC.

Spaulding shared examples of proposed new welcome banners for Willmar (see attached). Consensus of the committee was to separate Example 3, into four large banners keeping the colors of series example 2 and the side bars from series example 1. This recommendation will be forwarded to Ken Warner.

NEW BUSINESS

Mid-Central Research and Outreach Center (MCROC) marketing. Miller stated one of the services of MCROC's focus is to attract students through internships with the hope they will relocate and/or return to the area and partner with technology-driven companies to access the University of Minnesota's research resources. Spaulding inquired how this Market committee can assist MCROC to utilize the services.

Miller sees the committee's role is to develop a marketing plan to advertise MCROC and communicate to the region to identify opportunities via a brochure, website and/or the insert/tab. Spaulding suggested forming a subcommittee on how MCROC would fit into the insert/tab and instructed Miller will send an email to Spaulding listing MCROC services.

Anderson discussed the need for additional meeting space in the area. Miller stated the MCROC classroom is available for community use. There is no cost for non-profit organizations.

Hulstrand 2013 Minnesota calendar. Spaulding passed around a Minnesota calendar George Hulstrand printed (see attached). He inquired if EDC would like to purchase a supply. The consensus of the committee was to not purchase the calendar as it does not fit the EDC's purpose. The committee prefers a calendar that has a Kandiyohi County focus.

There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 1:26 p.m.

NEXT MEETING—The next scheduled committee meeting is **Monday, July 23, 2012** at the EDC board room.