

**KANDIYOHI COUNTY AND CITY OF WILLMAR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION (EDC)
JOINT OPERATIONS BOARD OF DIRECTORS (OB) MEETING
MINUTES
June 9, 2011
EDC Office, Willmar**

Present: Betty Bollig, Robert Carlson, Beverly Dougherty, Ron Erpelding, Duane Hultgren and Rick Nordin

Excused: Milan Schmiesing

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

Ex Officio: Jim Butterfield and Bruce Peterson

Media: Anne Polta, West Central Tribune

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

President Ron Erpelding called the meeting to order at 11:00 a.m.

IT WAS MOVED BY Bob Carlson, SECONDED BY Betty Bollig, to approve the agenda as presented and the following Consent Agenda.

CONSENT AGENDA—

Approve: 1. Minutes of May 12, 2011 meeting
2. Financial reports as of May 31, 2011

Accept: Committee Minutes
1. Business, Retention & Expansion/Recruitment (BRE/R) 5/4/2011

MOTION CARRIED.

PROGRESS REPORTS

Willmar Design Center (WDC). Bev Dougherty reported the second Becker Market is today; the WDC is working on obtaining funds for a feasibility study on a downtown parking ramp; opening up the bypass to downtown and the Community-Owned Grocery.

EDC/MinnWest Technology Campus (MWTC). Steve Renquist reported Tenex Health, Inc. is now at MWTC; all contracts have been signed for the Mid-Central Research and Outreach Center (MCROC), which is planned to open this fall.

[Bruce Peterson joined the meeting.]

Jean Spaulding reported Tenex Health is working on getting its manufacturing location set up at MWTC. The EDC and MWTC are co-hosting an Animal Science Venture Forum, September 21-22, 2011, an invite only event with the intent of driving traffic to MWTC; board members interested in attending the forum should let Spaulding know; members of the

Kandiyohi County Angel Network will be invited to the forum. Renquist reported the turkey research and development facility is moving forward along with the dairy research facility.

Willmar. Bruce Peterson reported the Willmar Planning Commission approved a new dental facility, Smiles, on 19th Avenue; a new strip center to be located near Walmart and anchored by Qdoba Mexican Grill was approved; the city of Willmar has been working on the expansion by Willmar Poultry; the state grant for MCROC at MWTC was signed; there will be changes at LuLu Bean's Coffee Shop as they purchased the location next door and will have a First Street entrance; the architect's study on the former terminal building was received and recommendations will be made to the Federal Aviation Administration—the architect's rehab estimates are \$590,000 to \$1.25 million; the Willmar Planning Commission held an in-house review of the city of Willmar's trails and pedestrian walkways and will send an amendment to Willmar's Comprehensive Plan; and a proposed development plan was reviewed for the downtown Mills block. In response to questions regarding Jennie-O Turkey Store's expansion, Peterson and Renquist provided an update on the realignment of County Road 40. Peterson reported Steve Salzer has reported at the last three Willmar Planning Commission meetings on new tenants at MWTC.

2011 goals. Erpelding requested the board occasionally review the goals.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS—There was no unfinished business.

NEW BUSINESS

Downtown Willmar parking ramp study. Renquist introduced Adam Arvidson, a landscape architect from Tree Line, who is working with the WDC and has also worked with the city of New London on redesign of its downtown. Renquist believes the local option sales tax can be used for a downtown parking ramp. Renquist reported on a meeting he hosted with Rice Memorial Hospital administration, Mayor Frank Yanish and Arvidson. Renquist stated Arvidson is requesting the EDC cover one-half of the \$30,000 cost to conduct a feasibility study on a parking ramp. Rice Memorial Hospital would pay the other half. Arvidson stated the feasibility study is critical to get answers to the unknown questions concerning a parking ramp and to get the various parties together to come up with a consensus plan. The WDC put out a request for information to urban designers and out of the six responses, selected two firms to interview as a consultant for the study, Hoisington Koegler Group, Inc. and SRF Consulting Group. Both of these firms have individuals who specialize in urban design and operation and design of parking ramps. The WDC is now seeking funding for the study based on the information provided by the consultants. The feasibility study would be done this summer and completed by the fall. Included in the study would be financing sources and operations financing. The assumption is it will be a public ramp, but that can be determined during the study. Board members felt that the satisfaction priority should be to Rice Memorial Hospital since support of a parking ramp for the hospital is the EDC's goal. The study may be able to determine the intangible perceptible benefit to the hospital's business. Arvidson has not yet written the final request for proposal (RFP) and can include that the study address maintenance and long-term operation expenses. Board members recommended it is imperative there be main floor business activity in a ramp for the central business district to generate real estate taxes off the project. If needed, Peterson has the previous studies and information available. A study was done in the 1980s. President Erpelding referred the request to the EDC's BRE/R Committee for a recommendation to the EDCOB at its July meeting.

2010 audit. Renquist reviewed with the board the 2010 audit, which notes minor findings. It was the board's consensus that it is not necessary for Jim Ruff to attend a future board meeting.

IT WAS MOVED BY Duane Hultgren, SECONDED BY Bev Dougherty to accept the 2010 audit as presented and forward it to the Kandiyohi County and City of Willmar Economic Development Commission's Joint Powers Board for approval.
MOTION CARRIED.

President Erpelding suggested the board send an RFP to area accounting firms to conduct the EDC's audit for the next three years (2011, 2012 and 2013).

IT WAS MOVED BY Duane Hultgren, SECONDED BY Betty Bollig to send a Request for Proposal to Kandiyohi County accounting firms to conduct an audit of the Kandiyohi County and City of Willmar Economic Development Commission's financial records for the years 2011, 2012 and 2013. MOTION CARRIED.

BIO International Convention. Spaulding stated that for the past two years she attended the BIO International Convention as a part of the Minnesota delegation. This year, the state decreased the partnership cost significantly to \$400, which includes attendance at the Monday night reception and participation in the Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday trade shows. Total attendance cost will be approximately \$2,000. Attendance by the EDC at this convention is to attract businesses to MWTC.

IT WAS MOVED BY Rick Nordin, SECONDED BY Bev Dougherty, to approve \$2,000 for the Kandiyohi County and City of Willmar Economic Development Commission's Assistant Director to attend the 2011 BIO International Convention in Washington, D.C., June 27-29, 2011. MOTION CARRIED.

Website. Spaulding reported the EDC's new website will be launched this month. A soft launch will be done with the EDC boards and committees followed by a public launch. Included in the new website is a property search feature through GIS Planning/ZoomProspector.

IT WAS MOVED BY Betty Bollig, SECONDED BY Bev Dougherty, to purchase a one-year membership in GIS Planning/ZoomProspector at a cost of \$4,600 to be paid from the Countywide Business Development line of the 2011 budget.
MOTION CARRIED.

Ramifications of state shutdown. Erpelding reviewed with the board areas that may have ramifications to Kandiyohi County, if there is a state shutdown and a budget cannot be reached by July 1: state employee layoffs (state troopers, DNR conservation officers, BCA licensed officers, Community Behavioral Health Hospital, Addiction Recovery Enterprise, parole and probation services and PCA and environmental monitoring); halting processing of business permits and driver's licenses; shutdown of Ridgewater College; shutdown of Sibley State Park (state parks earned nearly \$1 million in revenue to the state the first week of July 2010). Renquist stated the direct impact may be very little, but the indirect impact is large.

COMMITTEE REPORTS—

Ag. The board asked to be kept informed of the development of the dairy research facility.

BRE/R. Dougherty reported the committee is now meeting monthly instead of quarterly.

Finance. Spaulding reported she will meet with a project this week that the committee will review.

Leisure Travel. Betty Bollig reported the three-year contract with the Willmar Lakes Area Convention & Visitors Bureau ends this year and a continuation of the contract will be brought up at the June 30 board planning session.

NEXT MEETING—The next regular board meeting is 11:00 a.m., Thursday, July 14, 2011, at the EDC Board Room and the boards' planning session is June 30, 2011 at The Oaks, Willmar.

ADJOURNMENT—There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 12:31 a.m.

Betty Bollig, Secretary

APPROVED 7/14/2011:

Ron Erpelding, President