

**KANDIYOHI COUNTY AND CITY OF WILLMAR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION (EDC)  
JOINT OPERATIONS BOARD OF DIRECTORS (OB)  
MARKETING AND PUBLIC RELATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING  
MINUTES  
July 23, 2012  
EDC Board Room, Willmar**

Present: Jean Geselius, Ann Winge Johnson, Julie Redepenning and Liz VanDerBill  
Excused: Heather Anderson, Shari Courtney, Joanna Schrupp and Heather Thompson  
Guests: Betsy Bonnema of Red Star Creative; Lacey Solheid, EDC intern  
Staff: Jean Spaulding, Assistant Director  
Secretarial: Nancy Birkeland, Legal & Administrative Assistants, Inc. (LAA)

Jean Spaulding called the meeting to order at approximately 12:05 p.m.

**MINUTES—**

IT WAS MOVED BY Jean Geselius, SECONDED BY Julie Redepenning, to approve the minutes of the June 18, 2012 meeting as e-mailed. MOTION CARRIED.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

**Customer relationship management program.** Spaulding informed the committee the EDC purchased and has started using the Synchronist customer relationship management program. At this time, it just contains contacts and it will take some time to do business surveys and compile data.

**Community Marketing Coalition.** Spaulding informed the committee the Community Marketing Coalition (CMC) contacted Betsy Bonnema to act as a facilitator to develop a new tag line to replace its current tag line of See You in Willmar. Spaulding stated the CMC was created more than 15 years ago to counteract negative media at the time and is now an advertising and marketing initiative for the Willmar Lakes Area. Bonnema requested feedback on the purpose of the CMC and use of a community tag line. Committee members did not see the value of using a community tag line for their businesses and questioned the purpose of the CMC. The CMC just installed new street banners in Willmar. Committee members felt any tag line should stand on its own and be powerful.

**Newspaper tab.** Bonnema showed an outline of the 35" x 17" tab. The front cover features Your EDC, the outside cover features Your Volunteers and will contain information on the EDC's boards and committees, and inside content will include the EDC's tag lines, Recruiting Targeted Industry, Supporting Local Business and Assisting Entrepreneurs. Bonnema requested the committee's help on the inside pages and recommended one to three businesses be featured under each category. Suggestions included:

- Willmar Fabrication's sale to Buhler and its move to a new location
- EDC's co-sponsorship of the Animal Science Venture Forum

- MinnWest Technology as an opportunity for recruitment
- Peaceful Thymes under the entrepreneurs section and to highlight collaboration
- EDC's participation in the Minnesota Angel Network
- EDC's goals, such as increase the number of businesses in Kandiyohi County
- What can the EDC do to help a business rather than what the EDC has already done
- Invite readers to call for business assistance and information
- Facts and figures from the website contest
- Demographic growth information

The committee reviewed the information Lacey Solheid started for the volunteer section (see attached). The nomination form for the EDC's volunteer of the year award will be emailed to the EDC's boards and committees with a two-week deadline to return the nomination. This committee will review the nominations and select a winner.

**Visitors' guide.** Spaulding showed a proposed ad by Lakeside Press for the new visitors' guide (see copy attached). Lakeside Press will update the content for the economic development section of the guide. Last year the cost of the ad was \$1,125 and was considered a half page; the cost would be the same this year.

IT WAS MOVED BY Liz VanDerBill, SECONDED BY Jean Geselius, to place an ad in the 2013 Willmar Lakes Area visitors' guide at an approximate cost of \$1,125.  
MOTION CARRIED.

There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 1:29 p.m.

**NEXT MEETING**—The next scheduled committee meeting is **Monday, August 27, 2012** at the EDC board room.

## VOLUNTEER SECTION OF THE TAB

### MAIN BODY TEXT

The EDC's work would not be possible without the help of dedicated community members. Over sixty business leaders and owners on two boards and five committees oversee the operations, public relations, and finances of the EDC. They dedicate their time and effort into making a positive impact on Kandiyohi County. Julie Redepenning from the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development said, "Some of the significant impacts that come to mind would range from the addition of an ethanol facility in Atwater, the new airport, the growth of the Minnwest Technology Campus, providing community education through broadband initiatives, and assisting in maintaining the businesses we have within the county." Volunteers are the cornerstone of the Economic Development Commission. The EDC would be able to accomplish very little were it not for the people that serve on the various committees and boards.

Once, twice, even sometimes three times a month, volunteers step into the EDC office to get their work done. There were over 90 hours of meetings this past year alone. Many volunteers skip their lunch hour to attend a committee or board meeting. However, many of them feel their participation with the EDC far outweighs a missed lunch here or there. Many of the board and committee members said that one of the biggest advantages to helping the EDC is the people that they have met along the way. "I get to meet other county leaders I would not have met otherwise," said Bob Meyerson of Atwater State Bank. Not only do the volunteers get to expand their network of connections, they also become more aware of what is happening throughout the county. "Volunteering with the EDC has helped me to learn more about my local community," said Heather Thompson of Conway, Deuth, and Schmiesing, PLLP. "I've been impressed with all of the 'behind the scenes' projects the EDC works on."

Attending meetings isn't all that our volunteers do. There must be a way to carry out the plans made at the meeting. The volunteers assist the EDC staff members in executing the ideas. In fact, this publication would not have been possible without the help of volunteers. Many of the volunteers pride themselves on being able to help others out in the community. "Several small businesses have received financial help and it has been fun to watch them succeed," said Russ Weeks of Heritage Bank.

The EDC works hard to help the local businesses, but that would not be possible without community involvement. The volunteers have come to the EDC in a variety of ways. Some were recruited by their supervisors at work, others were appointed by local government officials, and some even discovered the need for volunteers in the newspaper. If serving on a committee seems daunting for you, there are plenty of other ways to help out! The EDC is always looking for feedback from the community. You and your business can serve as an ambassador on behalf of the EDC. If there's a problem in the community, or if your business has accomplished a great feat, we want to know! If you or your company are interested in serving with the EDC, please contact us at

## supporting local business.



The Kandiyohi County and City of Willmar EDC works to support the local business community. We provide customized business retention, expansion and relocation support, as well as consulting and mentoring programs. We also provide access to critical funding sources and equity financing.

Learn more about our support services at [www.kandiyohi.com](http://www.kandiyohi.com)

## assisting area entrepreneurs



The Kandiyohi County and City of Willmar EDC works to encourage and assist area entrepreneurs. We provide access to innovative funding opportunities such as the Entrepreneur's Loan Guarantee Program and Revolving Loan Fund. We also help develop training and mentoring opportunities for small businesses.

Learn more about our financial resources at [www.kandiyohi.com](http://www.kandiyohi.com)

## recruiting targeted industry.



The Kandiyohi County and City of Willmar EDC actively recruits businesses in the targeted industries we feel best suited for our local economy: healthcare, airport-related, value-added agriculture, renewable energy, biotechnology, and e-commerce. We facilitate collaboration and create easy solutions between city and county government and the private sector.

Learn more about our collaborative resources at [www.kandiyohi.com](http://www.kandiyohi.com)

find it all at the new  
[www.kandiyohi.com](http://www.kandiyohi.com)  
**GO THERE!**

**WILLMAR LAKES AREA**  
Kandiyohi County and City of Willmar  
**Economic Development Commission**  
[www.kandiyohi.com](http://www.kandiyohi.com) | 888-815-7370