

KANDIYOHI COUNTY AND CITY OF WILLMAR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION (EDC)
JOINT OPERATIONS BOARD OF DIRECTORS (OB)
BUSINESS RETENTION & EXPANSION/RECRUITMENT (BRE/R) COMMITTEE
MINUTES
April 7, 2010
EDC Board Room

Present: Bev Dougherty, Gary Geiger and Les Nelson
Staff: Steve Renquist, Executive Director
Excused: Tom Lindemann and Bruce Peterson
Secretarial: Nancy Birkeland, Legal & Administrative Assistants, Inc. (LAA)

Chairperson Bev Dougherty called the meeting to order at approximately 10:36 a.m.

MINUTES—

IT WAS MOVED BY Les Nelson, SECONDED BY Bev Dougherty, to accept the minutes of the January 6 and February 3, 2010 meetings by acclamation as e-mailed.

2010 GOALS STATUS

- A. **Business visitation—EDC staff and BRE/R Committee members will visit a minimum of 50 Kandiyohi County businesses.** Renquist reported EDC staff has visited 22 businesses this year. Renquist distributed the visitation list by Grow Minnesota! consisting of 54 businesses, including some from outside Kandiyohi County (see copy attached to original minutes).
- B. **Focus Groups—Continue dialogue luncheons with the aviation, health services and technology industries.** Renquist distributed a compilation of the health sciences questionnaire (see copy attached) and reported on the dialogue luncheon and presentation given by Cameron Macht, Regional Analyst from the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development. The EDC is helping an optometrist get approval as a provider through Blue Cross Blue Shield and assisting with the area's lack of an orthopedic surgeon. It appeared the majority of the attendees would like an annual dialogue. Dougherty stated the attendees at her table would like to have had discussion time.
- C. **Visit airports and develop an airport business and marketing plan.** Renquist reported committee members have visited Brookings, South Dakota, St. Cloud and Alexandria, Minnesota, airports. **Renquist** will be scheduling visits to Brainerd and the Metropolitan Airport Commission.
- D. **Organize and train three area communities in the skills of conducting their own business retention call program.** Renquist reported the EDC is working with Raymond, New London and Atwater. The EDC participated in a redesign plan for New London's downtown.
- E. **Work with Kandiyohi County communities to energize a retail and service business recruitment program.**
 - I. **Atwater hotel restoration and physician for clinic.** The EDC facilitated two community meetings leading to the Atwater hotel restoration and regaining a medical facility.

- ii. **Community-owned grocery store with local foods focus for Willmar, New London and Pennock.** Dougherty reported the focus group wants to determine a first and second choice building for a community-owned grocery store and has looked at the Habicht's building being first choice for downtown Willmar with the lower level for storage and the upper level redesigned similar to Phoenix on Fifth condominiums. Using HRA downtown redevelopment funds was discussed. Also possibly looking at a restaurant serving local foods with a sidewalk café and a butcher.
- F. **Work with the Agriculture and Renewable Energy Development (Ag) Committee to assist its business retention, expansion and recruitment goals.** Renquist distributed the results of the 2005 Ag Committee BRE survey. Renquist will meet with the EDC's newly-hired Ag Specialist to redo the survey. Geiger cautioned about making too many changes to the survey as then there is no longer a baseline for comparison purposes.
- G. **2010 business reception in conjunction with Manufacturer's Week (October 2-6).** Renquist reported he and Diane Schulte are working on a reception to be held in October 2010.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

There was no unfinished business.

NEW BUSINESS

2010 goals. Renquist distributed the EDC boards 2010-2011 goals, which includes goals relating to BRE/R (see copy on file). Dougherty reported an informational meeting on the Becker Avenue redesign will be held April 27, 2010 at the Willmar Public Works offices and will be presented to the Willmar City Council on May 2, 2010. The pedestrian study is currently on hold and may instead be replaced by a parking ramp study. Discussion was held on a downtown parking ramp and possible locations. Renquist suggested this committee host a show on the local cable access channel. This topic will be on the next meeting agenda. It was suggested to possibly invite Rudy Vigil and a representative of the Community Marketing Coalition.

Other. Renquist distributed a Demographic & Retail Sales Profile 2007 Update and a Willmar & Kandiyohi County Demographic & Economic Profile 2009 Update prepared by Cameron Macht (see copies attached to original minutes). Geiger reported Community Marketing Coalition survey results were recently presented; results may not be accurate as it was only done online. Discussion was held on the lack of tax generating properties in downtown Willmar; the majority are nonprofit or governmental entities. Geiger informed the committee SBA programs have greatly improved and its changed its guaranty to 90% and lowered its fee. Dougherty has discussed with Bob Bonawitz the creation of a greenhouse using Willmar Municipal Utilities excess heat for green energy. No information was available on Lutheran Social Services obtaining the former John's Supper Club building.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 11:36 a.m.

NEXT MEETING—The next regular committee meeting is **10:30 a.m., Wednesday, July 7, 2010**, in the EDC Board Room.



KANDIYOHI COUNTY HEALTH SCIENCES COMMUNITY
 DIALOGUE LUNCHEON
 MARCH 18, 2010

Tabulation Results of Questionnaire
 (32 attendees/21 surveys completed)

1. In your opinion, what are the growth and new and/or emerging components of the healthcare industry?

- Preventive care, PT
- Diabetic related problems, preventative care for the aging population
- Home care
- Senior special needs/assistance; public transportation needs; interconnectivity of electronics
- Pain management clinic; mental health—geriatric
- Adult foster care/adult day services; technology (in-house) that monitors vulnerable and aging adults to remain living in their own home
- A new campus needs to be identified in preparation of constant health care needs
- Anything to do with prevention and helping elderly people more; as the baby boomers get older we will have an older population
- People are living longer—more care needed
- R&D, orthopedic, cardiac care
- Ortho
- Primary care = growth
- Gerontology (demographics)
- Ortho surgery, pain management; specialty geriatric clinic; geriatric mental health; medication management; rehabilitation services; geriatric health care
- Home care
- Preventative medicine
- Complementary therapy

2. Are there any voids in our region's medical services that could be filled? If yes, what are they?

- Orthopedic surgeons
- Retinal specialist
- *Geriatric mental health;* pain management
- Home care expansion
- Ortho care; cardiac care
- Mental health for geriatric, need more opportunities
- Ortho, lung, pain management clinic
- Orthopedic surgeons; transportation to/from rural Kandiyohi areas for medical appointments (KAT bus does some and does a great job)
- ?
- Can't think of any
- In this area we are better off than other parts of the nation because of a good hospital and clinic
- Cardiac care, orthopedics
- Specialist medical care
- Ortho
- Orthopedics, gerontologist, psychiatry
- Geriatric care—health care/specialty health care; internal medicine; orthopedic; CV rehab; PMH—adolescent
- Knowledgeable personnel available to refer to a network of complementary therapy practitioners

3. Do you know of anyone who has contact or involvement with existing health equipment manufacturers located elsewhere?

- No (7)
- ?
- Altimate

4. What are other communities doing in support of their healthcare industry that you wish our community was doing?

- Supporting Rice Memorial instead of going to St. Cloud and Alexandria
- Support of elected officials for small clinics
- Similar as here
- To ultimately improve and support healthcare we must sponsor/support legislation that does not provide “free” healthcare to countless numbers of illegal immigrants at local taxpayer expense
- Unknown
- Preparing for baby boomers
- Increase the overall good word of mouth and advertising
- Building Hospice houses (like Fergus); people want to stay home; build LAH/Block Nursing Program—make countywide
- Strategic planning across industries; health care industry planning
- The Sunday Tribune (Feb. 28th) had an article about the health care system in Staples, MN. Check it out, very interesting!
- Serving. . . pampering the patient with simple, affordable little touches of caring: Piper Institute—bathrobes and tea in teacups, etc.; Midsota extras—support staff took extra time to pamper

5. How can the community and the EDC help make this area a better regional medical center?

- Aid recruitment and retention of staff
- Helping to cut through the red tape insurance companies put up
- Orthopedics
- Continue dialogue with city/county such as this
- A new campus needs to be identified in preparation of constant health care needs
- Continue what we are doing with cooperation between the hospital and ACMC
- Keep recruiting in the medical field
- Help promote the Tech Campus to increase opportunities for health care R&D
- Continue to promote to positive growth of community; continue to show the strong economic position
- Increase the overall good word of mouth and advertising
- Foster better integration of hospital and clinics; support life planning/care planning (advance care planning); provide health insurance for employees; case management at work
- Strategize with interested parties; market through EDC; legislative involvement—list serve/group e-mail
- Strategic planning across industries; health care industry planning
- I think if doctors and chiropractors could get along it would be amazing how well they could serve their clients. The time has come to embrace each other’s views.
- Bringing together the medical and alternative communities by educating them on the benefits they can be to each other vs. competition

6. Is there anything the EDC can do to assist in the recruitment of new healthcare professionals and/or services?

- Work with Rice and the clinics; monetary contribution
- Provide support for practitioners of small clinics with regard to obtaining contracts with insurance companies
- Willmar’s downtown business district (what is left of it) needs renovating; it has really become run-down and overrun with unemployed immigrants (many here illegally)
- Assist in providing regional information to help attract and maintain providers
- Continue to support and plan for the jobs and activities of family
- Would like contact names/numbers of people when we have a recruit

7. Are you able to recruit the quantity and quality of support staff you need to function?

- Mostly
- N/A
- Yes, because of a strong emergency medical program at Ridgewater College
- Yes, but we may not be able to in the near future as our national nursing shortage becomes more strained
- We have had trouble recruiting higher level staff
- Support staff, yes; physicians in specialty, we are having difficulty
- No, because of the numbers of median salary in area and available jobs for professionals
- Yes. Mostly word of mouth recommendations. If you have a good group to begin with it is much easier to recruit good people. If your base group has problems, then good luck recruiting.
- Not always
- I “grow” my own
- ?
- Yes for support staff, not upper level providers

8. **Are there programs that Ridgewater College could offer that would enhance your practice or improve the quality of locally available employees?**
- Dental assisting here instead of Canby and improve the quality of that program, which isn't what it once was
 - Para optometric training program
 - It would be great to see a 4 year college in Willmar, but the ability to work through them to get a 4 year degree is helpful
 - So far they have met all of our needs
 - No
 - HME training
 - I am interested in learning what others have to say
 - Continuing education on complementary therapy
 - Not at this time; nursing and CMA programs seem sufficient
9. **Are you aware of any existing high technology or equipment that could be jointly purchased and shared by existing area healthcare providers? If yes, what are they?**
- ?
 - No (2)
 - CNC computer carver, but who to share with is the tough part
10. **Who are your large suppliers of services and/or products?**
- Patterson Dental
 - Optical lab (glasses, lenses), frame companies, contact lenses, pharmaceuticals
 - I don't know of any suppliers in the area that we could utilize to get EMS equipment; we get a lot of items from Rice Hospital already and then from a CMS coop
 - McKesson Medical, Keaveny Pharmacy Services (local provider)
 - Plastics, instate; leather and soft EVA material, out of state
 - Invacare, Ohio; Pride, PA; Resperonics, PA; supplies—ISG warehouse distribution
- Could any of them be manufactured and/or supplied locally?**
- No (2)
 - Probably not
 - Not currently for medical equipment
 - Very tough to do

OTHER COMMENTS:

- There is concern about the impact (negative) the proposed new VA care facility will have upon existing care providers in our area. We cannot compete against government benefit packages offered to government employees like the VA.
- Not a health care provider, but certainly enjoyed the presentation, information and lunch. These types of sessions help one to understand their community and what makes it tick. Thanks. Keep up the good work.
- Government good/bad for business.
- I wish I had more input to offer, but as the new guy, I am still trying to learn my way around. I found the information interesting. Thank you for allowing me to attend.
- Thank you, very interesting.