

**KANDIYOHI COUNTY AND CITY OF WILLMAR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION (EDC)
JOINT OPERATIONS BOARD OF DIRECTORS (OB)
MARKETING AND PUBLIC RELATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING
MINUTES
February 22, 2010
EDC Office, Willmar**

Present: Jean Geselius, Diane Maurice, Joanna Schrupp, Heather Thompson and Liz VanDerBill

Excused: Betty Bollig, Diane Schulte and Deb Van Buren

Guest: Betsy Bonnema

Staff: Jean Spaulding, Assistant Director

Secretarial: Ruth Koenen, Legal & Administrative Assistants, Inc. (LAA)

Jean Spaulding called the meeting to order at approximately 12:06 p.m.

MINUTES—

IT WAS MOVED BY Liz VanDerBill, SECONDED BY Jean Geselius, to approve the minutes of the January 25, 2010 meeting as e-mailed. MOTION CARRIED.

MONTHLY REPORTS/UPDATES

MinnWest Technology Campus (MWTC). When registering to attend LifeScience Alley Conference & Expo, MWTC had committed to a follow-up mailer which was a VIP invitation to be put on a list for information on the grand opening of the Mid-Central Research and Outreach Center. The mailer recently was sent to approximately 1400 attendees of the show. Joanna Schrupp is compiling the RSVP list so follow-up information and an invitation to the open house can be sent when the schedule is set with the University of Minnesota. By responding to this card, their name and company will be placed on the VIP mailing list. Approximately 50 responses have been collected. The MWTC will be hosting a community open house for sometime in June—likely during Willmar Fest. The open house is part of MWTC's efforts to communicate with the area community all the work and accomplishments at the campus, which coincides with MWTC's five-year anniversary.

Projects for/with EDC committees. Spaulding will attend the 2010 BIO International Convention in Chicago in May representing MWTC and the EDC. Spaulding received approval by the EDCOB to upgrade her membership so as to attend a two-day "boot camp," which consists mainly of financial classes. Spaulding informed the committee that the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development will have a large trade show booth (Pavilion) that the EDC will be participating with at the Chicago convention.

Bonnema, Spaulding and Schrupp have attended some marketing meetings for MWTC. At their last session, they focused on identifying the accomplishments of the different phases of MWTC.

Phase one is from start up to 2009 and phase two is 2010-2011. They want to be able to inform the public what MWTC has accomplished and its future plans.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

EDC branding campaign. The members took turns updating the committee on the progress of the branding campaign assignments. For the diversity section, Spaulding has sent the questions to Roberto Valdez of the Willmar Area Multicultural Market. The kitchen will be licensed within the week, which will free up Valdez for Spaulding to interview him. Jean Geselius is interviewing Epiōpix and has scheduled a photo shoot with Ron Adams. Besides Jim Sandstrom, Geselius will also interview a couple of other managers. Liz VanDerBill is working with the Gorans family on the Ag campaign. She is also working with Dave Baker, but has a concern regarding the photograph to use for the campaign. Options for the photograph were discussed. Heather Thompson will interview Rick Schwinn regarding the trails after her tax season is done. It was suggested to have a “green” picture of the trail, one that isn’t covered with snow.

EDC website. Betsy Bonnema has been working on putting more details on the website. Last week, the home page was worked on. The committee viewed the website and Bonnema went over the layout and different items on it. The committee was reminded of Friday work sessions. Diane Maurice suggested including on the new website information from the recent article in the *West Central Tribune* on Prairie Woods Environmental Center and its solar panels.

Membership. Spaulding re-introduced the names suggested at last month’s meeting. It was decided that **Schrupp** invite Jared Anez and Robin Kopel and **Spaulding** will invite Jill Benson, Jill Gould and Julayne Meyer.

Entrepreneurship contest partnership. Spaulding has not worked on the entrepreneurship contest. She informed the committee on the Invention Convention, spearheaded by Tim Miller of MWTC. The Invention Convention is a contest for 6-8 graders that will take place on Saturday, May 1, 2010. The judges have not been confirmed, but will likely be from Nova-Tech Engineering, St. Cloud State University, Ridgewater College and the University of Minnesota. Approximately 120 invites for the Invention Convention were sent out Friday, February 19, to schools and teachers within an hour from Willmar. Although the Invention Convention is not the same as the Entrepreneurship contest, it is a test to see if something like it would work. This contest could be a feeder for the next step.

NEW BUSINESS

2010 Goals. The committee reviewed the 2010-2011 goals set by the EDC’s Boards at their November 2009 planning session. Spaulding suggested the committee look at its goals determined at the budget planning session and the boards’ goals to see if they are in agreement. Committee members questioned this committee’s role in the goal of guaranteeing an accurate 2010 Census. Bruce Peterson is the boards’ liaison and has indicated they have a broad-based countywide committee that has been meeting for several months on strategy to achieve the goal. It was recommended that **Spaulding** contact Peterson to have him periodically email her so the committee can have updates, in writing, as to what is taking place.

Lake Lillian bank building marketing. Spaulding informed the committee of a vacant building in Lake Lillian that needs some creative work in order to fill it with a business. Approximately seven years ago, it contained a coupon redemption business. The building has many great assets, including data wiring for computers, a climate controlled room, loading dock and more. If the

owners cannot find a tenant, they are considering demolition because of ongoing operating costs. It was suggested to form a subcommittee to work on this project. **Spaulding, Bonnema** and **Thompson** agreed to be part of this subcommittee. If anyone else would like to be on the subcommittee, please inform Spaulding. **Spaulding** will approach Neal Prokosch, Citizen's State Bank president in Lake Lillian, regarding the subcommittee. A marketing plan needs to be put together, then the plan needs to be taken before the EDC boards for financial approval. **LAA** will do a Meeting Wizard for a date.

There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 1:18 p.m.

NEXT MEETING—The next committee meeting is **12 noon, Monday, March 22, 2010**, at the EDC office, Willmar.