

**KANDIYOHI COUNTY AND CITY OF WILLMAR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION (EDC)
JOINT OPERATIONS BOARD OF DIRECTORS (OB)
MARKETING AND PUBLIC RELATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING
MINUTES
March 23, 2009
EDC Office, Willmar**

Present: Jean Geselius, Betsy Bonnema, Cameron Macht, Heather Thompson and Liz VanDerBill

Guest: Jeff Dockman

Excused: Beth Fischer, Anna Gorres, Julie Redepenning and Diane Schulte

Staff: Jean Spaulding, Assistant Director

Secretarial: Nancy Birkeland and Melissa Ball-Warriner, Legal & Administrative Assistants, Inc. (LAA)

Co-chairperson Heather Thompson called the meeting to order at approximately 12:01 p.m.

MINUTES—

IT WAS MOVED BY Liz VanDerBill, SECONDED BY Heather Thompson, to approve the minutes of the February 23, 2009 meeting as mailed or e-mailed. MOTION CARRIED.

MONTHLY REPORTS/UPDATES

Bring Them Back Home. Cameron Macht reported the spring newsletter is complete and printed copies for mailing have been received from PrintMasters. Information on purchasing and using Constant Contact® has not yet been provided to the EDC office. The goal is for the next newsletter to be an online version only. Jean Spaulding reported the human resource email list will be updated by LAA (anticipated to be ongoing) to include business representatives of major companies and senior management. The EDC will email these individuals descriptions of applicants when received. **Spaulding** will follow up with Julie Redepenning on this list and possible smaller businesses to include. Preliminary feedback from the employers is good.

MinnWest Technology Campus (MWTC). Spaulding reported the MWTC received a WIRED grant, which includes curriculum through the University of Minnesota and St. Cloud State University internships. Spaulding informed the committee the University of Minnesota is holding a focus group March 24 at MWTC on the Mid-Central Biosciences Center (MCBC).

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

EDC website. Jean Geselius reported on a meeting with Ken Warner of the Willmar Lakes Area Chamber of Commerce and Beth Fischer of the Willmar Lakes Area Convention and Visitors Bureau (CVB). Warner and Fischer showed an interest in a cooperative website, but first want to

know how much duplication there is between the sites and what are the future ideas for the various sites. Discussions with a programmer indicate it is possible to have coordinated sites. The **subcommittee** will compile web statistics, what a "dream site" would look like and research the similarities among the sites. The City of Willmar and Kandiyohi County could also be included in a cooperative site. It is unknown at this time if a request for proposal would involve only the EDC or all interested organizations. The top pages viewed on www.kandiyohi.com are the pages related to area tourism.

Volunteer Appreciation and Awards. Spaulding reported the EDCOB was given three options as to recognizing its volunteers and requested additional information on the advertising option. Spaulding reported Melvin's on the Lake recommends 45 as a maximum for a boat cruise; it is unknown how that maximum would work for the number of EDC volunteers. Dave Baker of Melvin's on the Lake offered to partner with the EDC on boat tours for visitors and possibly reduce their fees for special events. **Geselius** and **Thompson** will obtain more information from the West Central Tribune on doing a tab in June. Spaulding stated the EDCOB would have to approve the expense as it would be over \$1,000. The committee will need to determine the process for selecting and recognizing award winners, recognizing EDC volunteers and EDC information to include in the tab. Betsy Bonnema showed a sample of an 11" x 17" full color insert done for the Willmar Surgery Center. A tab insert is \$51.50 per 1,000 excluding printing costs. The committee recommended using its credit at Maracom for printing. It was recommended the EDC awards be placed on upcoming EDC committee agendas.

Willmar Area Development Corporation (WADC)/EDC. Spaulding reported on a meeting with the WADC and joint advertising that could be done, including TV promotions; magazines, such as *Fargo-Moorhead Magazine*, *Minnesota Monthly* and *Twin Cities Business*; a coffee table book on the area or hosting a competition for entrepreneurs, such as the Adobe® Design Achievement Awards. This topic will be discussed further at tonight's brainstorming session. Macht reported he spoke with Kathy Schwantes about Ridgewater College's magazine. The publisher of that magazine sells ads in the magazine and produces a very professional piece, however, it is expensive. The committee would need to be clear on the intent and purpose of such a marketing piece. Jeff Dockman offered information on why he moved to this area and the perception that this area is lacking in certain areas, such as the arts.

NEW BUSINESS—

2010 budget subcommittee. Geselius, Thompson, Spaulding and VanDerBill volunteered to work on the committee's proposed 2010 budget and the PowerPoint presentation to be presented to the EDC boards in June.

There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 1:20 p.m.

NEXT MEETING—The next committee meeting is **12 noon, Monday, April 27, 2009**, at the EDC office, Willmar.