

**KANDIYOHI COUNTY AND CITY OF WILLMAR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION (EDC)**  
**JOINT OPERATIONS BOARD OF DIRECTORS (OB)**  
**BUSINESS RETENTION & EXPANSION/RECRUITMENT (BRE/R) COMMITTEE**  
**AIRPORT BUSINESS TASK FORCE**  
**MINUTES**  
**May 10, 2006**  
**Board Room, Heritage Bank, N.A., Willmar**

Present: Dave Baker, Gary Geiger, Cameron Macht, Lloyd Melvie, Bruce Peterson and Tom Sand

Staff: Steve Renquist, Executive Director

Secretarial: Karen Carlson, Legal and Administrative Assistants, Inc. (LAA)

Chairperson Gary Geiger called the meeting to order at approximately 11:30 a.m.

**MINUTES**—The task force made a change to the March 8, 2006 special meeting minutes to remove the first sentence under the Review 2005 Goals section, item 2, “Macht completed research and determined that Kandiyohi County does not have a niche.”

IT WAS MOVED BY Lloyd Melvie, SECONDED BY Bruce Peterson, to approve the minutes of the February 8, 2006 meeting as mailed/e-mailed and the March 8, 2006 special meeting as corrected. MOTION CARRIED.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

**New airport followup on state approval of approach lighting**—Bruce Peterson reported the Mouser approach lighting that was to be funded with bond proceeds has been removed from the initial plan at the new airport. If this lighting was installed now and the runway lengthened to 6,500 feet, it would all have to be removed and re-installed. Therefore, this lighting has been put on hold until the City knows whether or not extending the runway is feasible over a three to five year period. This lighting was planned only for runway 1-3 which will be the most susceptible to foul weather. The Mouser system gives both horizontal and vertical lighting. This decision will not affect any of the other approach lighting. Peterson informed this task force that the airport opening has been pushed back to late September 2006. A grand opening is being planned for spring 2007. The delay was a result of delivery and installation of the fuel tanks.

**Marketing**—Macht reported the EDC’s Marketing & Public Relations Committee is interested in helping this task force with its direct mail campaign. Macht handed out a list of nine questions from the Marketing & Public Relations Committee (see copy attached to original minutes). Answers to these questions will give the Marketing & Public Relations Committee guidance and direction in creating and implementing a marketing plan.

Upon reviewing this list, the task force felt it would be important for the new airport manager to have input into the decision-making process necessary to answer these questions. The manager will start work full time next Monday, May 15. There was some discussion on the types of businesses that should be targeted in the marketing efforts, including those directly related to the avionics industry including, but not limited to, airplane upholstery, airplane painting, etc. **Macht** and **Renquist**, with input from **Bruce Jaeger**, will create a possible list of targeted companies for the mailing. Once an approximate quantity is decided, Red Star could be asked for a quote to help

determine the budget. This task force recommended getting input from the pilots currently using the airport for types of services they would like to see offered at the new airport.

**Air delivery freight**—Renquist reported the air delivery freight location requests are at the corporate offices for UPS and Federal Express. No new information is available. Renquist is thinking of asking if he can make contact at the corporate level in order to get communication and negotiations moving. One suggestion from this task force was to ask all local businesses to only use one shipper, such as UPS, for all their delivery needs. This could entice that company to open an air freight location in Willmar. Renquist stated the EDC could create a simple survey of local businesses asking who they use for their delivery needs and why they use a particular company. Many task force members use multiple delivery companies.

#### **Followup on business contacts and the Enterprise Network System (ENS)**

**Analysis**—Renquist reported after completing the analysis of inputs and outputs available in the Kandiyohi County area, he has been working with Macht on researching and creating a list of companies in the avionics industry that would be a good fit for the resources available in this area. Once this list is compiled, efforts will be made to meet with these organizations and present them with the benefits of moving their business to Willmar.

**VisionAire Corporation Update**—Renquist reported he has not had any additional contact with Matt Eller of VisionAire Corporation. VisionAire had shown some interest in making the new Willmar airport a test site for its new planes. **Renquist** will check with Mayor Heitke to see if he can assist in contacting Eller.

**Cargo facility update**—Renquist reported he has received the approval of the St. Cloud airport to contact the main office in St. Paul and request Willmar be added as a satellite site of the St. Cloud cargo facility. Right now it appears the Farmington/Rosemont area will most likely be the site. Willmar could be added as a satellite office for the foreign trade zone application that will be issued to the St. Cloud site.

**Air taxi service**—This task force is recommending researching the possibility of adding air taxi services in Willmar. The closest service now is located in Marshall, Minnesota. It may also be feasible for Marshall to put a plane in Willmar and provide the service.

**Volunteer Appreciation/Recognition Dinner**—Renquist invited everyone to the volunteer appreciation and recognition dinner tomorrow evening at the Holiday Inn/Willmar Conference Center.

**Air ambulance helicopters**—Geiger reported Redwood Falls, Minnesota, now has three air ambulance helicopters servicing the southwest Minnesota area.

**Army National Guard**—Peterson made some comments about the Army National Guard. Geiger recommended having discussions with Senator Dean Johnson regarding this topic.

**Green Lake plane**—Dave Baker recommended bringing out the “bird dog” plane that was removed from Green Lake for the grand opening of the new airport.

**REGULAR MEETING.** The next regular task force meeting is **11:30 a.m., July 12, 2006**, at the board room of Heritage Bank, N.A., Willmar.

**ADJOURNMENT**—There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 12:30 p.m.