

**KANDIYOHI COUNTY AND CITY OF WILLMAR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION (EDC)**  
**JOINT OPERATIONS BOARD OF DIRECTORS (OB)**  
**MARKETING AND PUBLIC RELATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING**  
**MINUTES**  
**June 22, 2009**  
**EDC Office, Willmar**

Present: Anna Gorres, Julie Redepenning, Diane Schulte, Heather Thompson, Deb Van Buren and Liz VanDerBill

Guests: Betsy Bonnema, Ron Erpelding, Wade Gustafson and Bruce Reuss

Excused: Beth Fischer, Jean Geselius, Cameron Macht, Nancy L. Miller and Milan Schmiesing

Staff: Steve Renquist, Executive Director, Jean Spaulding, Assistant Director

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

Co-chairperson Heather Thompson called the meeting to order at approximately 12:13 p.m.

**MINUTES—**

IT WAS MOVED BY Julie Redepenning, SECONDED BY Deb Van Buren, to approve the minutes of the June 1, 2009 meeting as mailed or e-mailed. MOTION CARRIED.

Self-introductions were made and guests welcomed.

**MONTHLY REPORTS/UPDATES**

**Agriculture and Renewable Energy Development (Ag) Committee.** Wade Gustafson informed the committee that the Ag Committee is looking to get a biomass business into the Willmar area and increasing its committee membership. The first step to membership growth was done by mailing an invite letter to local Ag businesses and banks. Steve Renquist informed the committee that the EDC, its Ag Committee and Kandiyohi County are excited that the Mid-Central Biosciences Center will be located at the MinnWest Technology Campus. It will benefit the community and promote the possibilities of new business and new technology. Southwest Minnesota has the greatest potential for future bio business. Renewable resources in the bio business field between corn/bean stovers are available in the Willmar area and need to be defined, as well as the resources knowledgeable in installation/repairs/building and supply availability to assist in all areas of bio business. Wind energy is also located in the area. It was requested the Marketing and Public Relations Committee assist with the Ag Conference scheduled for January 14-15, 2010. Advertising the Ag Conference will improve the attendance. The conference last year had more outside support versus local and included animal Ag and land Ag. Advertisement should include the four state area. Public relations will need to start earlier than the time frame started in 2008. Handout material for networking was also requested. Promoting the conference, as well as the area, can be accomplished using a flyer. The Marketing and Public Relations Committee will discuss more marketing/branding options for the Ag Committee during its next brainstorming session. The new EDC website will explain what the Ag Committees represents and its efforts.

**Business Retention Expansion and Recruitment.** Ron Erpelding discussed some issues related to the Willmar Airport. The Mason City, Iowa Airport was mentioned as a similar airport to evaluate in comparison to the Willmar Airport. Jean Spaulding would like to fly to Mason City and incorporate a complete sense of how that airport operates. The City of Willmar wants to move

forward with an airport plan and needs assistance with marketing the Willmar Airport. Ron Erpelding defined the questions that need to be addressed:

What questions should be asked of the Mason City Airport?

To whom should we be marketing?

What are the things that make the Willmar Airport different?

How do we put a plan together that would promote businesses to relocate to areas around the airport?

The Mason City Airport visit should incorporate a Marketing and Public Relations Committee representative. That airport was chosen due to its size and location and the Willmar Airport is not in competition with it. Marketing for the health care industry in the Willmar area also needs to be better promoted.

[Ron Erpelding, Bruce Reuss, Steve Renquist and Wade Gustafson were excused from the meeting.]

**MinnWest Technology Campus (MWTC).** Betsy Bonnema informed the committee that MWTC is moving forward with producing materials. The daycare located at the MWTC is now open. The Glacial Lakes State Trail is now connected to Robbins Island.

#### **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

**EDC website.** Anna Gorres informed the committee the Webtomix proposal was selected and a contract will be signed. Webtomix will complete the development and backbone of the website. RedStar is on a separate contract and will provide the design and template. The design template has been requested in two weeks. Meeting wizard will be completed next week to include the subcommittee and Betsy Bonnema. An additional meeting will be scheduled with the full committee for content. Constant Contact was discussed during the June 1, 2009 meeting and has become the EDC's second option. An additional proposal was suggested at no charge. CloudNet is the EDC's current host server; however, the EDC is open to suggestions for a change; one option is going on the county's server.

**West Central Tribune tab.** Bonnema is continuing to define the EDC look for the branding campaign. Additional headlines were shown. The committee discussed that "slow pace" projects a negative pitch. The stories regarding successful personnel/business in Kandiyohi County is still positive. A collaborative motto needs to be defined. The saying "Dream it, Build it, Live it" and "Just my speed," were discussed. "Great Growth, Perfect Pace," was also suggested. Feedback from the committee and EDCOB were suggested to instill ownership and input. Bonnema will create a concept.

[Heather Thompson and Anna Gorres were excused from the meeting]

**Tabletop presentation.** Not discussed at this time.

**Entrepreneur Contest.** Not discussed at this time.

**NEW BUSINESS**—No new business at this time.

There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 1:57 p.m.

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