

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

Present: Teri Beyer, Bob Bonawitz, Lee Byberg, Bill Jagow, Don McGrath, Mike Nitchals, Charlie Oakes, Marie Ostby, Jeff Roiland, Jean Spaulding and Roy Stiff

Staff: Steve Renquist, Executive Director

Excused: Dean Bouta and Ron Erpelding

Secretarial: Nancy Birkeland, Legal & Administrative Assistants, Inc. (LAA)

Task Force chairperson, Jean Spaulding, called the meeting to order at approximately 7:06 a.m.

MINUTES—

IT WAS MOVED BY Charlie Oakes, SECONDED BY Bob Bonawitz, to approve the minutes of the July 13, 2006 meeting as mailed or e-mailed. MOTION CARRIED.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Greater Minnesota Technology Showcase. Steve Renquist stated Jay Bosch is unable to attend this meeting and provided background on the showcase and work done to date. Renquist stated plans for the showcase are going forward, but it may not happen until 2008 as the 2007 budget will not allow the \$70,000 budget request.

Joint Budget Meeting. Renquist reported the BRE/R Committee's 2007 budget under which this task force and two other task forces appears is \$11,000.

MinnWest Technology Campus. Renquist distributed a list of some companies to which presentations have been made and the marketing strategy for the campus (see copies attached to original minutes). Renquist stated the campus is being extensively remodeled and listed some of the amenities that will be added. Only local companies are located on the campus at present. Chris Huisinga is the marketing representative for the campus. Renquist reported the Willmar Area Development Corporation retained the services of Harlan Jacobs to promote the campus. Jacobs has introduced the EDC to approximately 20 companies over the past four months. Renquist stated a private, local, venture capital organization is in the process of being created. Lee Byberg stated most presentations to companies have included a representative from the campus, mainly Chris Huisinga. The task force questioned and discussed the venture capital needed by the companies listed on the handout. Renquist stated the EDC has the capacity to obtain \$2 million in lending capacity using a variety of programs. Spaulding recommended when listing companies interested in the campus, it be indicated which businesses are startups or established. Renquist stated some companies that need airport access need overnight air service and air taxi service. The BRE/R Airport Business Task Force has contacted Marshall's air taxi service about offering services in Willmar and continues to pursue air cargo. Renquist stated the Entrepreneurial Network Systems (ENS) is being used to identify industries to pursue. Bill Jagow questioned if trade secrets and confidentiality issues have surfaced in being so

closely located to similar businesses on a central campus. Renquist stated that has not been a concern expressed to date. Marie Ostby questioned why the focus for the campus is on biomedical technology and not renewable energy, which may be a better fit for this area. Renquist stated all areas will be pursued, but to date, the focus has been on the medical industry because that is Jacobs's focus. Byberg stated the campus has not been shown to a large number of companies as the campus has not been ready until recently. Renquist stated the campus exceeds companies' expectations once toured, but there have been some comments about the distance from the metro area. Spaulding asked that the task force hold its next meeting on September 15 at the campus. **Renquist** will make arrangements for the September 15 meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

2006 goals/action plan. Spaulding stated work is being done on the action plan for the goals.

Other. Mike Nitchals reported he spoke with the Detroit Lakes utilities general manager, who was unaware of a technology campus/area in Detroit Lakes. Renquist reported he spoke with the Detroit Lakes city administrator and city developer and they also are not aware of any technology campus. Ostby will followup as she was told a voice over IP was done in that area. Spaulding requested an infrastructure assessment be placed on next month's agenda. Roy Stiff recommended an infrastructure assessment be done before the technology showcase is held. Nitchals recommended contacting Dean Bouta, the last chair of KandiLink, regarding what they discovered as far as an assessment.

IT WAS MOVED BY Roy Stiff, SECONDED BY Marie Ostby, to work with the City of Willmar and Kandiyohi County on completing an infrastructure assessment of the area. MOTION CARRIED.

ADJOURNMENT—There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:20 a.m.

NEXT MEETING—The next regular committee meeting is **7:00 to 8:00 a.m., Friday, September 15, 2006**, at the MinnWest Technology Campus, Willmar.