

**KANDIYOHI COUNTY AND CITY OF WILLMAR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION (EDC)  
JOINT OPERATIONS BOARD OF DIRECTORS (OB) MEETING**

**MINUTES**

**September 10, 2009  
EDC Office, Willmar**

Present: Gordon Behm, Beverly Dougherty, Ron Erpelding and Duane Hultgren

Ex Officio: Denis Anderson

Excused: Betty Bollig, Bob Carlson, Bruce Peterson and Milan Schmiesing

Staff: Steven Renquist, Executive Director

Guest: Michael Schramm, Chief Executive Officer, Rice Memorial Hospital

Media: Anne Polta, West Central Tribune

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

President Duane Hultgren called the meeting to order at approximately 11:02 a.m. and introduced Michael Schramm, Chief Executive Officer of Rice Memorial Hospital.

**2009 Priority 2. Collaboration and support the enhancement of the local medical**

**community**—Board members and Steve Renquist provided Schramm with a history on economic development in Kandiyohi County and attempts to work with the health care businesses in the county.

[Bev Dougherty joined the meeting.]

Schramm thanked the board for the invitation and provided background on himself and his position at Rice Memorial Hospital. Schramm highlighted areas the hospital will be addressing and informed the board the hospital is going through a comprehensive strategic planning process for the next three years. Schramm is positive about the area's health care field and noted it is a large portion of the area's economic development. Schramm informed the board the construction of a cancer center should be completed by the end of November. The hospital and two Willmar clinics are anticipating the national health care reform that will occur.

[Michael Schramm was excused from the meeting.]

IT WAS MOVED BY Beverly Dougherty, SECONDED BY Gordon Behm, to approve the agenda as mailed and e-mailed. MOTION CARRIED.

**CONSENT AGENDA—**

IT WAS MOVED BY Ron Erpelding, SECONDED BY Beverly Dougherty, to approve the following items under the Consent Agenda:

1. Minutes of the August 13, 2009 meeting;
2. Treasurer's report as of August 31, 2009;

3. Payment of the following bills:
  - a. James M. Ruff, Inc. \$3,660.00
  - b. Lobbyist Dean Johnson \$2,000
4. Add committee members
  - a. Ag: Loren Corle, Kevin Halvorson, Bill Harper, Keith Poier, John Soderholm, Brad Saeger and Scott Thaden
  - b. Finance: Nick Dalton
  - c. Marketing and Public Relations: Renae Thompson
5. Remove committee members
  - a. Finance: Steve Payne
  - b. Marketing and Public Relations: Beth Fischer and Steve Salzer
  - c. Technology Advisory: Jim Millard

and accept the following committee minutes:

1. Ag, July 16
2. Finance, August 11
3. Marketing, June 22 and July 27
4. Tourism, August 3

MOTION CARRIED.

#### **PROGRESS REPORTS—**

**Economic Development Activities.** Steve Renquist informed the board that Assistant Director, Jean Spaulding, is absent from today's meeting as she is attending the Minnesota Association of Professional County Economic Developers annual conference. Renquist discussed a letter he sent to Genesis10 (see copy attached). Renquist recommended to the board that the EDC not participate in this year's International BioEnergy Days and the board agreed. President Hultgren encouraged the board to provide staff with their pros and cons on the philosophy of enhancing opportunities to attract businesses to our area so they can be discussed at the boards' joint planning session in November. Board members expressed an urgency in having area elected officials discuss possible incentives that can be offered when recruiting businesses to the county. Renquist indicated the funds held by the former Kandiyohi County Economic Development Partnership, Inc. may be available for this purpose, but those funds would not be replenished. Renquist has met with the Willmar Area Development Corporation on its capacity to provide funds. Discussion of this topic will continue at the boards' joint planning session in November. Denis Anderson recommended the Joint Powers Board receive preliminary information on this topic prior to its October board meeting. Renquist suggested that as the county's only true economic development organization, the EDC should possibly levy an additional \$100,000 each year to use for incentive purposes. Renquist reviewed with the board his Comparison between EDC 2009 Goals and the results of the Minnesota Regional Competitiveness Project (see copy attached). Renquist informed the board the EDC has been working with the court system on consolidating its financial accounts receivable department into one demonstration project, which would be first out state project of this nature. Renquist notified the board that the EDC was not a recipient of the WIRED grants.

**Willmar Design Center (WDC).** Bev Dougherty reported the WDC won the first place award at the Minnesota State Fair in the 25<sup>th</sup> Minnesota Community Pride competition and received \$1,000. Willmar was the only community that had five projects, all others had only one. Staples won for forming its own corporation and offering broadband and Internet access free to its residents. The WDC was the recipient of a grant through the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development and five funding applications have been received with up to ten possible. Dougherty

anticipates the WDC will reapply next year. The Becker Avenue market street project is moving forward and a community meeting is planned.

## **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

**2009 Priority 3. New Willmar airport and aviation inquiry.** Renquist informed the board that as to its 2009 Priority 3, he contacted the airport in Mason City, Iowa, which indicated nothing of substance has been done with its marketing plan. Renquist continues to attempt to identify a similar size airport to the Willmar airport. Ron Erpelding recommended searching for an association of airports for additional information. Anderson confirmed the city of Willmar's interest in the EDC assisting with marketing the airport, as well as the new industrial park. There was some concern about new legislation requiring higher insurance coverage on hangars and some communities not enforcing that increase, giving them an unfair competitive edge.

**NEW BUSINESS**—There was no new business.

## **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**Agriculture and Renewable Energy Development (Ag).** Renquist invited the board to attend an EDC Venture Capital Subcommittee meeting at Christianson & Associates, PLLP on September 21 at 7:30 a.m. Renquist informed the board the EDC's Ag Committee joined Ag Ventures Alliance of Mason City, Iowa, at a one-time cost of \$250. Renquist provided information on the Alliance and stated members of the Alliance will be attending the September 21 meeting.

**Business Retention and Expansion/Recruitment.** No report.

**Finance.** Renquist reported the committee is reviewing financial incentives offered by other communities in surrounding states of a similar size to Willmar.

**Marketing and Public Relations.** No report.

**Tourism.** No report.

**NEXT MEETING**—The next regular board meeting is 11:00 a.m., October 8, 2009 at the EDC office.

**ADJOURNMENT**—There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 12:27 p.m.

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Bev Dougherty, Secretary

APPROVED 10/8/2009:

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Duane Hultgren, President

