

**KANDIYOHI COUNTY AND CITY OF WILLMAR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION (EDC)**  
**JOINT OPERATIONS BOARD (OB)**  
**TOURISM COMMITTEE**  
**MINUTES**  
**September 11, 2006**  
**J & L Bison Ranch, Willmar**

Present: Betty Bollig, Alan Carlson, Bob Dickerson, Connie Filley, Jolene Garberich, Deb Geister, Trudie Guptill, Helen Heinen, Dick Larson, Janet Olney and Dave Pederson

Excused Absent: Shari Courtney, Marilyn Johnson, Mona Nelson and Dean Shuck

Unexcused Absent: Dave Becker, Tim Johnson and Ed Walhof

Guest: Dennis Peterson

Staff: Kathy Schwantes, Assistant Director

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

Following a tour of J & L Bison Ranch and lunch, chairperson Alan Carlson called the meeting to order at approximately 12:50 p.m.

**MINUTES—**

IT WAS MOVED BY Trudie Guptill, SECONDED BY Jolene Garberich, to approve the minutes of the August 7, 2006 meeting as mailed or e-mailed. MOTION CARRIED.

**REPORTS—**

**Trails Subcommittee.** Connie Filley reported she is attempting to obtain information from Kandiyohi County, but progress is being made. Carlson reported working cooperatively on GPS mapping was brought up to the Glacial Ridge Trail Association.

**Visitors' Guide.** Bob Dickerson reported the project is progressing well and nothing is needed from the committee at this time. Trudie Guptill stated the Visitors' Guide Committee recently proofed the guide's content.

**Advertising Tracking.** Kathy Schwantes distributed an updated copy of the inquiries tracked by the Willmar Lakes Area Convention & Visitors Bureau (CVB) (see copy attached to original minutes) and reported the *AAA Living* ad has had 448 inquiries to date, which has resulted in the committee going over budget in mailing visitors' guides (budgeted \$1,000; current expense is \$2,165.84). Schwantes reported that although the fall 2006 *Explore Minnesota* ad was shown to the committee, no formal motion for the expenditure was made.

IT WAS MOVED BY Connie Filley, SECONDED BY Deb Geister, to place a 3 x 2 color ad in the fall *Explore Minnesota* publication with the Tourism Committee paying \$1,165,

which is one-half of the cost and the other one-half being paid by the Willmar Lakes Area Convention & Visitors Bureau. MOTION CARRIED.

The committee was pleased with the advertising tracking done this year.

#### **UNFINISHED BUSINESS—**

**County Billboards.** Betty Bollig showed an example of the billboard redone by Quick Signs and Schwantes showed one created by Red Star with the EDC's new design (see copies attached to original minutes). The committee discussed the examples shown and gave their comments. The billboard will continue to be worked on and will be placed on the committee's October agenda.

**Advertising.** The committee discussed advertising in the winter 2006-2007 *Minnesota Explorer*. It was the committee's consensus to do impact marketing for this winter rather than an ad in the winter issue of the *Minnesota Explorer*. Carlson asked that a proposed winter ad be created.

**Tourism Racks.** There were no comments on the August 2006 Tourism Rack Update done by Pam Schlagel and Ken Warner (see copy attached to original minutes).

IT WAS MOVED BY Bob Dickerson, SECONDED BY Betty Bollig and Dick Larson, to place a tourism information rack at the new Willmar airport. MOTION CARRIED.

**Schwantes** will followup with the airport manager.

**Other.** Carlson reported the Kandiyohi County Historical Society's permanent tourism information sign was installed.

[The agenda was taken out of order.]

**Prairie Woods Environmental Learning Center (PWELC).** Dave Pederson reported the PWELC will hold its open house this Sunday, September 17, from 1:00-5:00 p.m. with recognition of its 10 years of programming to be held at 4:30 p.m.; Will Steger has been confirmed to do a presentation for the PWELC on October 15 at Ridgewater College; the PWELC will be placing a half page ad in the field guide issue of *Minnesota Itineraries*; 300 FFA members from Region 5 will be at the PWELC this week; the new wind turbine will be used as an educational tool and ultimately there will be a self-guided renewable energy tour on the PWELC grounds. Carlson asked if the wind turbine should be included in the new visitors' guide.

[Dave Pederson was excused from the meeting.]

#### **NEW BUSINESS—**

**Minnesota Office of Tourism (MOT) Grant.** Schwantes reported the CVB submitted the MOT grant report and a refund of \$2,221.91 was received of which the EDC received \$1,110.96.

**Governor's Fishing Opener.** Schwantes stated the MOT is looking for proposals from communities to host the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Governor's Fishing Opener May 9-12, 2008. Proposals are due by October 2, 2006. It was the committee's consensus not to submit a bid.

**Fishing the Midwest.** Connie Filley presented information on hosting “Fishing the Midwest with Bob Jensen” television show (see information attached to original minutes) while they are here filming a segment on Kandiyohi County this fall for airing in spring 2007. Schwantes reported the CVB is interested in participating in this and Shari Courtney’s discussions with the MOT indicate grant dollars would qualify, if the committee is awarded another MOT grant next year. The committee discussed this as a great opportunity to showcase area fishing and promote the area. The committee recommended that the web site and 800 telephone number be published in the printed material.

IT WAS MOVED BY Connie Filley, SECONDED BY Janet Olney, to participate in hosting “Fishing the Midwest with Bob Jensen” in the fall of 2006 at a total cost of \$3,500 plus a fishing guide and lodging and meals for two guests with the costs to be shared in partnership with the Willmar Lakes Area Convention & Visitors Bureau and any others. MOTION CARRIED.

**Filley** will bring this opportunity to the Spicer Commercial Club at its next meeting. **Schwantes** will coordinate the event with Courtney and they will attempt to obtain other partners. Any suggestions for a fishing guide, lodging or meals should be directed to Schwantes or Courtney.

**A Day in the Life of Billings book.** Schwantes showed a photo coffee table book on Billings, Montana, and asked if the committee was interested in doing a similar project. The committee did not show an interest.

#### MONTHLY REPORTS—

**Glacial Ridge Trail Association.** Carlson stated the Association appears to be getting more active.

**Kandiyohi County Historical Society.** Carlson reiterated the tourist information sign was erected.

**Little Crow Resort Association.** Dickerson reported the Association has not met.

**Little Crow Water Ski Team.** Deb Geister reported the Ski Team was featured by WCCO TV on August 11; following that airing, they had an increase in attendance; the Ski Team’s web site contains a link to the WCCO feature; the team placed sixth in nationals; and they are looking for a new show director following the resignation of this year’s director.

**New London.** Guptill reported New London’s Appreciation Day is this Saturday, September 16; the Music Festival was well attended and may be held at Neer Park next year as it has outgrown Holm Park; Home for the Holidays will be held in mid-November; and the city continues to work on expanding the trail system.

**Spicer.** Filley reported they will start discussing WinterFest at their next meeting. Carlson reported WinterFest is not included in the event calendar for the new visitors’ guide. **Carlson** will followup on this.

**West Central Snow Drifters/Atwater.** Jolene Garberich reported the club is cleaning the snowmobile trails and will hold safety training classes the end of November and beginning of December. Registration can be done online at the ACGC Community Education web site. Carlson

stated this committee will need the cooperation of the trail association to do winter impact marketing. Garberich reported the trail association was approached about the GPS mapping.

**Willmar Arts Council.** Janet Olney reported Celebrate Art! Celebrate Coffee! is September 15 and 16.

**Willmar Design Center/Main Street Willmar.** Dick Larson reported the Willmar Design Center (WDC) is changing its meeting date to the second Wednesday of each month; the east entrance into Willmar was cleaned up and the WDC has been busy with the Becker Market. Carlson asked that this committee be provided with a copy of any report done on the Becker Market.

**Willmar Lakes Area Chamber of Commerce (WLACC)/CVB.** Schwantes announced Pam Schlagel resigned from her position at the WLACC. Schwantes reported she and Courtney will staff a booth at the Association of Minnesota Counties annual meeting being held in Willmar this week and will distribute packets to the more than 100 attendees.

**ADJOURNMENT**—There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 1:45 p.m.

**NEXT MEETING**—The next regular meeting is **11:30 a.m., Monday, October 2, 2006** at **Grand Stay Cottages**, New London.