

**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
November 16, 2007
EDC Board Room, Willmar**

Present: Dean Bouta, Steve Giroux, Jim Millard, Ron Nelson, Charles Oakes, Jeff Roiland, Jean Spaulding and Jeff Tengwall

Excused: Ron Erpelding, Don McGrath and Diane Schulte

Guest: Nicole Franzwa

Staff: Kathy Schwantes, Assistant Director

Secretarial: Allison McGeary, Legal & Administrative Assistants, Inc. (LAA)

Task Force chairperson, Jean Spaulding, called the meeting to order at approximately 7:35 a.m.

MINUTES—

IT WAS MOVED BY Charles Oakes, SECONDED BY Jeff Roiland, to approve the minutes of the October 19, 2007 meeting as mailed or e-mailed. MOTION CARRIED.

NEW STAFF LIAISON—Kathy Schwantes introduced herself as the new staff liaison for the Technology Task Force.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS—

Blandin Broadband Conference update. The Blandin Broadband Conference held on November 7 and 8, 2007 was attended by Nicole Franzwa, Jim Millard, Schwantes and Spaulding. Millard stated the conference was interesting and motivating and involved a lot of information on the infrastructure and the actual set up of the structures. Millard stated there were not as many highspeed vendors as last year's conference. Franzwa stated she enjoyed the last session she attended, which had Sheila Howk as speaker from New Ulm that did what this task force is doing. Howk shared how New Ulm got started, came up with a plan and then struggled and had to start over with new ideas and are now successful. Howk gave Franzwa useful information and is e-mailing more information and items the task force could use. Franzwa stated one thing New Ulm did that did not work was installing computers in public places and the biggest problem was explaining what is broadband. New Ulm came up with "What is E," which is easier to explain than broadband. Dean Bouta stated you do not have to use the *Get Broadband* name in projects the task force does or advertises. Franzwa stated New Ulm redid its strategies, but not its goals. Spaulding stated the session she attended, *Considering the Business: Successful Marketing*, with a speaker from MStar, which is a provider for internet, phone and TV. Spaulding stated the session was about MStar's marketing plan for signing up customers for their service, which did not relate to what the task force is doing. Bouta stated Montevideo failed at its

first attempt as well. **Bouta** will find out what Montevideo had as a required account for attending its conferences before it was cancelled. Millard suggested the task force start the advertising and education as soon as possible.

Recommendations for the business and residential educational programs. Franzwa stated she has not contacted the providers yet, as she has been concentrating on places to host the seminars. Franzwa distributed Howk's presentation, Local-e-Shop (see copy attached to the original minutes). Millard pointed out slide three to the task force. Schwantes stated the Marketing and Public Relations Committee is going through the EDC website page by page and updating it with the EDC's new logo and look. Schwantes stated the EDC has some businesses that are interested in the website grant to start their websites. Schwantes and Franzwa suggested a work plan to achieve the business goals. **Schwantes and Franzwa** will present the residential work plan and hope to have a log and budget ready to present to the task force at the December 6 meeting. Schwantes suggested for the conferences the task force send out a save the date notice and brochures. Schwantes suggested the task force do a presentation of the grant process and the *Get Broadband* program to the Willmar Design Center (WDC), as it works with the small downtown businesses and the downtown area of New London. Schwantes proceeded with a suggested time line to complete the goals set by the task force:

Deadline	Task
November 28, 2007	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Service providers will be invited to attend a meeting at 10:00 a.m. and asked to bring their coverage area maps
December 4, 2007	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mail out web brochure
December 7, 2007	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seminars and presenters confirmed • Schwantes will ask Julie Redepenning of the Minnesota Workforce Center to help with the seminars as she has a great database of businesses and Rhonda Wulf of the University of Minnesota Extension Office for Kandiyohi County
December 14, 2007	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mailing list and/or an e-mail list put together for the task force's marketing ads
December 19, 2007	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Service coverage area maps to be completed
December 21, 2007	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final mailing list and/or e-mail list ready to go out
December 25, 2007	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Send out a save the date notice for the website seminars
December 29, 2007	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All information received for seminars <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▸ being held February 5 and 12 ▸ Each seminar will involve building off of the previous seminar and yet be able to stand alone.

<p>February 5, 2008 9:00 a.m.-12:00 pm.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seminar held at MinnWest Technology Campus (MWTC) • Titled, Starting a basic website • Agenda will include the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Information on how to start a website ▶ Identifying service providers; both internet and webpage designers ▶ Getting a website grant application to all who attend ▶ Start with an overview ▶ Have a panel discussion of three individuals to talk about what they have done with time to answer questions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Gary Peterson with Maracom * Sue Danielson with Fabric Warehouse * Tim Furr with Ridgewater College ▶ Have a presentation, possibly by Millard ▶ Have a provider speak on what an internet provider can offer and what they need to build their website <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Bouta was suggested by task force members ▶ Review packet information ▶ Wrap up
<p>February 5, 2008 Afternoon</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seminar held at MWTC • Titled, Online marketing • Agenda will include the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Overview, grant application and those who do online marketing ▶ Panel discussion by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Roger Gauque with Northern Factory Sales * Cecil Meyer with Grand Cottage * Third panel member to be determined ▶ Presentation on how to market your company online ▶ Review, wrap up and packets that include a list of website designers and information on making your website zing to be marketable
<p>February 12, 2008</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seminar held at MWTC • Agenda will include the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Overview and website grant application ▶ Panel <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Chris Buzzeo or Brian Okuly with Marketing Concepts * An attorney * Don McGrath's referral
<p>March, April and May</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Newsletter will include success stories <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ The first newsletter will have success stories from those who spoke on the panels ▶ The last newsletter should have success stories of those who attended the seminars
<p>May 2008</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The <i>Get Broadband</i> program to be done

Millard will check with Steve Renquist to see if he is receiving a newsletter from Ann Tracey of the Blandin Foundation. Discussion was held on the number of seminars to hold.

{Jeff Tengwall joined the meeting and Jim Millard was excused from the meeting}

Bouta suggested an internet provider could provide information on the connection and speed a business would need and what a business could do with the connection. The task force discussed the possibility of a "virtual mall." Schwantes suggested panel members represent businesses throughout Kandiyohi County. Roiland stated Marketing Concepts puts together good websites and he talked with Buzzeo of Marketing Concepts about the seminars and feels he would fit into seminar two. Steve Giroux suggested a person from the Little Theater in New London as a panel presenter, because it markets over the internet. **Giroux** will contact Julie Dregne of the Little Theater and will let Franzwa know if she is willing to present. Oakes suggested the Barn Theatre. Bouta stated the audience for the seminars is going to be small businesses. Oakes suggested the Humane Society of Kandiyohi County as they are a volunteer society and are always changing pictures on its website. **Schwantes** will get the contact name for the Humane Society of Kandiyohi County. The task force suggested some names for the seminars, such as e-connect. Schwantes suggested incorporating the EDC wave by having it going from a hard wire into the wave to represent wireless. Schwantes suggested incorporating the seminar material with the EDC marketing logo or blue coloring. Schwantes stated it will be taken to the Marketing and Public Relations Committee on November 30, 2007 to receive its assistance. Schwantes stated no budget dollars have been determined for the seminars; she would like to have the residential goals put together first and then determine a budget by the task force's December 6 meeting. Justin Mattern of E*Tap Marketing was suggested for seminar two. Bouta suggested Shelly Paulson of Summerset Studio. Oakes suggested for seminar three to have bankers share on how risky it is to move money online and suggested banks might even sponsor some residential seminars. Attorneys were suggested to speak on legal issues that might come up with having a website. **Franzwa** will ask website designers if they have information on legal issues and if they do then the task force will not need to have an attorney speak.

Spaulding stated New Ulm did not have a good focus on the residential goals, with the exception of Tech Tuesdays. Residential goals were distributed (see copy attached to original minutes). Bouta stated New Ulm focused on education, providing hardware and public use of computers and failed. Franzwa contacted the Willmar Public Library and Ridgewater College for training sessions. The Willmar Public Library is willing to give the task force 10 computers two days a month for an hour on Fridays. Ridgewater College prefers Fridays in the morning and would give the task force two days a month, but would charge the task force per hour for use of its facility. Franzwa stated Mid-Minnesota Regional Development Commission (MMRDC) has a senior surf program that is directed toward senior citizens. Franzwa stated she spoke with Matt Johnson of MMRDC and it would be willing to partner with the task force in doing six or more of these a month. MMRDC sessions would cover modems, online connection and service providers. **Franzwa** will find out more information from MMRDC.

{Ron Nelson was excused from the meeting}

Franzwa showed a brochure done by the MMRDC for Senior Surf Days (see copy attached to original minutes). Franzwa stated the task force would need to redo the brochure layout. Roiland stated some churches have their own computer labs and suggested looking into them as places to have the sessions. Schwantes suggested public places that people can go into and use the internet should be identified with a logo on the door. Oakes stated he would like one of the logo clings for his business. Schwantes and Franzwa will do a time line and will have a handout on the residential goals for the December 6, 2007 meeting. Schwantes asked the task force for feedback on presentations for the seminars.

Meeting with Service providers for mapping service area. The task force will meet with companies that provide services at 10:00 a.m. Wednesday, November 28, 2007. This meeting will be to get the provider's maps and to explain why the task force wants them. Spaulding stated the maps would consist of internet and cellular services. Bonnema Surveys would overlay all the maps onto one map for the task force. Bouta stated the task force will get a general overview of coverage from the providers. Discussion was held on how cooperative providers may be and whether they would be

willing to share coverage maps. Schwantes stated the map could be used as an economic tool for businesses coming into the area.

{Charles Oakes was excused from the meeting}

Spaulding stated the task force would be able to put the map Bonnema Surveys creates on a website with the names of the providers on it. Roiland stated the task force will have to get permission to use the name and/or logo on the website. Having local maps at the meeting was recommended. Bonnema Surveys would need to be at this meeting to help providers map out their coverage area. **Franzwa** will send out invitations to internet and cellular providers for the November 28 meeting. **Franzwa** will let LAA know if she needs contact information for other providers not on her list.

NEW BUSINESS—

Meeting time. Spaulding stated the meeting time will be 7:30 a.m. till 9:00 a.m. on the first Thursday of the month. **LAA** will add the time frame to future agendas.

Schwantes stated she would like to set up weekly Friday meetings with Franzwa and invited anyone from the task force to join them. Schwantes stated Franzwa has turned in a journal of what she has done and if anyone wants to see it, a copy can be made available.

NEXT MEETING—The next regular committee meeting is **7:30 a.m., Thursday, December 6, 2007**, at the EDC Office.

ADJOURNMENT—There being no further business, meeting was adjourned at 9:00 a.m.

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Guest: Nicole Franzwa

Staff: Kathy Schwantes, Assistant Director

Bouta stated he has been on a panel a number of times and has also done it with Kandi Link on "what is my connection and how can I use it." Bouta suggested the first seminar may need to have some of this information. Bouta stated the presentation would be about 20 minutes with time to allow for questions and answers for a maximum time of 45 minutes. Spaulding stated the providers presenting will have to be natural. Bouta will be the provider speaker at the first session. Bouta stated his company is not an internet provider anymore, but once the business has its connection, Bennett Office Technologies would be able to help. Bouta suggested for the 40 minute presentation to have 15 minutes of talk about your options and then open it up for discussion. **Franzwa and Bouta** will get together to finalize the seminars. Seminar two should be more to do with website designers. Franzwa stated for the seminar on marketing your website, the businesses will need to know more about how do they optimize it. Schwantes suggested putting together questions the task force will want the speaker to address. If the task force has an attorney there, it would want the attorney to answer legal question and not go into other areas. **Bouta** will talk with financial institutions to find out the legal issues. Schwantes suggested having a bank at the seminar instead. Spaulding suggested having an attorney there just to answer questions. Schwantes suggested having Marketing Concepts for the presenter in seminar three and having the panel be marketing. Schwantes stated the panel should be real people with success stories so businesses can relate to the panel. Seminar three's panel will talk about how they use their websites, how they market their websites and how they have succeeded from starting a website. Bouta stated when talking with website designers they will be able to give names or maybe they themselves would do the presentation. Franzwa shared a broadband definition to use. Bouta suggested he could talk about what broadband is and the definition as part of his presentation. Schwantes suggested having a sheet with definition of terms that are used in the seminar packets. Spaulding stated people expect everything to work all the time and the expectations are high and expect it for free. For college students who got everything with a college tuition coming into the real world their expectations are going to be even higher. Franzwa stated speakers confirmed are John Soderholm, Justin Mattern from E*Tap Marketing (speaker and vendor), Gary Peterson from Maracom and Cecil Meyer.