

**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
July 20, 2007
EDC Board Room, Willmar**

Present: Dean Bouta, Don McGrath Jim Millard, Ron Nelson, Dave Sisser and Jean Spaulding

Excused: Ron Erpelding, Bill Jagow and Jeff Tengwall

Staff: Steve Renquist, Executive Director

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

Task Force chairperson, Jean Spaulding, called the meeting to order at approximately 7:00 a.m.

MINUTES—

IT WAS MOVED BY Dave Sisser, SECONDED BY Dean Bouta, to approve the minutes of the June 15, 2007 meeting with the following correction: add Jim Millard as excused.

MOTION CARRIED.

Get Broadband survey results— Dave Sisser noted 50% of those surveyed were retail businesses. In the survey where it states the speeds they are using, do they correlate what a faster speed or a computer can do for them. Jim Millard believes an internet presence is especially important, if they are a small niche business; a small web page can create visibility and other potential for small businesses. Dean Bouta referenced findings in number 7 on the business survey that 83% of businesses said that broadband would have no impact on relocation plans, Bouta believes they did not understand the question. Task force members believe there is a very strong lack of knowledge and the general public does not have all of the information - education is needed.

{Ron Nelson joined the meeting.}

Millard stated that education should be both via media educational ads and/or classroom instruction; education is first and foremost. As people are educated they are going to ask what is available, for that we will need to learn providers' coverage areas. The EDC Marketing Committee will be asked to assist.

Spaulding stated the goal of the *Get Broadband* grant is to overall increase broadband use.

It was the consensus of the task force to talk to someone at the Blandin Foundation to find out what are some programs that have been done, what are the resources for educational programs and their contact information and define who was surveyed. **Millard** will contact Bill Coleman or another representative from the Blandin Foundation to set up a noon meeting and e-mail the EDC with the date and time. The Willmar School District and Ridgwater College will be invited to the meeting with Blandin

Foundation. The August meeting will be determined when the meeting with the Blandin Foundation is set.

Steve Renquist distributed the Marketing Assistance Request form (see copy attached to the original minutes). The task force needs to learn more from the Blandin Foundation before it can fill out this form. Spaulding suggested talking with the Marketing Committee informally to get ideas for an ad.

Meeting with the EDC Marketing Committee was tabled to a future meeting.

OTHER— Renquist distributed information on a Community Connect Broadband Grant Program dealing with agriculture for committee members to review and discuss at a future meeting.

NEXT MEETING—The next regular committee meeting is **to be determined when the meeting with Blandin Foundation is set.**

ADJOURNMENT—There being no further business, meeting was adjourned at 8:08 a.m.