

**KANDIYOHI COUNTY AND CITY OF WILLMAR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION (EDC)
AGRICULTURE AND RENEWABLE ENERGY DEVELOPMENT (Ag) COMMITTEE**

MINUTES

January 17, 2019

McMillan's Family Restaurant, Willmar

Present: Rollie Boll, Ian Graue, Kevin Halvorson, Larry Konsterlie, Kim Larson and Dan Tepfer

Excused: Jon Folkedahl, Dustin Kotrba, Keith Poier and Bruce Reuss

Absent: Dan Lippert

Guest: Michelle Marotzke, Willmar Municipal Utilities

Staff: Connie Schmoll, Business Development Specialist

Secretarial: Diane Beck, Legal & Administrative Assistants, Inc. (LAA)

Chairperson Dan Tepfer called the meeting to order at approximately 7:32 a.m. and welcomed Michelle Marotzke of Willmar Municipal Utilities. Marotzke will share today's information with John Harren, who will select a representative from Willmar Municipal Utilities to serve on this committee. Self-introductions were conducted.

AGENDA—The agenda was approved as emailed.

MINUTES—Chair Tepfer presented the December 20, 2018 minutes.

IT WAS MOVED BY Kim Larson, SECONDED BY Larry Konsterlie, to approve the Minutes of the December 20, 2018 meeting as emailed. MOTION CARRIED.

Industrial hemp discussion. Chair Tepfer led a discussion on next steps for the Ag Committee to pursue an active role in industrial hemp. Schmoll mentioned the *West Central Tribune* printed a very positive article regarding this committee's future role in industrial hemp. Chair Tepfer suggested forming a subcommittee to look into a feasibility study, production, processing, etc. Schmoll reported she contacted AURI (Agricultural Utilization Research Institute) regarding its conferences, the University of Minnesota (U of M) as to its industrial hemp study and several attendees at the November 15th presentation and received interest by several people to serve on an industrial hemp subcommittee (see attached). Larry Konsterlie offered to chair the subcommittee and Kim Larson and Keith Poier have volunteered to serve on the subcommittee. Schmoll will ask Konsterlie to schedule a subcommittee meeting soon. Marotzke inquired as to the biggest benefits of industrial hemp in the area. Chair Tepfer shared that although the acreage for

crops is much smaller than corn, soybeans, wheat, etc., it is another crop alternative. If processing can be done locally, more farmers may have an interest in growing industrial hemp as there are approximately 20,000 products that can be made from industrial hemp. Chair Tepfer feels it is important to explore the total package, i.e., production, processing, marketing, equipment, etc.

Discussion was held regarding a direction for the Industrial Hemp Subcommittee. Chair Tepfer feels the feasibility study is the umbrella in addition to potential opportunities. Direction of the subcommittee will include:

1. Feasibility study—who could conduct the study, cost and grant opportunities;
2. Potential opportunities for production, processing and equipment (location of a processing facility is preferred to be in Kandiyohi County); and
3. Markets.

The subcommittee will report back to the Ag Committee each month. Larson inquired about attending industrial hemp conferences. Schmoll shared the Ag Committee supports its members attending conferences. Schmoll will send Konsterlie a list of possible subcommittee members.

IT WAS MOVED BY Larry Konsterlie, SECONDED BY Kim Larson, to form an Industrial Hemp Subcommittee to investigate a feasibility study, production and processing possibilities. MOTION CARRIED.

REPORTS

Ag Marketing and Event Planning Subcommittee. Schmoll reported a meeting was held between Joanna Schrupp, Dustin Kotrba and herself to discuss hosting a joint ag conference, goals, focus, budget and priority issues, past and present. Contributions of \$6,000 by the EDC and \$20,000 by MinnWest Technology Campus (MWTC) were set. A new name for the conference was discussed and it was suggested to have MWTC's marketing person work on a new name. Marotzke inquired if the conference has breakout sessions. Schmoll stated in the past no breakout sessions were available, but it is an option. At the next subcommittee meeting, Schmoll will share this committee's agreement to have a new name. Schmoll encouraged committee members to send any suggestions for a new name to her.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Election of chair and vice chair. Schmoll reported a Nominating Committee consisting of herself, Chair Tepfer and Ian Graue contacted members to fill the positions of chair and vice chair. Kevin Halvorson agreed to serve as vice chair and Dan Tepfer is willing to serve another year as chairperson. Chair Tepfer called for additional nominations and none were received.

IT WAS MOVED BY Larry Konsterlie, SECONDED BY Rollie Boll, to cease nominations and cast a unanimous ballot for Dan Tepfer as chairperson and Kevin Halvorson as vice chair of the Kandiyohi County and City of Willmar Economic Development Commission's Agriculture and Renewable Energy Development Committee.

MOTION CARRIED.

NEW BUSINESS—There was no new business.

Ag/Renewable Energy Community Events/Projects. Chair Tepfer shared a tour has been scheduled for potential investors of a possible shrimp and lettuce production facility in the area.

Schmoll promoted the Agprofessionals Agcellence banquet and awards presentation to be held February 1, 2019 at the Willmar Conference Center. Ag Commissioner Thom Petersen will be in attendance along with keynote speaker Tom Haag, presenter Jeff Stewart and emcee Joe Gill. Schmoll asked committee members to market the banquet to the farming community.

Konsterlie shared the Kandiyohi County and Stearns County Corn and Soybean Growers annual meeting will be held January 28th at the American Legion in Willmar. The speaker will be Zach Johnson of Lowry. Konsterlie suggested committee members view Johnson's YouTube videos, MN Millennial Farmer, and invited committee members to attend at no cost.

A brief discussion was held regarding a possible speaker on soybean processing for February's committee meeting. Konsterlie will get a list of possible speakers to Schmoll.

Chair Tepfer mentioned the Ag Committee discussed last month to have speakers on various agricultural topics and shared Earl Huber of Concorde Bank may attend a future committee meeting.

Konsterlie will attend a portion of the MN AG EXPO in Mankato January 23-24th and will report at the February committee meeting.

ADJOURNMENT—There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:53 a.m.

NEXT MEETING—The next regular committee meeting is **7:30 a.m., February 21, 2019**, at Christianson PLLP, 302 Fifth Street SW, Willmar.

EDC Ag Industrial Hemp Subcommittee

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