

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

MINUTES

January 18, 2018

Christianson PLLP, Willmar

Present: Ian Graue, Kevin Halvorson, Kim Larson, Dan Lippert, Keith Poier and Dan Tepfer

Excused: Bruce Reuss, Jon Folkedahl, Larry Konsterlie and Dustin Kotrba

Absent: Rollie Boll

Staff: Connie Schmoll, Business Development Specialist

Media: Carolyn Lange, West Central Tribune

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

Chairperson Dan Tepfer called the meeting to order at approximately 7:33 a.m.

AGENDA—The revised agenda was approved as emailed.

MINUTES—

IT WAS MOVED BY Kevin Halvorson, SECONDED BY Keith Poier, to approve the December 21, 2017 Minutes as emailed. MOTION CARRIED.

REPORTS

West Central Angel Fund I. Connie Schmoll reported Jeff Pattison of West Central Steel shared an overview of West Central Angel Fund I at 1 Million Cups on January 17th. There are currently 28 members. The Fund has reviewed more than 30 applications and hopes to fund a project in the near future. It will hold a social on January 23rd. Schmoll shared an overview of 1 Million Cups, a national organization, that meets at the Barn Theatre at 8 a.m., each Wednesday. Schmoll also mentioned DI Labs (D3D), a 3-D printing company located in Spicer, presented at 1 Million Cups yesterday.

Ag Marketing Subcommittee. Schmoll reported a few members of the Ag Committee, as well as Kim Lippert of Ridgewater College, attended the viewing of the “Food Evolution” movie on January 15th. Schmoll commented the movie was good, but seemed to negatively target organic farming. A positive outcome was people should not rely on fear-motivated campaigns and trust

science and not make assumptions. The “Food Evolution” movie is available on Amazon at a cost of \$4.99. Attendees at the viewing concurred with not showing the movie at the Ag Producers Workshop in August as the goal of the workshop is to recognize conventional and organic farming operations. Keith Poier felt it is an important movie to see as it gives a good picture of what is going on in that arena. Chair Tepfer commented it would be beneficial to have policy makers see the movie. Kim Lippert suggested the Ag Marketing Subcommittee research articles by Jeff Simmons regarding abundant and safe foods. Dan Lippert shared he viewed one of six segments of “Rotten” on Netflix, which is about the food industry. Schmoll shared she has communicated with Joanna Schrupp of MinnWest Technology Campus regarding collaboration with the Ag & Animal Science Conference. She will continue to visit with Kim Lippert regarding the Soil Social.

Frozen Forum/Hemp Lac qui Parle County. Poier attended the Frozen Forum held January 11 and 12, 2018 hosted by the Lac qui Parle County EDA and Madison and Dawson Chambers and reported approximately 85 attended. Poier mentioned the *West Central Tribune* printed an interesting article regarding the Frozen Forum. Poier reported the keynote speaker was Robert Mitchell, founder of The Hemp Connection in Tulsa, Oklahoma, who is working to develop the infrastructure needed to process industrial hemp in this country, something that has not happened since hemp was raised as part of the war effort in the 1940s. Mitchell stated hemp can be made into 30,000 different products, from textiles and paper to biofuels, also food products which is currently the largest market. Most hemp sold in the United States is imported from Canada. Margaret Wiatrowski, coordinator of the industrial hemp program for the Minnesota Department of Agriculture, shared Minnesota is one state offering a pilot program under a 2014 federal law that allows growers to raise hemp to study growth, cultivation and marketing. Six growers planted 38 acres in 2016 and 33 growers planted hemp on 1,200 acres in 2017. Harvesting hemp is difficult due to the tree-like stalk. Industrial hemp must contain less than .3 percent of THC (tetrahydrocannabinol), the mood-altering ingredient found in marijuana. Transportation of hemp seeds across state lines is prohibited even at .3 percent. Schmoll inquired how the Ag Committee can help; Poier suggested finding assistance for marketing hemp as there is a need to promote the raising of hemp and it is important to be involved in conversations to aide in the development of a fair price for hemp. Poier shared he attended only the first day of the forum as the second day of the forum focused on solar.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS—

Ag Livestock Permit Response. Schmoll reported a subgroup was formed and met a couple of times and decided not to hold a public form. A memo was sent to the Kandiyohi County Administrator and Kandiyohi County Zoning Administrator regarding clarified status of conditional use permitting in an Agricultural Zone and support for the Kandiyohi County Livestock Supportive Resolution of 2004. The group held a meeting with Larry Kleindl, Kandiyohi County Administrator; Gary Geer, Kandiyohi County Zoning Administrator; Rollie Nissen, Chairman and Harlan Madsen, Vice Chair of the Kandiyohi County Board of Commissioners and a member of the Zoning Board. Schmoll has requested to be on the Kandiyohi County Board of Commissioner’s agenda in February to ask for renewed support of the 2004 Resolution. Lippert agreed it is important to reinforce commitment

for livestock permitting. The Ag Committee concurred with staying on top of the issue and looking for businesses needing a location for a livestock facility in Kandiyohi County.

NEW BUSINESS

2018 Ag Goals. Chair Tepfer shared the 2017 Ag Goals (see attached) and the need to revise or add goals for 2018. Schmoll stated the EDC strategic planning session will be held in late March and she would like to present this committee's goals at that time. Poier suggested expanding Goal 6 to include research in the production of hemp. Other suggestions included: leave the goals vague; expand Goal 4; add the word "renewable" after technology to the overall goal of the Ag Committee. Schmoll will work on language for Goal Nos. 5 and 6 and will send it out to members prior to the next meeting. Lippert suggested compiling a separate list of issues to address and explore—a work-in-progress list.

AG/RENEWABLE ENERGY COMMUNITY EVENTS/PROJECTS. Schmoll reported she will not attend the Natural Products Expo West in California in March, but will attend the Minnesota Agriculture Expo in Mankato on January 24th. If committee members are interested in attending, please contact her. Schmoll shared the Willmar Area Lakes Chamber of Commerce will sponsor a Tax Planning Workshop at 7:00 a.m. on January 26th at The Oaks. In addition, Dr. David Kohl, Professor Emeritus, at Virginia Tech, Blacksburg, Virginia, will speak on marketing at the Willmar Education and Arts Center, February 21st. Cost is \$40 and pre-registration is due by February 16th. Schmoll will add both events to the EDC Facebook page.

Larson suggested contacting Tersteeg Brothers in Olivia to ask if they have additional information on hemp farming. Schmoll will contact them and ask if they can attend a future committee meeting. Larson also mentioned an upcoming hemp conference in Colorado.

ADJOURNMENT—There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:55 a.m.

NEXT MEETING—The next regular committee meeting is **7:30 a.m., February 15, 2018** at Christianson PLLP, 302 Fifth Street SW, Willmar.



Agriculture and Renewable Energy Development Committee 2017 Goals

Mission

To sustain, identify and develop agriculture, agribusiness and renewable energy opportunities.

Overall Goal of the Agriculture and Renewable Energy Development (Ag) Committee

Target activities that leverage Kandiyohi County's assets in agriculture, with a special emphasis on Ag business, manufacturing, bioscience, technology, energy and research.

1. Bring agriculture or renewable energy related projects to the West Central Angel Fund I for consideration throughout the year.
2. Plan and implement projects in response to the strategies identified in the 2017 Ag Producers Business Retention and Expansion (BRE) Program
3. Conduct education and marketing campaign highlighting local agriculture
 - a. Work with the EDC's Marketing and Public Relations Committee
 - b. Establish a subcommittee to lead efforts
 - c. Promote our region as an area that supports renewable energy development
 - d. Broadly distribute the Ag Producers BRE Report
4. Assist with deployment of broadband into rural unserved areas of Kandiyohi County
 - a. Continue to identify specific needs among agriculture and renewable energy for broadband access and speed, including current and future communication needs
5. Invite and support development of value-added agriculture businesses in Kandiyohi County
6. Continue to monitor and promote Kandiyohi County's involvement in the Minnesota Turkey Research and Development Facility and Minnesota Dairy Training, Research and Consumer Education Facility