

**KANDIYOHI COUNTY AND CITY OF WILLMAR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION (EDC)
BROADBAND AND ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE MEETING
MINUTES
January 4, 2021
Via ZOOM Video Conference**

Present: Mark Boeschen, Donna Boonstra, Jason Hulstein, Roger Imdieke, Michelle Marotzke, Rollie Nissen, Glenn Otteson, Gregg Price, Ramsey Schaffnit and David Sisser

Excused: Dean Bouta

Absent: Sonja Bogart and Bruce DeBlieck

Staff: Connie Schmoll, Business Development Manager

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

Chairperson Mark Boeschen called the meeting to order at approximately 12:00 p.m.

AGENDA—Added to the Agenda was election of officers for 2021.

IT WAS MOVED, SECONDED AND CARRIED to approve the revised Agenda.

MINUTES—

IT WAS MOVED BY Donna Boonstra, SECONDED BY Ramsey Schaffnit, to approve the Minutes of the December 7, 2020 meeting as emailed. MOTION CARRIED.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS—

IT WAS MOVED BY Rollie Nissen, SECONDED BY Donna Boonstra, to re-elect Mark Boeschen as chairperson and to elect Michelle Marotzke, as vice chair of the Kandiyohi County and City of Willmar Economic Development Commission Broadband and Advanced Technology Committee for 2021. MOTION CARRIED.

Dave Sisser was thanked for his years of serving as vice chair.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Updated engineering study. Glenn Otteson reported all information has been received and the study will be completed soon. Roger Imdieke reported the deadline to complete the study was extended.

Federated Telephone Cooperative project. Schmoll stated there is nothing new relative to Federated Telephone Cooperative. The engineering study will be important for a project. Schmoll will make a presentation to the county board on January 19th so it would be good to know the number of townships that may be included. Schmoll stated the cost for the total project is estimated to be \$3,983,391. Anticipated funding would come from the state Border-to-Border Grant Program at 45%; Federated at 25%; Kandiyohi County at \$25,000 per township; and \$2,500 per household over 10 years via the county tax rolls. Other funding could also be sought. There is a total of 438 unserved and underserved locations in the proposed project area. Marketing to residents will be key. A homeowner could borrow the funds through a Revolving Loan Fund program and have it placed as a lien against their home. Schmoll noted the low bidder of the FCC auction was LTD, which could cause issues with the state grant application. Sisser stated January 19, 2021 is the date for LTD to submit a full proposal. Sisser will monitor LTD's progress, as well as Elon Musk's SpaceX Starlink project and Jeff Bezos' Amazon (Project Kuiper) satellite project. Satellites can have blackout areas. Musk is currently beta testing and the cost is high. Schmoll stated Federated is willing to keep moving forward with a project as long as other local funding is secured to cover costs above the state grant and 25% provider investment.

Subcommittee Reinstatements. Chairperson Boeschen stated three subcommittees are being recommended and requested volunteers to serve. The following volunteered.

1. Education/Marketing. Michelle Marotzke, chair; Roger Imdieke, Rollie Nissen and Glenn Otteson.
2. Grant Writing. Schmoll, chair; Donna Boonstra, Dean Bouta, Bruce DeBlicke and Glenn Otteson.
3. Adoption of Broadband. Dave Sisser, chair; Jason Hulstein, Gregg Price and Ramsey Schaffnit.

Chair Boeschen will participate in all subcommittee meetings in the beginning.

NEW BUSINESS—There was no new business.

Minnesota Rural Broadband Coalition. Schmoll reported the Minnesota Rural Broadband Coalition held a strategic planning meeting where goals were decided and funding was discussed. The Coalition budgeted \$59,000 in 2020 and was \$19,000 short. Dues for 2021 may increase and it may increase who must pay dues. Schmoll noted this committee approved \$500 to participate in the Coalition and Aaron Backman approved an additional \$400 be paid from the EDC's general budget. The Coalition sent a letter to legislators urging the passing of \$15 million to fund the state broadband program in 2021. A second letter was sent urging the legislators to fund projects now rather than waiting for the FCC rural broadband auction results.

ADJOURNMENT—There being no further business,

IT WAS MOVED, SECONDED AND CARRIED to adjourn the meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 12:35 p.m.

NEXT MEETING—The next committee meeting is **12 noon, Monday, February 1, 2021** via ZOOM video conference.