

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

MINUTES

March 16, 2017

Christensen PLLP, Willmar

- Present: Rollie Boll, Jon Folkedahl, Ian Graue, Kevin Halvorson, Dustin Kotrba, Kim Larson, Dan Lippert and Dan Tepfer
- Excused: Keith Poier and Bruce Reuss
- Absent: Arvind Auluck Wilson, John Duevel and Larry Konsterlie
- Guest: Carolyn Lange, West Central Tribune
- Staff: Connie Schmoll, Business Development Specialist
- Secretarial: Diane Beck, Legal & Administrative Assistants, Inc.

Chairperson Dan Tepfer called the meeting to order at 7:40 a.m.

AGENDA—Chair Tepfer added legislative forum under Unfinished Business. On future agendas, the Call to Order will be changed to 13 members/7=quorum.

IT WAS MOVED BY Rollie Boll, SECONDED BY Ian Graue, to approve the agenda with noted changes. MOTION CARRIED.

MINUTES—Chair Tepfer noted three changes to the February 16, 2017 minutes.

- EDC Marketing and Public Relations Committee Assistance, page 2, paragraph 4. “Lippert spoke of the lamb industry and how it is trying to do positive promotions. He stated the Kandiyohi County area is a thriving.... Sentence will be changed as follows:
 - He stated that Kandiyohi County is a thriving area.
- EDC Marketing and Public Relations Committee Assistance, page 2, paragraph 6. Last sentence will be changed to.
 - “Schmoll stated the Ag BRE survey volunteers are trying to secure at least one farm family to participate in videotaping their interviews for this purpose and for promotion of the Ag Producers’ BRE project.”
- Under New Business, 2018 Farm Bill tour.
 - The acronym REAP will be changed to (Renewable Energy for America Program).

IT WAS MOVED BY Kim Larson SECONDED BY Rollie Boll, to approve the February 17, 2017 minutes with changes. MOTION CARRIED.

REPORTS

West Central Angel Fund I. Schmoll reported the first organizational meeting of the West Central Angel Fund I will be held on April 6, 2017. A few members have volunteered to serve on the executive committee. There are 28 members to date with the possibility of adding new members until July 31, 2017. All leaders have signed their agreements and provided a 10% payment. One share is \$25,000 with a minimum of two shares. The total fund is more than \$1 million with a maximum of \$2 million. Schmoll shared there are three start-up businesses that will make presentations to the West Central Angel Fund I. Schmoll explained the voting process. Schmoll will give a presentation on the West Central Angel Fund I at the Agricultural Utilization Research Institute (AURI) New Uses Ag Innovation Forum on March 22, 2017 in Minneapolis.

Ag Producers' Survey Subcommittee. Schmoll provided an update. The research phase is complete. Fifty-one out of 56 surveys were completed. Jim Molenaar is compiling the data and preparing the final report that will be presented at two workshops on Wednesday, April 5, 2017 (Noon and 4 p.m.) at the Kandiyohi County Health & Human Services Building. Invitations to agriculture producers, volunteers and sponsors were mailed. Comments from Ag Committee volunteers conducting interviews were: interviews went very well and happy to participate; enjoyed the interviews and it would have been good to have the next generations available during the interviews; nice to have a conversation with the interviewees and not just ask the questions; no red flags; interviewees were genuinely happy to be included and listened to. Schmoll thanked the Ag Committee members for their willingness to volunteer.

Marketing Subcommittee. Dustin Kortba stated the first accomplishment of the Ag Marketing Subcommittee was to update agricultural-related facts for the display panels used at the recent Willmar Ag Show. Jon Folkedahl received comments on the left panel and Ian Graue received comments on the solar facts on the right panel. Schmoll mentioned more statistics are needed for the Ag flyer. The subcommittee also worked on goals for the Willmar Ag Show; one goal was to have 100 visitors and received a total of 93 visitors. Schmoll and Chair Tepfer expressed thank you to the Ag Marketing Subcommittee for their work.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

2017 Ag Committee Goals. Schmoll distributed the revised 2017 Ag Committee Goals she shared at the EDC Joint Operations Board meeting on March 9, 2017 (see attached).

IT WAS MOVED BY Jon Folkedahl SECONDED BY Dan Lippert, to accept the revised 2017 Agriculture and Renewable Energy Development Committee Goals with Schmoll clarifying and rewriting goal 3.d. as official. MOTION CARRIED.

Willmar Ag Show. Chair Tepfer inquired if handing out LED light bulbs was a good incentive to entice visitors to stop at the Ag booth. Kim Larson stated it drew visitors in to begin conversations and commented that a good number of visitors did not know that the EDC had an Ag Committee. The Ag Committee conducted the drawing for the Agriculture-themed basket displayed at the Willmar Ag Show booth. The winner was Dave Adrian; the EDC will contact the winner to pick up the basket. Chair Tepfer commented the future of the Willmar Ag Show will be evaluated.

Other. Schmoll indicated she has not scheduled a tour of West Central Bait in New London. The tour date will be added to the Ag Committee agenda for April 20, 2017. Chair Tepfer, Lippert and Larson attended the legislative forum held on February 24, 2017 at MinnWest Technology Campus. Topics included the buffer issue, revamping the policy on road ditch haying operations, property taxes, etc. Larson inquired whether the EDC and the Ag Chamber Committee will partner to conduct farm tours for students. Schmoll indicated the Chamber is expected to fill the vacant Ag position shortly and she will follow up on the issue and report at a future Ag Committee meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

Broadband Community Meetings. Schmoll stated that Consolidated Telecommunications Company (CTC) will conduct three Meet & Greet events on March 20, March 23 and April 4, (5:00-6:30 p.m.) at Dethlefs Center, 217 Hillcrest Avenue in Spicer. The EDC Broadband Committee will personally contact individuals within the project area. The meetings will be an opportunity for residents to meet CTC representatives and sign up for future broadband services. Individuals who do not know if they are in the project area are encouraged to attend or visit the CTC website www.connectctc.com. Graue inquired if the Ag Producers' Survey contacts are included in the broadband contact list. Schmoll will send out the invitation to Ag Producers' Survey individuals.

Agriculture/renewable energy community events/projects. Chair Tepfer announced the Midwest Farm Energy Conference will be held June 13 and 14, 2017, at the West Central Research and Outreach Center in Morris. Brief discussion held by those who attended the Ridgewater College Farm Business Management Program "Agriculture and Economics in 2017 and Beyond" held on February 22, 2017.

ADJOURNMENT—There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:45 a.m.

NEXT MEETING—The next regular meeting is **7:30 a.m., April 20, 2017**, at Christianson PLLP, 302 Fifth Street SW, Willmar. Reminder: There will be no Ag Committee meeting in May.



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. Distribute Ag Producers BRE Report broadly
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