

KANDIYOHI COUNTY AND CITY OF WILLMAR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION (EDC)
MARKETING AND PUBLIC RELATIONS COMMITTEE
MINUTES
June 22, 2020
Via ZOOM Video Conference

Present: Donna Boonstra, Jesse Gislason, Melissa Knott, Emily Lien, Pam Rosenau, Joanna Schrupp and Brittany VanDerBill

Excused: Shari Courtney

Guest: Lindsey Donner, REDstar Creative

Staff: Aaron Backman, Executive Director and Connie Schmoll, Business Development Manager

Secretarial: Nancy Birkeland, Legal & Administrative Assistants, Inc.

Chair Brittany VanDerBill called the meeting to order at approximately 12:00 p.m.

MINUTES—

IT WAS MOVED BY Joanna Schrupp, SECONDED BY Jesse Gislason, to approve the Minutes of the February 24, 2020 meeting as emailed. MOTION CARRIED.

[Pam Rosenau joined the meeting.]

Social Media Statistics. Lindsey Donner provided the Facebook statistics for March 24 to June 21, 2020: total likes 701, total reach 20.5K (↓-5%), post engagement 1.9K (↓-54%), page clicks 1.4K (↓-1647%), total fans 40 (↓-33%) and posts published 100. The top popular posts were broadband speed test 2 likes, 8 shares, reach of 907; Immigrant Business Disaster Relief Grant Program from SWIF (11 likes, 4 shares and reach of 662); EDC extends condolences to Gossman family (13 likes, 1 share, reach of 484); and the COBAL loan program (6 likes, 5 shares and reach of 470). There were 8 unlikes during this period. Active fans are online between 4:00-6:00 a.m. and 6:00-8:00 p.m.; demographics is strongly female (71%); reach by country after the United States is the United Kingdom (31) and Norway (11). Schmoll stated a broadband survey was done during the pandemic that had nine questions and 345 responses. The survey resulted in a lot of narrative about what is working well and what is not working; the results will be used to apply for a future state broadband grant.

Website analytics show the top 10 landing pages from March 23 through June 21 were the home page, news, broadband survey, lakes/recreation, cities, major employers, and cities of Kandiyohi, Lake Lillian, Sunburg and Spicer. Traffic was up significantly to 6,862 new users.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS—There was no unfinished business.

NEW BUSINESS—

Ag Events. Schmoll reported the Partners In Ag Innovation Conference that is co-hosted by the EDC and MinnWest Technology Campus will be held virtually on July 30, 2020. The most recent Constant Contact invite was emailed to the committee, who was asked to help share the event. It was noted that after the Agriculture Utilization Research Institute shared it with its membership, the attendance increased. Schrupp indicated the conference may be done both virtually and in-person in the future. Schmoll noted the Ag Legacy Planning workshop held earlier this month had 39 registrants with 37 participating.

Updated Ag Flyer. The committee reviewed the current ag flyer (see attached), which is quite outdated and should be updated. Chair VanDerBill noted the focus of the flyer depends on who is the target audience or the purpose of the flyer. Schmoll stated the target audience is larger ag processing or renewable energy businesses as she uses the flyer when attending conferences.

Suggested updated included the following:

- Add farm organizations
- Add renewable energy organizations
- Could change to a different focus
- Include images of Bushmills, Simply Shrimp, Lettuce Abound or other non-traditional ag business
- Change the template to provide more information on a project
- Update all photos and statistics
- Go more in-depth on statistics—Agriculture in Kandiyohi County only shows a bird and corn cob icons
- Emphasize diversity and companies highlighted
- Do a higher resolution document
- Although there are no hemp producers in Kandiyohi County, there are hemp growers; show the area is open to new possibilities, such as hemp
- Use some of the words/language from the Partners In Ag Innovation Conference as they suggest innovation; maybe include the annual conference on the flyer

Schmoll asked the committee to email her with any other ideas.

Broadband Survey. Schmoll asked for ideas on how the broadband survey results can be used in the future. Chair VanDerBill suggested using an infographic for social media. Schmoll reported the CARES Act released additional funds, including for economic development and broadband. Schmoll contacted Arvig, which is very interested in a Kandiyohi County project and will present it to their board on June 29, 2020. A federal grant application would be written by this region's EDA office. Meeker Cooperative Light & Power Association is also interested in a broadband project as the east side of Kandiyohi Township next to Dovre is in its project area. Schmoll reported she and Backman spoke with the new CEO of Kandiyohi Power Cooperative, who is interested in looking at broadband in the future.

Summer Newsletter. As to a summer newsletter, Backman stated items about the EDC's response to the COVID-19 pandemic could be included. Backman informed the committee about the EDC's COVID-19 Business Assistance Loan (COBAL) program and Immigrant Business Relief Grant

program, as well as the state's Small Business Relief Grant Program that starts tomorrow. Another area that could be highlighted and unique to Kandiyohi County is the poultry research and education initiative. The initiative started because the Rosemount facility needs to be replaced. Other topics could include the broadband survey and how it will be used, a thank you to Harlan Madsen, followup of the Partners In Ag Innovation Conference, Opportunity Zone and the Renaissance Zone. The committee was asked to forward any other ideas that come to mind. Schrupp noted there could be other news that could be included for a fall newsletter.

NEXT MEETING—The next meeting is **12 noon, Monday, July 27, 2020** via ZOOM.

ADJOURNMENT—There being no further business,

IT WAS MOVED BY Melissa Knott, SECONDED BY Jesse Gislason, to adjourn the meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 12:48 p.m.

DIVERSE AGRICULTURE & RENEWABLE ENERGY OPPORTUNITIES

— AGRICULTURE & RENEWABLE ENERGY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE —

Kandiyohi County has deep roots in agriculture and a bright future as well. Our strong agriculture sector makes us a prime location for agribusiness, bioscience and technology businesses. Many industry leaders such as Nova-Tech Engineering, Select Genetics, RELCO, LLC and Jennie-O Turkey Store are headquartered here in West Central Minnesota's business hub. Recently, we've made some great strides towards creating a more eco-friendly business community by investing our time in renewable energy efforts.

The EDC is committed to working collaboratively with local farmers and ag-related industries through our Agriculture & Renewable Energy Development Committee. The committee's mission is "To sustain, identify and develop agriculture, agribusiness and renewable energy opportunities." It supports this mission by targeting activities that leverage Kandiyohi County's assets in agriculture, with a special emphasis on ag business, manufacturing, bioscience, technology, energy and research.

Diverse ag economy with over 1,300 farms



Produced enough wind & solar to power 1,280 homes



Contact us:
kandiyohi.com
toll-free 866.665.4556



IMPACT BY THE NUMBERS

— A PROFILE OF AG AND RENEWABLE ENERGY IN KANDIYOHI COUNTY —

Agriculture in Kandiyohi County



Farmland:	Land Area:	# of Farms:	Average Size:
415,090 acres	75%	1,310	317 acres



Agricultural Marketing:
\$414 million (2016) { Crops: **\$183 million**
Livestock: **\$231 million**

Renewable Energy in Kandiyohi County



Wind:	Enough to Power:
7.7 million kwh	800 homes



Solar:	Enough to Power:
5.3 million kwh	480 homes



Ethanol:	Enough E-85 to Power:
65 million gallons	190,000 cars

Contact us:
kandiyohi.com
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