

**KANDIYOHI COUNTY AND CITY OF WILLMAR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION (EDC)  
BROADBAND AND ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE MEETING**

**MINUTES**

**June 5, 2017**

**Kandiyohi County Health & Human Services Building, Willmar**

Present: Mark Boeschen, Travis Bonnema, Dean Bouta, Scott Froemming, Larry Handlin, Larry Kleindl, Michelle Marotzke, Les Nelson and David Sisser

Excused: Donna Boonstra, Bruce DeBlieck and Kathy Dillon

Absent: Brian Mort and Donn Winckler

Staff: Connie Schmoll, Business Development Specialist

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

Chairperson Dean Bouta called the meeting to order at approximately 12:05 p.m.

**MINUTES—**

IT WAS MOVED BY David Sisser, SECONDED BY Les Nelson, to approve the minutes of the May 1, 2017 meeting as emailed. MOTION CARRIED.

**COMMUNITY NEIGHBORHOOD MEETING.** Schmoll reported she made a decision to not move forward on a neighborhood champions meeting to promote the broadband project because of some controversy with CTC about what defines a sign up. Schmoll did not want neighbors being asked to promote the project if service agreements would be required. The expectation has since been resolved. Those conducting early sign up will be expected to send in the \$25 deposit to be considered part of the 810 needed. Service contracts will not be required. Larry Kleindl, Schmoll and CTC representatives agreed upon a new letter to be sent that would include a return envelope and a direct ask for the \$25 deposit. Neighbors are already proactive in encouraging others to sign up so the meeting and training will not be further planned at this time.

**CTC BORDER-TO-BORDER GRANT PROJECT—**

**Sign up of subscribers.** Chair Bouta announced that, according to the CTC website, the number of early subscribers for services is currently at 71% of the required 50% and 230 additional sign-ups are needed before the project can begin. Bouta commended committee members for their diligence in going door-to-door to secure the early signups on the CTC Crowd Fiber site.

**Marketing.** Kandiyohi County and the EDC worked with Representative Dave Baker to record an ad promoting sign up for the potential CTC broadband build. The ad has been placed on Lakeland Broadcasting stations paid for by Kandiyohi County and on KDJS Stations paid for by the EDC. In addition,

Michelle Marotzke and Schmoll taped a promotion that aired on the Q102 morning show. Commissioner Rollie Nissen also conducted a radio interview that was aired promoting sign up. Flyers were placed on cars at Our Lady of the Lakes Church on Sunday, May 21st by Schmoll and Dave Sisser. A sign up form is now on the EDC website.

**CTC Marketing.** CTC was out promoting the project during fishing opener and just before Memorial Day. Following today's meeting, Schmoll, Kleindl and Chair Bouta will have a conference call with CTC regarding next steps for the project. Currently, the deadline for sign-ups is July 1, 2017. Schmoll said there is a possibility that the State will extend the deadline for CTC to sign the grant documents, allowing more time for early sign up.

Schmoll encouraged committee members to assist by going door-to-door to attain more signups. Chair Bouta stated it is important to continue with the door-to-door contacts as well as to call residents in the project area. Schmoll referred to a spreadsheet prepared and maintained by Mark Boeschen with the addresses of residents in the project area. Volunteers are encouraged to use the database to obtain phone numbers.

Schmoll announced she attended the Lake Florida Lake Association meeting on June 3, 2017 at Prairie Woods Environment Learning Center (PWELC) and was able to secure an additional 13 sign-ups. Schmoll will attend the Games Lake/Norway Lake Association meeting on June 10 and she asked for a committee volunteer to assist. Sisser volunteered to attend.

**Bonding.** Kleindl shared the project is at the point where it may cost more and stated Kandiyohi County will wait for CTC to let them know when it is ready for the bond. Chair Bouta suggested the bonding deadline issue be discussed during the conference call this afternoon. Kleindl stated the longer the project waits, the more likely the interest rates will increase. Kleindl questioned if additional dollars are needed, would there be other companies interested in a partnership. Committee members offered suggestions, i.e., power companies, banks, Farm Credit, etc. Scott Froemming inquired the amount of the additional costs; Kleindl stated it could reach between \$50,000-\$75,000. Froemming stated he will consider bringing up this issue at Kandiyohi Power Cooperative (KPC) board meeting on June 21. Schmoll offered to speak to the KPC Board about this need.

#### **UNFINISHED BUSINESS—**

**Hack-a-Thon Applications/future.** Schmoll mentioned the West Central Tribune article: *AIS detection: There's an app for that* ([see](#) attached). The Kandiyohi County Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) task force created the Aquahunter app which is designed to help the public identify and report aquatic plants and creatures that may be invasive. The app was created with joint funding from the AIS Task Force, a BoatUS Foundation grant and funding from the Hack-a-thon grant from the Blandin Foundation. Larry Handlin stated the RITA grant is ending and he may be leaving the area sometime this summer and inquired if anyone is interested in leading a future Hack-a-thon. Two former Ridgewater College employees may have time to assist, but most likely will not take the lead. Handlin suggested checking with Betsy Bonnema and Jayme Sczublewski. Handlin will also check with Ridgewater staff.

**WiFi Hotspots.** Kleindl reported on the number of WiFi Hotspot users in the Blomkest and Lake Andrew areas. Schmoll shared WiFi reports from Willmar Public Schools, New London-Spicer Schools and the Willmar Civic Center.

**NEW BUSINESS—**

**Review Broadband Committee goals.** Schmoll briefly reviewed the Broadband and Advanced Technology Committee 2017 Goals and Projects and mentioned the new broadband grant application is available with no change in the application process. \$10 Million is available for projects in Minnesota in 2018. A brief discussion was held regarding the goal to apply for another DEED grant. Members agreed to keep the goal and address in January 2018.

**Other.** Travis Bonnema inquired on the status of the CenturyLink and Frontier projects and requested that they be invited to the next meeting and bring maps of their projects in Kandiyohi County. Schmoll will contact them and invite them to a future Broadband Committee meeting. Discussion also held regarding the Arvig fiber project which runs from Highway 71/Highway 7 to Meeker County on Minnesota Trunk Highway 7. Schmoll mentioned that Arvig may conduct a crowd fiber sign up campaign for residents of Lake Lillian to decide if they will bring fiber to the city residents. They would need at least 50% sign up.

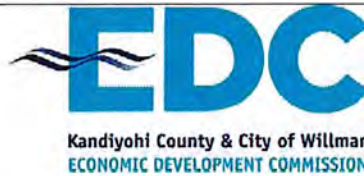
Chair Bouta discussed the Legislative issues regarding the Arvig fiber build.

Schmoll encouraged committee members to sign up to do door-to-door visits. Members wanted to know the outcome of the call with CTC today before committing. Schmoll will email a follow-up report of that conference call today.

**Next meeting date.** Committee members concurred to change the date for the next meeting to Monday, July 10, due to the 4<sup>th</sup> of July Holiday.

**ADJOURNMENT—**There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 1:00 p.m.

**NEXT MEETING—**The next meeting is **12 noon, July 10, 2017**, at the Kandiyohi County Health & Human Services Building, Willmar.



## Broadband and Advanced Technology Committee 2017 Goals and Projects

### Board Goal 1. Expansion of High-Speed Broadband in Rural Kandiyohi County

#### Strategy 1.1 Business Retention and Expansion

Objectives/Actions	Responsibility	Target Date	Status/Update/Comments
A. Facilitate and support a shovel-ready broadband project in Kandiyohi County.	Connie, EDC Broadband Committee, Kandiyohi County	Throughout 2017/2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>State of Minnesota awarded CTC (Consolidated Telecommunications Company) of Brainerd, a grant award of \$4.94 million, which will be matched with loan funds from Kandiyohi County in the amount of \$4.94 million. Construction in northern Kandiyohi County is planned to begin in spring of 2017</li> </ul>
B. The EDC will facilitate efforts to market the broadband options to residents and businesses in the project area. A take-rate surpassing 45% is necessary to pay loans and provide a positive ROI for CTC.	Connie, EDC Broadband Committee		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Subcommittee formed to plan marketing efforts</li> </ul>
C. Continued planning for broadband deployment in unserved areas of Kandiyohi County, including legislative networking, securing stories and letters of support, adoption and utilization projects, securing private partnerships for the next stage of deployment, and securing public and private partnerships for funding.	Connie	Throughout 2017/2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conducted meeting with Rep. Dave Baker on 12/28/2016</li> <li>Conducted meeting with Senator Andrew Lange on 1/13/2017</li> <li>Securing team to participate in first Broadband Day on the Hill on 3/15/2017</li> </ul>
D. Submit a Phase II Border-to-Border Broadband Grant Application to Office of Broadband/DEED	Connie, EDC Broadband Committee, Kandiyohi County	October 2017	

# AIS detection: There's an app for that

By Anne Polta  
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Matt Glup, left, takes instruction from Mike Smith, an aquatic invasive species trainer with the state Department of Natural Resources, during decontamination training May 23 at the Kandiyohi County rescue squad garage.

Briana Sanchez Tribune

WILLMAR – A chance to help protect Kandiyohi County's lakes from aquatic invasive species is no further away than your smartphone. In fact, there's an app for that. The Kandiyohi County AIS task force has created an app called Aquahunter that's designed to help the public identify and report aquatic plants and creatures that might be invasive species. It's available for both iPhone and Android smartphones. It can also be found at [www.aquahunter.org](http://www.aquahunter.org). It was created with joint funding from the county task force and a BoatUS Foundation grant. "This is a free app that anybody can download," said Stephanie Felt, coordinator of the Kandiyohi County aquatic invasive species task force. She described it as "a one-stop shop" for locating and sharing AIS information. "It's helping us have more eyes out there," she said.

Science has yet to come up with successful treatment options once a lake becomes infested. But when an invasive species is detected early enough, the odds can be better, Felt said. "There are some things that can be done," she said.

With the public using the app to monitor and report possible signs of invasive species activity, "we're hoping to shorten the response time," she said.

The more pictures received, the larger the database becomes, increasing the app's detection accuracy. Both native and non-native species photos are needed.

Felt checks all the photos that are submitted and forwards any positive hits to the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources for response.

The app is currently designed to handle reports of zebra mussels, Eurasian watermilfoil, starry stonewort, spiny waterflea, purple loosestrife and curly leaf pondweed. Descriptions of these species also are listed under the guide portion of the app.

Three lakes in Kandiyohi County – Green, Calhoun and Florida – are on the infested waters list for zebra mussels. Green, Calhoun, Florida and Norway Lakes also are on the infestation list for Eurasian watermilfoil.