

KANDIYOHI COUNTY AND CITY OF WILLMAR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION (EDC)
FINANCE COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES
June 9, 2020
Via Teleconference

Present: Matt Behm, Nick Dalton, Travis Jones, Les Nelson, Jeff Welker and Randy Zinda

Excused: Kerry Johnson and Justin Schnichels

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

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

Chairperson Matt Behm called the meeting to order at approximately 12:02 p.m.

AGENDA—There were no changes to the Agenda.

IT WAS MOVED BY Les Nelson, SECONDED BY Randy Zinda, to approve the Agenda as emailed. MOTION CARRIED.

MINUTES—

IT WAS MOVED BY Nick Dalton, SECONDED BY Randy Zinda, to approve the Minutes of the May 12, May 26 and June 2, 2020 meetings as emailed. MOTION CARRIED.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS—There was no unfinished business.

NEW BUSINESS

COBAL Loan Reviews. Backman reported 46 businesses have asked for information with 30 having submitting COBAL applications and 21 being approved and closed to date totaling \$97,500. The Joint Operations Board will meet this Thursday and this committee's recommendation to use \$25,000 to expand the program will be presented. There remains \$52,500 in the program.

Immigrant Business Disaster Relief Grant Program. Backman noted several grant applications have been received; eight grants have been approved to date.

- Amin Grocery LLC. Backman provided information on Amin Grocery LLC located in downtown Willmar. The business has two employees and has been in business for five years. The grant would be used for rent and utilities. Staff is recommending a grant of \$650. The business is registered with the Minnesota Secretary of State and a copy of the tax return was received.

IT WAS MOVED BY Les Nelson, SECONDED BY Jeff Welker, to approve a \$650 grant under the Immigrant Business Disaster Relief Grant program to Amin Grocery LLC. MOTION CARRIED.

- Mubarak Express L.L.C. Backman provided information on Mubarak Express L.L.C. located in Willmar. It is a trucking business with one employee and has been in business six years. The grant would be used for rent, utilities and insurance. The business is registered with the Minnesota Secretary of State and a copy of the 2019 tax return was received. Staff is recommending a grant of \$650.

IT WAS MOVED BY Nick Dalton, SECONDED BY Travis Jones, to approve a \$650 grant under the Immigrant Business Disaster Relief Grant program to Mubarak Express L.L.C. MOTION CARRIED.

Backman stated that from the original \$25,000 received from Southwest Initiative Foundation, \$6,500 has been committed to businesses that represent a total of 20 jobs.

Connie Schmoll reported she received a call today from K-Traps, which is considering paying off its Revolving Loan Fund loan with the EDC. The \$20,000 loan was originally given in July 2019 and was for five years.

Backman informed the committee the EDC is working on its 2021 budget and has started discussions with Mid-Minnesota Development Commission (MMDC) about MMDC taking over the SCORE counseling. Schmoll provided information on the SCORE program, which is typically done by volunteers.

Les Nelson reported the federal Economic Development Administration offered MMDC funds of approximately \$875,000 to start a new Revolving Loan Fund for the region covering 4 counties and 40 cities. The MMDC will have two years to get the program started. It also received an invitation to accept a \$400,000 grant with no local match requirement. These programs are mainly in response to COVID-19 recovery efforts. Nelson believes MMDC will hire two staff to provide technical assistance. Nelson also announced the MMDC will be moving its offices to the third floor of the Administration Building at MinnWest Technology Campus, possibly in August. Recently hired

was Justice Walker as the new planner; he will assist the city of Willmar with updating its comprehensive plan.

Backman announced JC Penneys in Willmar will be closing. The EDC was contacted by the hair salon employees about possibly starting their own salon.

Spicer Castle was demolished and there is interest by the new owners, Diane Buzzeo and partner, in building at least 12 high-end condominiums.

Committee members indicated when their banks may reopen to the public. Dalton stated United Minnesota Bank reopened yesterday and Jeff Welker indicated Lake Region Bank may reopen next week. Jones stated Heritage Bank is being cautious on its reopening due to the Pennock branch having been exposed to the virus.

ADJOURNMENT—There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 12:38 p.m.

NEXT MEETING—The next special committee meeting is tentatively set for **11 a.m., Tuesday, June 16, 2020** via teleconference.