

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

MINUTES

July 21, 2016

Christianson & Associates, PLLP, Willmar

Present: Arvind Auluck-Wilson, Rollie Boll, Ian Graue, Kevin Halvorson, Dustin Kotrba, Kim Larson, Dan Lippert, Bruce Reuss and Dan Tepfer

Absent: Jon Folkedahl, John Duevel, Larry Konsterlie and Keith Poier

Guest: Lyn Zeppelin, Vice President/Business Banker (Commercial Ag Lender), United Prairie Bank, Spicer

Staff: Connie Schmoll, Business Development Specialist

Secretarial: Diane Beck, Legal & Administrative Assistants, Inc.

Chairperson Ian Graue called the meeting to order at approximately 7:33 a.m. The agenda was approved as emailed.

MINUTES

IT WAS MOVED BY Rollie Boll, SECONDED BY Kevin Halvorson, to approve the minutes of the June 16, 2016 meeting as emailed. MOTION CARRIED.

REPORTS

Ag Investment Planning Subcommittee. Connie Schmoll provided an update of the Angel Investment Fund group. Schmoll attends meetings and conducts scheduling of members and sharing of pertinent information with members. Steven Mercil of Angel Capital Group is leading the group through Phase I to design the group/fund. There are currently 13 members who have made an initial investment of \$1,000 each. Members will purchase at least two shares each at \$25,000 which will be pulled in as investments are made. The Fund will be a minimum of \$1 million. At their June 20, 2016 meeting, the group voted on an official name for the investment group: West Central Angel Fund, I.

Dan Tepfer inquired about phases and structure. Schmoll commented members are accredited angel investors and membership is not open to the general public. Schmoll commented the Angel Capital Group may bring in projects from a larger radius while prioritizing local projects. Investors will make decisions as a group and members will also have the opportunity to invest individually in a project. The Ag Committee complimented Schmoll, Tepfer and the Ag Investment Subcommittee for spearheading the successful formation of the West Central Angel Fund I.

Ag BRE Survey Subcommittee. Schmoll reported the subcommittee will be meeting on August 1, 2016 and she will provide an update at the next Ag Committee meeting. The plan is to conduct an Ag Producers' Survey in January and February 2017 with pre-work to begin in August 2016.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

2016 Ag goals. Schmoll shared the reprioritized 2016 Ag Goals from the June 16, 2016 meeting (see attached). The goals will also move into 2017.

Group A:

Goal 1, d. Bring at least one agriculture or renewable energy-related project to the investment group for consideration by December 31, 2016. Schmoll shared she has met with a potential business prospect. The company is working on a concept; she suggested inviting this company to a future Ag Committee meeting to present their concept.

Goal 2. Plan for a 2017 Ag Producers' Survey. Arvind Auluck-Wilson inquired if the University of Minnesota will be assisting with the survey. Schmoll reported the University of Minnesota does not have the survey that was used in 2005 and the cost would be approximately \$12,000 plus the cost to create our survey in their system. Jim Molenaar has offered to assist with the survey using his software at a cost of \$3,500.

Goal 3. Support and conduct ag education including developing a public relations strategy. Chair Graue inquired if college students could write ag-related blogs to help promote the sharing of agriculture information. Dan Lippert distributed a Ridgewater Ag Reunion & Alumni Kickoff brochure (see attached). The event will be held on Friday, August 19, 2016. Schmoll will send the brochure to EDC Constant Contact groups. Lippert commented it may be a good opportunity for the Ag Committee to build a network to aide with sharing of agriculture information. Ag Committee members felt this would be an excellent opportunity and would support the EDC sponsorship at the \$250 level which includes two dinner tickets.

IT WAS MOVED BY Bruce Reuss, SECONDED BY Kim Laron, that the EDC support a silver sponsorship at a cost of \$250 for the Ridgewater Ag Reunion & Alumni Kickoff on Friday, August 19, 2106. MOTION CARRIED.

Auluck-Wilson suggested Aaron Backman as a speaker; Schmoll will ask Backman if he can attend. He also inquired if agriculture information could be shared via social media, i.e., Facebook and Graue inquired if the EDC's website could be used for posting agriculture blogs. Schmoll responded this may be possible. Tepfer inquired if the Ag Committee could work with the West Central Ag Sales Association. Tepfer and Boll will share the idea at the next West Central Ag Sales Association meeting in July or August. Larson shared Kelly Bolden of West Central Tribune is willing to print newsworthy agriculture articles and thanked Carolyn Lange for attending today's meeting. Schmoll reported she will attend the 2017 Farm Fest in August and encouraged Ag Committee members to attend. She will email the brochure to Ag Committee members. She also suggested the Ag Committee discuss the possibility of staffing a booth at the 2017 Farm Fest.

Goal 4. Assist with deployment of broadband into rural unserved areas of Kandiyohi County.

Schmoll reported 377 broadband surveys were conducted during the month of July and the preliminary report showed 82% of those surveyed support a Border to Border grant application for a deployment project in Kandiyohi County.

Group B.

1. **Support development of additional sources and uses for area food products.** Boll expressed his concern of the slow-moving process for the Food Hub located in the Historic 313 on Fourth Street.

Schmoll will place the 2016 Goals on the Ag Committee agenda every two months.

NEW BUSINESS

Animal Science Conference. Schmoll shared the Animal Science Conference will be held on September 20, 2016; the planning group will meet following the Ag Committee meeting. Schmoll will send the conference link to Ag Committee members.

Community happenings in agriculture/renewable energy. Graue shared past issues of the Bio Cycle magazine with Ag Committee members. Boll shared the Kandiyohi County Fair will be held August 10-13, 2016. There is a new structure for housing sheep. Auluck-Wilson shared Great River Energy will close one of its coal-fired plants in North Dakota. Schmoll reminded committee members that Dana Anderson will give a presentation on training and franchise opportunities with Living Green Farms at the August 18, 2016 meeting.

ADJOURNMENT—There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:35 a.m.

NEXT MEETING— The next regular meeting is **7:30 a.m., Thursday, August 18, 2016**, at Christianson & Associates, PLLP, Willmar.

Agriculture and Renewable Energy Development Committee

Mission

To sustain, identify and develop agriculture, agribusiness and renewable energy opportunities

Overall Goal of the Agriculture and Renewable Energy Committee

Target activities that leverage Kandiyohi County's assets in agriculture, with a special emphasis on Ag business, manufacturing, bioscience, technology, energy and research.

GROUP A:

1. Establish an ag investment group
 - a. Secure a minimum of 8 investors to lead the charge for a larger group by June 1, 2016.
 - b. Establish a fund by December 31, 2016 with a minimum of \$1MM for projects.
 - c. Attend at least two Community Venture Network meetings to seek economic development projects for Kandiyohi County.
 - d. Bring at least one agriculture or renewable energy related project to the investment group for consideration by December 31, 2016.
2. Plan for a 2017 Ag Producers Survey
 - a. Develop a timeline and select interview tools by October 31, 2016.
 - b. By December 2016, secure the funding needed to complete the project.
 - c. Secure at least 20 volunteers by December 31, 2016, to assist with interviews.
3. Support and conduct ag education including developing a public relations strategy
 - a. Participate in the 2016 Animal Science Conference with a booth and exhibit to showcase agriculture and renewable energy in Kandiyohi County.
 - b. Attend Farm Fest 2016 in August to determine if there is opportunity to share and plan for a booth at the 2017 Farm Fest Show.
 - c. Network with and assist ag interest groups, such as the Minnesota Dairy Association, Corn Growers, Clean Energy Resource Teams, the PACE program.
4. Assist with deployment of broadband into rural unserved areas of Kandiyohi County
 - a. Complete the Kandiyohi County Broadband Feasibility Study by August 15, 2016.
 - b. Identify specific needs for broadband access and speed including current and future communication needs for list to include in grant application by September 30, 2016.
 - c. Identify and apply for at least one source of funding in 2016 to proceed with implementation of broadband in Kandiyohi County in 2017.
 - d. Secure partnership with one or more broadband provider(s) to move forward with broadband network deployment in Kandiyohi County.

GROUP B:

1. Support development of additional sources and uses for area food products
 - a. Submit at least one reference letter to support funding requests for Historic 313's Food Hub by December 31, 2016.
 - b. Follow-up with grant application made to USDA to assess if further reference support is needed by October 2016.

2. 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
 - a. Support MCROC and its work on turkey research.
 - b. Make at least one connection with University of Minnesota Turkey Research representative by September 30, 2016.
 - c. Continue to monitor progress of the Dairy Facility.

Support RC &
 ag alumni!!!



Ridgewater Ag Reunion & Alumni Kickoff!

Friday, August 19, 2016

**Willmar Conference Center
 240 23rd St., Willmar, MN 56201**

BE A SPONSOR!

Support Ridgewater for a fun evening with agriculture colleagues, alumni, and past/present faculty. Help launch the Ridgewater Ag Alumni group, celebrate Jere Rambow's retirement, and participate in the PAS ag student silent auction fundraiser!

- 5:00-6:30 Optional Ag Department tour on campus
- 6:30-8:00 Reunion social and dinner
- 8:00-12:00 Brief program, socializing and FUN!

Register by August 8 with this form.

More Info: www.ridgewater.edu/agreunion



Commit and register by August 8

EXCLUSIVE DIAMOND SPONSORSHIP

\$2,500

- Signage on the buffet serving table and on each guest table
- Recognition at event and in event program
- Designated table and dinner tickets for 8 (\$200 value)
- Banner/signage at all Ag Department events on campus in 2016-17 (Field Day, Career Day, etc.)
- Promotion in all Ag Department publications or press releases
- Recognition including name and logo in Ag Department newsletter (twice per year)
- Recognition on Ag Department web page(s), including Facebook

PLATINUM SPONSORSHIP

\$1,000

- Signage on silent auction table(s)
- Recognition at event and in event program
- Designated table and dinner tickets for 8 (\$200 value)
- Banner/signage at all Ag Department events on campus in 2016-17 (Field Day, Career Day, etc.)
- Promotion in all of our Ag Department publications or press releases
- Recognition including name and logo in Ag Department newsletter (twice per year)
- Recognition on Ag Department web page(s), including Facebook

GOLD SPONSORSHIP

\$500

- Dinner tickets for 4 (\$100 value)
- Recognition at Ag Reunion event and in event program
- Banner/signage at all Ag Department events on campus in 2016-17 (Field Day, Career Day, etc.)
- Promotion in all of Ag Department publications or press releases
- Recognition including name and logo in Ag Department newsletter (twice per year)
- Recognition on Ag Department web page(s), including Facebook

SILVER SPONSORSHIP

\$250

- Dinner tickets for 2 (\$50 value)
- Recognition at Ag Reunion event and in event program
- Promotion in all of our Ag Department publications or press releases
- Recognition including name and logo in Ag Department newsletter (twice per year) press releases

BRONZE SPONSORSHIP

\$100

- Recognition at Ag Reunion event and in event program
- Recognition on Ag Department web page(s), including Facebook

Commitment form on back

Ridgewater Ag Reunion & Alumni Kickoff, Fri., August 19

Yes, I Will Be a Sponsor!

(Sponsorship details on front page)

Diamond \$2,500
 Platinum \$1,000
 Gold \$500

Silver \$300
 Bronze \$100

Contact Person: _____

Phone: _____

Company Name: _____

Cell: _____

Email Address: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Sponsor Guests *All sponsorships (except Bronze) include dinner tickets. Please indicate attendee names.*

Names _____

Names _____

Names _____

Names _____

(If you do not know the names of your guests at this time, please email them prior to August 8 to kim.tensen@ridgewater.edu)

Additional Guests

If you are interested in attending this event but do not desire to sponsor it, please go the Ridgewater website at www.ridgewater.edu/agreunion to register online or to print and submit your registration form.

Payment Options

TOTAL FEES: Sponsorship Support \$ _____
Donation to Ag (We support you!) \$ _____ TOTAL DUE: \$ _____

Please Invoice Me

I want to pay by credit card

Visa

MasterCard

Credit Card #: _____ Expiration Date: _____ Back CSV Code _____

Cardholder Address: _____

Cardholder Signature: _____

Enclosed is my check payable to Ridgewater College Foundation (check # _____) Add Memo: "Ag Alumni"

I am unable to attend, but am enclosing my donation of \$ _____ payable to Ridgewater College Foundation (check # _____) Add Memo: "Ag Alumni"



Return form
by August 8 to:

Kim Tensen
Ridgewater College
2101 15th Ave NW
Willmar, MN 56201

Phone: 320-222-7606
Fax: 320-222-5275
kim.tensen@ridgewater.edu

Commit your support and register by August 8!

From: Connie Schmoll [mailto:connie@Kandiyohi.com]
Sent: Wednesday, May 25, 2016 2:36 PM
To: Bruce Peterson <bpeterson@willmarmn.gov>; Jim Gauer <jgauer@willmarmn.gov>
Subject: EcoEngineers Proposal

Good afternoon Bruce and Jim,

Eco Engineers is proposing to provide a study of our area to determine if there is sufficient need, feedstock and interest to pursue a production facility to turn waste into biogas. EcoEngineers is interested in providing a study, however, if there is sufficient local interest and support, a formal request for proposals would be issued to obtain competitive bids for the work.

As it states in the proposal, the EDC's Agriculture and Renewable Energy Committee is dedicated to the development of sustainable and renewable energy resources in the community and that includes using waste and other feedstock, if levels are sufficient, to create biogenic natural gas. Our interest can lead to such development only if the area agencies/facilities producing such waste have a need and interest as well and are willing to help fund the study. In order to help determine need and interest, please let me know your thoughts about the following:

1. Are there existing challenges in Willmar, for instance with the wastewater treatment facility, that would warrant the need for such a study?
2. What challenges facing the City of Willmar and the waste water treatment plant might be resolved with a study and a follow-up plan?
3. Are there currently any other studies taking place or that have been done recently, that would reduce or void the need for a comprehensive biogas feasibility study?
4. What level of investment would the City of Willmar make to have such a study completed?
5. Which other services/facilities in Kandiyohi County do you feel would benefit from such a study and why?

Thank you for taking some time to contemplate these questions. I will be providing the responses to the EDC's Agriculture and Renewable Energy Committee Members in June. Please let me know if you need further information.

Connie

Connie Schmoll
Kandiyohi County & City of Willmar Economic Development Commission

Connie,

I spoke with Jim Gauer and, together, we answered your questions. Before I list the answers it is important to know that the City has had similar contacts in the past and has treated them warily. Too often, companies look to cities in situations like this to finance their due-diligence. Our concise answers to the questions are:

1. The logistics and costs of bio-solids disposal.
2. Reducing disposal costs for bio-solids.
3. No.
4. There has been nothing budgeted for such a study. If the company can provide examples of success in other communities, staff could bring the idea to the Council to consider special funding.
5. Kandiyohi County landfill, major ag-waste producers.

Please let me know if you have further questions.

Bruce