

**KANDIYOHI COUNTY AND CITY OF WILLMAR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION (EDC)
JOINT OPERATIONS BOARD OF DIRECTORS (OB) MEETING
MINUTES
October 8, 2020
Via ZOOM Video Conference**

Present: Art Benson, Rollie Boll, Donna Boonstra, Jesse Gislason and Les Heitke

Excused: Kerry Johnson and Kelly TerWisscha

Ex Officio: Julie Asmus and Dave Ramstad

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

Media: Shelby Lindrud, West Central Tribune; and Macklin Caruso, Lakes Area Review

Secretarial: Nancy Birkeland, Legal & Administrative Assistants, Inc. (LAA)

Treasurer Rollie Boll called the meeting to order at approximately 11:00 a.m.

AGENDA—

IT WAS MOVED BY Jesse Gislason, SECONDED BY Art Benson, to approve the Agenda as emailed. MOTION CARRIED.

Treasurer Boll stated the Broadband Committee minutes to accept are dated September 14 rather than August 3, 2020.

IT WAS MOVED BY Art Benson, SECONDED BY Donna boonstra, to approve the following Consent Agenda with the date correction to the Broadband Committee Minutes. MOTION CARRIED.

CONSENT AGENDA

- Approve:
1. Minutes of September 10, 2020 meeting
 2. Financial reports as of September 30, 2020
 3. Payment of Invoice No. 20-195-2.5 from Achieve TFC for \$1,202.50 from the CPR Grant Program
 4. Approve committee additions and resignations:
 - a. Add Sonja Bogart to the Broadband and Advanced Technology Committee

- b. Remove Shari Courtney from the Marketing and Public Relations Committee and Jeff Welker from the Finance Committee

Accept: Committee/Subcommittee Minutes

1. Agriculture and Renewable Energy Development 8/20/2020
2. Broadband and Advanced Technology 9/14/2020
3. Business Retention and Expansion/Recruitment 7/10/2020
4. Finance 8/18, 8/25, 9/1 and 9/9/2020
5. Marketing and Public Relations 6/22/2020

Aaron Backman recognized the committee members, who are being removed from committees. It was the consensus of the board to send a thank you card to Jeff Welker for his years of service to the EDC.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Update on COVID-19 Response. Backman reported the EDC’s Finance Committee has held 23 meetings in the past 20 weeks.

COVID-19 Business Assistance Loan (COBAL) Program. Backman reported \$127,500 (85% of goal) has been lent under the COBAL Program to date. The program has slowed down with one loan being closed in each of the following months: July, August and September. Backman suggested the program be extended through the end of November as some businesses do not qualify under the CPR Grant Program.

IT WAS MOVED BY Art Benson, SECONDED BY Donna Boonstra, to approve extending the COVID-19 Business Assistance Loan Program to the end of November 2020. MOTION CARRIED.

CARES Pandemic Relief (CPR) Grant Program. Backman reported since the CPR Grant Program was established on July 28, 2020, 238 applications have been received from 203 businesses and 35 nonprofits organizations. The Kandiyohi County Board of Commissioners has approved 156 of those grants to date. Backman reported the County Board approved the transfer of another \$500,000 to the EDC increasing the total funds received to date to \$3,000,558.53, which includes interest on the Jumbo savings account.

Schmoll shared a summary of the eligible applications approved by the County Board to date (see attached).

Backman reported the Small Business/Nonprofit Planning Team approved changing the eligibility for small businesses to include those that show a 20% loss in the first part of 2020 (previously was a 25% loss). Five businesses that were deemed ineligible now qualify for the program. A press release will be distributed today announcing the change.

NEW BUSINESS

Certificate of Deposit at United Prairie Bank. Backman reported a Certificate of Deposit at United Prairie Bank is maturing and recommends the Certificate be renewed. The amount of the Certificate, including interest, is \$109,619.23.

IT WAS MOVED BY Donna Boonstra, SECONDED BY Jesse Gislason, to renew Certificate of Deposit No. XXX4720 for 12 months at United Prairie Bank in the amount of \$109,619.23. MOTION CARRIED.

PROGRESS REPORTS

Willmar/Willmar Industrial Park. Backman reported the City of Willmar approved the sanitary sewer main extension to Epitopix with a preliminary budget of just under \$1.6 million; the city received \$1.3 million from an Innovative Business Development Public Infrastructure grant the EDC submitted. Epitopix wants to annex another adjacent parcel into the City of Willmar that would need to be rezoned from ag to industrial. The city received approval from BNSF to cross under the Wye; construction of the Highway 12 portion of the Wye project has progressed this summer. Also, Innovative Systems that is currently located on Highway 71 North near Sunray has purchased the Trouw Nutrition facility and will relocate there.

Dave Ramstad reported his office is working on the Heritage District designation in the Renaissance Zone of the Central Business District. They are also working on an RFP for a small hotel to be located in the Renaissance Zone to connect to the hospital by a skyway; working with Mid-Minnesota Development Commission (MMDC) on the comprehensive plan and a task force to be formed in December; received contact from a couple of developers that have shown interest in the Renaissance Zone; and working with the city attorney and planner to cleanup a composite zoning book. He has included in his 2021 budget software for the city planner that includes a GIS package and for a hub website that will allow interaction between others.

Backman noted Ridgewater College is selling 1.6 acres of surplus property that is being made available first to units of government at the appraised value of \$60,000. The City of Willmar has determined it does not have a use for the property. Backman suggested the EDC could purchase the property and resell it to a developer, possibly for multi-family residential or mixed use. He believes the EDC could put stipulations on how the property is developed and work with the City of Willmar on what would be an appropriate use for the property. Backman noted the Joint Powers Board would have final approval on any purchase. Discussion was held on possible uses for the property, which included a convenience store. Ramstad noted the property is currently zoned for multi-family residential.

IT WAS MOVED BY Les Heitke, SECONDED BY Donna Boonstra, to recommend to the Joint Powers Board that the Kandiyohi County and City of Willmar Economic

Development Commission purchase 1.6 acres of surplus property from Ridgewater College for resale. MOTION CARRIED.

Backman was asked to inform the two board members who are missing from today's meeting.

Agricultural Innovation. Schmoll reported the EDC Ag Committee's Marketing and Event Planning Subcommittee is planning a biofuels virtual conference with Christianson PLLP for January 27 or 28, 2021. The subcommittee is also working on updating the EDC's ag flyer and the Industrial Hemp Subcommittee has decided to meet quarterly.

Broadband. Schmoll reported the Broadband and Advanced Technology Committee has been busy and is in contact with Federated Telephone Cooperative, which is interested in doing a project in the townships of Mamre, Dovre and St. Johns and will contribute 25% to the project. The committee has requested the County Board use CARES Act funds to update the feasibility study that was previously done and to market the Minnesota Speed Test Initiative. Schmoll encouraged the board to take the speed test at <http://mnruralbroadbandcoalition.com/speedtest> as the more people who do the test, the stronger the county's border-to-border grant application will be. The committee also sent a letter to local candidates informing them of the committee and the work it has done.

What's Up? Board members gave updates. Boonstra reported the Highway 23 Coalition board met last week and will be working with MMDC on obtaining a count of how many agricultural vehicles travel Highway 23 and looking for funding for its priority projects. Julie Asmus reported discussion continues on the Willmar city hall/community center; the council will discuss the potential JC Penney location at Uptown Willmar at its October 19th meeting.

NEXT MEETING—The next regular board meeting is **11:00 a.m., Thursday, November 12, 2020** via ZOOM video conference.

ADJOURNMENT—The meeting was adjourned at approximately 12:07 p.m.

Art Benson, Secretary

APPROVED: 11/12/2020:

Kelly TerWisscha, President

9.30.2020 Summary of EDC Approved Applications

Businesses

156 businesses

87 or 56% Willmar - other: New London-18, Spicer- 17, Atwater-3, Pennock-2, Kandiyohi-1, Lake Lillian-1, Raymond-1, Sunburg-1

25 township applications: Dovre- 7, New London-5, Burbank-2, Willmar-2, Colfax-1, Edwards-1, Genessee-1, Holland-1, Irving-1, Kandiyohi-1, Lake Elizabeth-1, Mamre-1, Roseland-1

Diverse Businesses: 29 or 18.6% East African-13, Asian-12, Latino-4,

Average years in business: 15 (14.79)

711 FTE jobs – average per business: 4.5

Average loss: 61%

Average grant: \$9,878

Business Types:

30	Barber/Salon/Nails/Massage
25	Restaurant/Cafe/Bar/Grocery/Catering
20	Retail
20	Health, i.e.: Dental/Eye care/Chiropractic/Fitness
16	Service, i.e.: Staffing/Photography/Interior Design, etc.
15	Construction/Manufacturing
7	Media/Printing
6	Hotel
5	Auto Sales/Service
5	Entertainment
4	Transportation/Logistics
3	Childcare

Nonprofits

30 Nonprofits

22 or 73% Willmar - other: Atwater-1, New London-4, Spicer-1, Lake Andrew Township- 1, Dovre Township-1

235 FTE jobs – average per nonprofit: 8

Average loss: 38%

Average grant: \$27,933

Mission:

Arts, Recreation, Education and Other-16 (\$5,000 mission award)

Social Services-10 (\$12,500 mission award)

Mix of Social Services and Other-4 (\$8,000-\$10,000 mission award)

Healthcare-0 (\$7,500 mission award)