

KANDIYOHI COUNTY AND CITY OF WILLMAR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION (EDC)
JOINT OPERATIONS BOARD OF DIRECTORS (OB)

MINUTES

July 13, 2023

Community Room, Heritage Bank, N.A., Willmar and Via ZOOM Video Conference

Present: Art Benson, Jesse Gislason, Les Heitke, Noah Hultgren, Kelly TerWisscha and Mary Warszynski

Absent: Abdulcadir Gaal

Ex Officio: Steve Gardner

Staff: Aaron Backman, Executive Director; Sarah Swedburg, Business Development Manager (via Zoom) and Kelsey Olson, Marketing & Communications Specialist

Guest: John Harren, Willmar Municipal Utilities

Media: Jennifer Kotila, West Central Tribune

Secretarial: Cathy Skindelien, Legal & Administrative Assistants, Inc.

Chairperson Art Benson called the meeting to order at approximately 11:04 a.m. and declared a quorum was present.

AGENDA—

IT WAS MOVED BY Mary Warszynski, SECONDED BY Jesse Gislason, to approve the Agenda as presented and the following Consent Agenda:

CONSENT AGENDA

- Approve:
1. Minutes of June 8, 2023
 2. Financial reports as of June 30, 2023
 3. Payment of Invoice No. 0000004 from Fatouma Hachim in the amount of \$2,816 from the Elevate Community Business Academy Professional Services/Program Instructor line of the budget
 4. Approve payments under the Child Care Economic Development Grant Program for 29 Forgivable Loan Agreements with the individuals/entities noted on the list provided (see attached)

- Accept: Committee/Subcommittee Minutes
1. Broadband and Advanced Technology 6/5/2023
 2. Finance 5/9/2023

MOTION CARRIED.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Childcare Position with United Community Action Partnership (UCAP). Aaron Backman reported plans for a shared UCAP childcare community coordinator are progressing, with subsequent meetings resulting in a revised job description (see attached). The proposal will go to the Joint Powers Board for approval at its next meeting. The candidate will be employed 100% by UCAP, with the EDC contracted to cover 40% of the cost. Three days per week will be spent at UCAP and two days at the EDC. The essential job functions include working directly with providers at a community level, managing childcare grants, maintaining program development, facilitating partnerships in childcare, removing barriers to childcare providers and helping coordinate the Rural Childcare Innovation Program. This is a unique position that does not exist elsewhere in the state. After 18 months the position will be assessed. A memorandum of understanding will be drafted in time for the Joint Powers Board meeting. UCAP will handle the hiring process and has identified one potential candidate. The position will eliminate duplication of effort to help support removal of barriers for child care providers at a community level.

Willmar Municipal Utilities (WMU) Update. John Harren, General Manager of Willmar Municipal Utilities, reported on four items of interest: the water treatment plant, plant demolition, new building plans and energy rates.

Water Treatment Plant. Willmar has two water treatment plants, one located on Willmar Avenue in southeast Willmar and the other on Lakeland Avenue in northeast Willmar. The Lakeland plant is converting to biological treatment, which will result in fewer chemicals in the water. The project is behind due to supply-chain issues and will be completed by the end of the year with full implementation by mid-2024, as the cutover needs to occur during off-peak season. Once implementation is complete, water capacity will increase by 500 gallons per minute, making this the largest water treatment project in 30 years, at a cost of just under \$19 million. With the anticipated growth of Willmar taken into consideration, water capacity is sufficient without additional water towers. A water transmission line running from the Lakeland plant to the Willmar Avenue plant will cost approximately \$8 million. Applications for grants for this project have been unsuccessful.

Power Plant Demolition. The old power plant has been demolished within its budget of \$5 million, \$2.25 million of which was spent on asbestos and environmental cleanup. Curb, gutter and sidewalks have been poured. A new substation between the power plant site and the railroad tracks houses all the controls, power lines and feeder cables that were inside the power plant. A well previously housed in the old power plant will be used for haulers to provide bulk water, with a buying station and card system installed. A stormwater pond will be located on the old coal yard site.

New Building Plans. In 2010 the Utilities Commission initiated a study to look at a new building for WMU. Higher priorities led to a delay, with \$20 million being spent on system reliability. The new facility project is ready to move forward. Criteria for site selection has been developed. Because the plant runs 24 hours per day, 7 days per week, residential areas will be avoided. Access to a main thoroughfare is a consideration and 8-10 acres will be necessary for future expansion. If the

site chosen is larger than 10 acres a solar farm could be added. The cost of the project will be \$16 million, with 80% already set aside for this purpose.

Rates. The City of Willmar's water main system is aged and in need of modeling updates. WMU is working with the city to identify priorities and a final plan was presented at Monday's City Council meeting. Water main replacement will cost \$1.5 million per year with \$1.2 million built into the rates, for a deficit of \$300,000. A rate increase will be addressed to cover the difference.

Harren was asked the following questions:

- Is WMU able to cover the electrical need in Willmar?
The transmission grid is complicated. Renewables in the manner they are being promoted are creating concern. Willmar was very close to a rolling blackout last winter, when the temperatures were well below average and the wind died down. Coal and gas usage was transitioning to wind and solar sources, and couldn't get ramped up again to cover demand. WMU issued an alert, and to the community's credit, usage dropped almost a full megawatt instantly, avoiding a blackout.
- What is being done to add capacity?
The Commission has studied the addition of generation using payments from the Midcontinent Independent System Operation (MISO) Market. Eleven megawatts will be added to the 12 megawatt generation currently available. MISO is looking to bring in quick start resources, such as diesel generators. The diesel will be contracted with Dooley's Petroleum.
- Do we have enough transmission in town?
This has to do with the grid as a whole. Locally we have enough reserve margin in the system to add 5-6 megawatts without an issue.
- Who are the partners in Missouri River Energy Service?
Missouri River represents Willmar and approximately 60 other communities, including Marshall, Alexandria, Benson, Melrose, Sauk Centre and Hutchinson.
- Is there progress on the clean energy mandate?
WMU is in a very good position with 93% carbon-free power. The mandate requires 100% carbon-free power by 2040. Renewable energy credits can be purchased to offset carbon production.
- How are the wind turbines working?
WMU's wind turbines are 14 years old with a life expectancy of 20 years. They haven't been running a lot in the past year. The turbines are the only two left in the United States that are manufactured by DeWind Company, making replacement parts extremely difficult to obtain. Wind turbines should generate eight million kilowatts per year, and this year only one million kilowatts will be produced.
- What are long-term plans for renewable energy?
WMU partnered with Missouri River to get competitive wholesale pricing. Through Missouri River a 1-megawatt solar farm is being built 60 miles south of Willmar, helping to put WMU on a path to meet the renewable mandate by the deadline of 2030.

[John Harren was excused from the meeting.]

NEW BUSINESS

Closed Session for EDC Parcel Negotiations and Office Space Discussion.

[Shelby Lindrud was excused for a closed session of the board.]

EDC Parcel Negotiations. Backman requested discussion in regard to offering the EDC property located near Ridgewater College for sale to a housing developer. The property is two acres and was purchased for \$62,000 in 2021 for the promotion of commercial development, however no opportunities have arisen as of yet. The developer, who specializes in twin homes, will visit Willmar on July 21, 2023. Board consensus was to allow the site developer to explore purchasing the property.

Office Space Discussion. Backman reported the cost of renting the EDC office space will increase significantly after completion of the lease in November, 2024. The current space totals 1,500 square feet and is no longer sufficient. Two alternative locations are being considered: One office location with 2,840 square feet, and another with 2,900 +/- square feet of space. Partnership with other co-located tenants, such as Ridgewater College, the Latino Economic Development Center and the Willmar Lakes Area Convention & Visitors Bureau, was discussed. A suggestion was made to check into early release from the lease with the Elks. More information will be gathered regarding a timeline, solidifying partnerships and the cost of the alternatives.

Closed Session for Annual Review of Executive Director. Six out of 13 board members completed the confidential review form, a compilation of which was reviewed with Backman by Joint Powers Board Chair Julie Asmus and President Benson.

[All staff was excused for a closed session of the board.]

IT WAS MOVED BY Mary Warszynski,, SECONDED BY Noah Hultgren, to reopen the meeting. MOTION CARRIED.

The meeting was reopened at 1:05 p.m.

IT WAS MOVED BY Kelly TerWisscha, SECONDED BY Les Heitke, to file the annual review of Executive Director Aaron Backman in his personnel file and to recommend to the Kandiyohi County and City of Willmar Economic Development Commission Joint Powers Board that it approve a 3.5% salary increase for the Executive Director in 2024. MOTION CARRIED.

REPORTS

Economic Development Activity. Backman reported Kuepers Inc. will begin its next phase of multi-family housing development south of Walmart. The conditional use permit was approved at the planning commission meeting held on June 7, 2023, as well as approval for a minor subdivision consisting of two buildings with 36 units in each. The purchase agreement is in place for MB Rail

and the Willmar City Council approved the City of Willmar's rebranding project. The National Guard Armory is considering a new location in an area west of County Road 55. There has been an introduction of ordinance to set a public hearing on the Bethesda independent living housing project.

Elevate Community Business Academy. Sarah Swedburg reported the graduation of the spring 2023 cohort was a huge success. She has received seven new inquiries about the fall class, with 25-30 already on the waiting list. Stephanie Lopez will be the lead instructor and the class will be taught exclusively in English. Four information sessions will be held at the EDC office. A maximum of 15 students may be implemented depending on demand, making it more competitive to be accepted in the program. RSVPs will be required for graduation. A summer fellowship is being held for teenage entrepreneurs and the Elevate Community Business Academy will partner with Springboard for the Arts to create a program targeted to artists this fall.

Swedburg noted that there are 50 graduates of the program and she would like to create an advisory committee to brainstorm and assess policy structure. The committee, consisting of approximately 15 graduates in a non-paid capacity, would meet twice a year.

IT WAS MOVED BY Mary Warszynski, SECONDED BY Noah Hultgren, that the Kandiyohi County and City of Willmar Economic Development Commission create an advisory committee to oversee the Elevate Community Business Academy. MOTION CARRIED.

Child Care Economic Development Grant. Swedburg reported the childcare initiative has been going well and the UCAP shared Child Care Community Coordinator position will be a huge help. A mentorship program for childcare providers will be implemented this summer. Forgivable loan checks will be mailed to providers today. The forgivable loan application process was paused in July and will start again in August.

Main Street Economic Revitalization Program. All Main Street Economic Revitalization grant requests require approval from the State of Minnesota, which has caused a delay in disbursements.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Agriculture and Renewable Energy Development. The Partners in Ag Innovation Conference will be held at MinnWest Technology Campus on July 25, 2023. Sponsorships have exceeded expenses this year. The conference is free to attend.

Industrial Hemp Exploratory Subcommittee. The EDC subcommittee has been interacting with a European company on a site for an industrial hemp processing facility. Kandiyohi Power Cooperative is working to ensure there is adequate power supply for the proposed facility. The hemp plots associated with the project are thriving.

Broadband and Advanced Technology. Grants totaling \$21 million have been secured for broadband projects in Kandiyohi County, with Border-to-Border Broadband Development grants

covering Lake Elizabeth, Harrison and East Lake Lillian Townships, and a United States Department of Agriculture ReConnect grant serving parts of Burbank, Irving and Roseville Townships. Federated Telephone Cooperative's (FTC) four-township project in western Kandiyohi County has been initiated. American Rescue Plan Act funds earmarked for broadband must be allocated by December, 2024. New Border-to-Border Broadband Development rules have doubled the maximum project grant level to \$10 million with a 50% local match.

Marketing and Public Relations. Kelsey Olson reported the EDC website is progressing. A renaming exercise was conducted for the EDC and several good names were suggested. Premier Virtual granted a three-month extension and will help with the marketing of career fairs held in that timeframe by recruiting people from Indeed and other areas. Specialized career fairs, including health care in September and manufacturing in October, will be held. A virtual business one-stop shop will take place on August 24, 2023, providing legislative updates, marketing help and workforce support.

Business Retention and Expansion/Recruitment. A quarterly meeting took place on June 7, 2023, where an update was given on the virtual events. Ridgewater College just hired an instructor for its Commercial Driver's License program, which is being upgraded with the help of a \$1.5 million grant from the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development.

Finance. The EDC Finance Committee approved a loan for Paul Swanson of Paul's Tree Work. Southwest Initiative Foundation and Mid Minnesota Development Commission will provide funding as well. Total financing of \$220,000 will be used to purchase equipment.

IT WAS MOVED BY Kelly TerWisscha, SECONDED BY Jesse Gislason, to approve a loan to Paul's Tree Work LLC under the Kandiyohi County and City of Willmar Economic Development Commission's Revolving Loan Fund program in the amount of \$25,269.02 at 6.75% interest with a seven-year amortization and a five-year balloon, contingent upon obtaining additional financing from Lake Region Bank, Southwest Initiative Foundation and Mid-Minnesota Development Commission and obtaining limited personal guarantees by the borrower, and/or his father Kent Swanson and a cousin Wade Wickman, obtaining keyman insurance on the borrower with the EDC as a loss payee, and securing a third security position in all business assets by the filing of a UCC Financing Statement. MOTION CARRIED.

Leisure Travel. The Leisure Travel Committee did not meet in July and is looking forward to Farmfest 2023, which will be held in Redwood Falls, Minnesota on August 1-3, 2023.

WHAT'S UP.

- Warszynski reported the Willmar Lakes Area Chamber of Commerce has hired a new president to replace Ken Warner, who is retiring.
- Heitke noted Heglund Catering is anxious to finish its building. Catering services are already taking place and a ribbon cutting is scheduled for October.
- Hultgren is excited to see all of the broadband activity taking place in his area as part of the four-township project implemented by FTC.

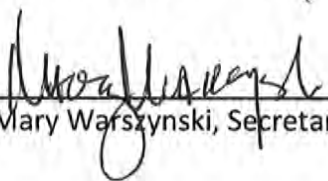
- Backman reported Kandiyohi County was a recipient of a Corridors for Commerce grant for the interchange at Highways 9 and 23 in New London.
- Gardner attended the grand opening of the Family Promise shelter. The facility will house up to nine families. Ten churches partnered in the project.

ADJOURNMENT—There being no other business,

IT WAS MOVED BY Les Heitke, SECONDED BY Noah Hultgren, to adjourn the meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 1:46 p.m.

NEXT MEETING—The next regular board meeting is 11:00 a.m., Thursday, August 10, 2023 at the Community Room of Heritage Bank, Willmar, and via Zoom video conference.



Mary Warszynski, Secretary

APPROVED: 8/10/2023



Art Benson, President



Child Care Economic Development Grant Program

Forgivable Loan Agreement Payments

Loans Approved in June

1	Susan Anderson	\$3,622.50
2	Alexis Collins	\$11,250.00
3	Shawna Fischer	\$9,375.00
4	Pamela Harris	\$1,941.57
5	Angelyn Lindgren	\$6,875.00
6	Britney Lingl	\$6,250.00
7	Michelle Minter	\$6,250.00
8	Chacey Moist	\$9,375.00
9	Hahne Heck DBA Heck's Hideout	\$5,000.00

Total to be disbursed in June **\$59,939.07**

Loans Approved in May

1	Karly Boody DBA KB Kiddie Kare	\$1,736.00
2	Discovery Hill*	\$25,280.45
3	Megan Fladeboe	\$9,375.00
4	Loving Arms*	\$4,952.10
5	Ronda Mundahl	\$3,554.29
6	Nancy Nelson	\$3,979.60
7	Praise and Play*	\$4,952.10
8	Paula Schaeffer	\$5,547.14
9	Nadene Schliep	\$7,811.39
10	Marlene Stark	\$3,058.90
11	Stay 'n Play Child Care, Inc.	\$40,000.00
12	Nicole Van Hauen	\$4,346.98
13	Michelle Weiler	\$6,250.00
14	Susan Yoakum	\$6,146.25

Total disbursed: **\$126,990.20**

* not yet disbursed

Loan Approved in April

1	First Step Family Daycare	\$11,348.57
2	Ashley Klein	\$12,500.00
3	Jacquelyn Larson	\$10,885.00
4	Carly Panek	\$9,235.80
5	Deanna Schueller	\$11,416.30
6	Lindsay Sukalski	\$9,606.56

Total disbursed: **\$64,992.23**

Total Loans Disbursed to Date:

\$251,921.50

Department/Division: Community Family Services
Reports To: Child Care Programs Manager
Supervises: N/A
Status: Regular Full Time
FLSA Status: Non-Exempt
DBM Rating: to be determined



CHILD CARE COMMUNITY COORDINATOR

Job Summary:

As part of the United Community Action Partnership (UCAP) team, all employees work to help us achieve our mission. By working together, we will fulfill the Agency's goals as set forth in our strategic plan. We strive for continuous improvement and are helped along the path through the use of Results Oriented Management and Accountability (ROMA) data system. ROMA helps us in many areas including assessment, planning, implementation, achievement of results, and evaluation. We seek outcomes that align with the national ROMA goals:

1. Individuals and families with low incomes are stable and achieve economic security
2. Communities where people with low incomes live are health and offer economic opportunity
3. People with low incomes are engaged and active in building opportunities in communities

The Child Care Community Coordinator is responsible for supporting community projects related to alleviating the child care availability shortage. This position is a unique partnership between UCAP and the Kandiyohi County & City of Willmar Economic Development Commission (EDC). As such, the Child Care Community Coordinator will contribute to the continued momentum of child care efforts in the community by supporting ongoing program management and evaluation, with support from the EDC. The Coordinator will maintain all required documentation to ensure that proper grant reporting can be completed.

Essential Job Functions

1. **Manage, evaluate, and further develop local community child care grants and the Rural Child Care Innovation Program (RCCIP) goals, plans and activities.**
 - Collection and submission of accurate, regular data and narrative reports
 - Work with partners to coordinate the receipt and distribution of funds
 - Assist the EDC with program management of the Child Care Economic Development Program
 - Provide technical assistance to child care programs looking to access local funds
 - Coordinate with Community Services Director and Child Care Programs Manager
 - Assist the RCCIP team with the implementation of goals and activities
2. **Design and maintain program development and sustainability plans, policies and procedures, as related to child care.**
 - Assist in the creation and implementation of program development plans, sustainability plans and strategic plans in partnership with the EDC

- Cultivate and nurture community relationships, assuring that new or revised policies, plans and procedures are consistent with the Agency’s mission and values
- Oversee, monitor and track expenditures required for each RCCIP goal and/or strategy in coordination with the EDC
- Coordinate with partners pursuing additional grant programs to align with RCCIP goals

3. Assure all necessary documentation is completed accurately.

- Maintain accurate and detailed documentation of activities.
- Complete and submit accurate day sheets, time sheets, mileage, expense claims, out-of-area forms, schedules, calendars, etc. for approval in a timely manner

4. Facilitate partnerships through community outreach

- Coordinate RCCIP Meetings
- Develop outreach needs to support child care programs throughout the UCAP service area
- Build relationship with County licensing staff
- Participate in weekly EDC staff meetings and interact with EDC staff regarding child care priorities and programs
- Establish and maintain effective working relationships with colleagues within other agencies to increase accessibility of services for participants.
- Represent UCAP and the EDC at community functions

5. Attend conferences, meetings & trainings as needed or requested.

- Attend Agency-sponsored orientations and trainings.
- Attend and participate in agency/program meetings as requested
- Attend community task forces, advisory committees and other meetings
- Attend workshops/conferences as requested

6. Support and model UCAP’s Behavioral Competencies

Organizational Success	Making People Matter
Teamwork/Cooperation Commitment to Quality/Process Improvement Creativity/Innovation Flexibility/Adaptability to Change Continuous Learning/Development/Improvement Display Leadership/Initiative/Vision Commitment to Mission, Vision and Agency	Positive Attitude & Professionalism Respect for Others/Interpersonal Skills Support Diversity and Understand Related Issues Honest, Fair & Trustworthy Recognize Others’ Achievements Respect and Value Others’ Perspectives Resolve Conflicts Constructively
Job Effectiveness	Additional Competencies for Supervisors
Planning/Organizational Skills Effective Problem Solving Sound Judgment & Effective Decision Making Productive and Results Oriented Effective Communication Dependable & Responsible Job/Organizational Knowledge Advocate for People we Serve	N/A

Required Knowledge, Skills and Abilities

- Ability to analyze situations and make appropriate decisions
- Demonstrated interpersonal, oral and written communication skills
- Experience or willingness to work in a team setting
- Demonstrate commitment to accountability, measure outcomes and results-oriented culture.
- Time and resource management skills
- Ability to work with a diverse group of people
- Resourcefulness, creativity, and critical thinking skills
- Ability to make community connections
- Public speaking skills
- Ability to recognize and negotiate diverse opinions
- Computer skills, including e-mail, database management, internet use, Word and Excel
- Reliable mode of transportation to and from worksite and the ability to travel
- Reliable, regular attendance
- Must have satisfactory background check

Education and Experience

At least three to five years' work experience in project management or a combination of five years education and/or work experience. Experience with child care and/or in a human service field preferred.

Physical Requirements and Working Conditions

Physical Requirements	Rarely (0-12%)	Occasionally (12-33%)	Frequently (34-66%)	Regularly (67-100%)
Seeing: Must be able to read reports and use computer				X
Hearing: Must be able to hear well enough to communicate with coworkers				X
Standing/Walking		X		
Climbing/Stooping/Kneeling		X		
Lifting/Pulling/Pushing	X			
Fingering/Grasping/Feeling: Must be able to write, type, and use phone system				X

All work will be performed in normal office conditions with light office noise and with the absence of disagreeable elements.

The statements herein are intended to describe the general nature and level of work being performed by employees and are not to be construed as an exhaustive list of responsibilities, duties, and skills required. Furthermore, they do not establish a contract of employment and are subject to change at the discretion of UCAP.

Approved By: Executive Director/Date

Approved By: ADA Compliance/HR Director/Date

Employee Acknowledgement

I have read and understand that this Job Description describes my job duties at UCAP. I have received a copy of this Job Description and understand that it is my responsibility to read and comply with it. I understand that I should contact my direct supervisor with any questions I have about my Job Description.

Date: _____

Employee Signature

Employee's Name (Printed)

