

**KANDIYOHI COUNTY AND CITY OF WILLMAR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION (EDC)
MARKETING AND PUBLIC RELATIONS COMMITTEE
MINUTES
November 27, 2023
Heritage Bank, 310 First Street South, Willmar**

Present: Jesse Gislason, Tiffany Hintz, Emily Lien and Pam Rosenau

Excused: Ben Carlson and Ann Winge Johnson

Guest: Patrick Gilmore, Lunar Media LLC

Staff: Kelsey Olson, Marketing and Communications Specialist

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

Chairperson Pam Rosenau called the meeting to order at approximately 12:01 p.m.

MINUTES—

IT WAS MOVED BY Jesse Gislason, SECONDED BY Emily Lien, to approve the Minutes of the September 25, 2023 meeting as emailed. MOTION CARRIED.

The agenda was taken out of order.

UPDATES—

Committee invites, possible member introductions. Self-introductions were conducted followed by the introduction of Patrick Gilmore, owner of Lunar Media, LLC. He is originally from Benson, Minnesota and is on the board of directors of the Barn Theater. He is interested in community involvement and would like to join this committee.

New name announcement. Kelsey Olson reported the EDC Joint Powers Board unanimously approved the rebranding of the EDC to Kandiyohi County Economic Development. The name will be used publicly for marketing purposes while the legal name of Kandiyohi County and City of Willmar Economic Development Commission will remain.

Website site-map review. Olson reported Aaron Backman approved the site map for the updated website. It will be organized by how the audience identifies itself. Navigation topics will include Future & Present Business Owners, Developers and Site Selectors, Citizens, Community Organizations, Local Elected Officials, About Us and Contact Us. The drop-down menu for each topic will contain the following:

- Future Business Owners
 - Business Plan, Financial Assistance, Marketing and Elevate
- Present Business Owners
 - Financial Assistance, Networking, Marketing, Elevate, Success Stories and Workforce Support
- Developers and Site Selectors
 - Available Sites, Work with Us, What We Offer and Project Highlights
- Citizens

- Success Stories, Housing, Broadband, Childcare, I have a Dream, Job Resources, Education and Moving Here
- Community Organizations
 - Partner with Us, Partnership Examples, Community Resources
- Local Elected Officials
 - Getting Started as a New Electee, Accessing Funds & Education, Stories from your Neighbors, Ongoing Projects and Programs
- About Us
 - What We Do and Staff & EDC Organization
- Contact Us
 - EDC Contact Information

It was suggested to include “I Have a Dream” under the Future Business Owners menu, as well as the Citizens menu. The website will be designed to avoid scroll fatigue. Olson hopes to have the website and rebranding projects completed by the end of the year.

Rebranding update. Olson reported the next steps in the rebranding process will be selecting a logo, colors and updating the branding guide. Use of the Raleway font will be discontinued. Olson requested help from the committee in choosing a replacement.

Hispanic Heritage Month video. Hispanic Heritage Month occurred September 15-October 15, 2023. Southwest Initiative Foundation provided a \$1,500 grant that was used to produce a video by TEN17 Media in partnership with the City of Willmar, Mid-Minnesota Development Commission and Comunidades Latinas Unidas En Servicio. The video celebrates the countries from which Willmar’s Hispanic community originated and the culture, including food, music, working, shopping and events. It invites everyone to celebrate the diversity within our community. There are 64 million Hispanic Americans in the United States, with 310,000 residing in Minnesota, where the population is expected to increase to 550,000 by 2035. Because the video was completed after October 15th, it will be used next year and redone to include educational information.

Winter newsletter. Olson reported the hiring of Tanna Stucky for the Childcare Community Coordinator position shared with United Community Action Partnership. Stucky will be highlighted in the EDC winter newsletter along with childcare success stories. Prairie Woods Environmental Learning Center, Atwater Ford and Peace Lutheran Church have applied for childcare grants, which is a positive step in developing larger centers in the county. The childcare mentorship program will have its first meeting this week, with 10 providers showing interest and 7 committed to becoming mentors. Postcards and magnets will be ordered in support of the program. There is a lack of continuity with county childcare licensors, which poses a problem for new providers. Stucky will work with the county on solutions for the high turnover rate in that position.

Social Media updates. Olson reported the EDC will end its contract with Sprout Social and resume working with Hootsuite, resulting in a savings of over \$1,300 per year. Articles receiving attention included National Entrepreneurial Month and requests for letters of support for broadband.

NEW BUSINESS—

Logo review. The committee reviewed several logos created by Kristen Allen of Greenwater Garage & Gallery and selected a first and second choice. A logo containing four pictures was the first choice, with one of the pictures changed to an image of Minnesota showing the location of Kandiyohi County. The second choice had the Minnesota identifier in a circle with the new name listed on the right. The committee requested a square

version of that option. Olson will get the logos reworked and emailed to the committee prior to the December meeting. Colors were discussed and will be finalized at the December meeting.

Rebranding time-line discussion. Olson will meet with the City of Willmar to explore collaboration efforts on logos and colors. Recommendations for reworking the logos will be given to Greenwater Garage & Gallery so they may be completed by Friday, December 1st. This committee will make its recommendations at the December 11 meeting and the logos will be presented for approval to the EDC Joint Operations Board at its meeting on December 14. Olson will look into a special meeting of the EDC Joint Powers Board the week of December 18 for final approval.

Workforce: Student-centered workforce solutions. To support student-centered workforce solutions, Olson recruited professional volunteers who would be willing to share their careers with students in grades 3 and 5. Teachers of those grades throughout school districts serving Kandiyohi County students were contacted. To conclude this project as directed by EDC leadership, Olson connected professional volunteers with school teachers. The Business Education Network was referenced as another possible area of support.

2024 goal setting. Goal setting for 2024 will take place at the January meeting.

December meeting date. The next committee meeting will take place on December 11 from noon until 1:30 p.m. at the Community Room of Heritage Bank in Willmar. Items on the agenda will include logos, colors, taglines, fonts, branding guide, flyers and anything needed for website completion.

IT WAS MOVED BY Emily Lien, SECONDED BY Pam Rosenau, to recommend to the Kandiyohi County and City of Willmar Economic Development Commission's Joint Operations Board that Patrick Gilmore be added to the Marketing and Public Relations Committee.
MOTION CARRIED.

ADJOURNMENT—There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 1:22 p.m.

NEXT MEETING—The next meeting is **12 noon, Monday, December 11, 2023** in-person at the Community Room, Heritage Bank, Willmar.

New Website Site-Map

