

KANDIYOHI COUNTY AND CITY OF WILLMAR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION (EDC)
 MARKETING AND PUBLIC RELATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING
 MINUTES
 November 27, 2017
 WORKUP, Willmar

Present: Deb Geister, Emily Lien and Brittany VanDerBill

Excused: Donna Boonstra, Shari Courtney, Melissa Knott and Ryan Thielen

Absent: Jean Geselius

Guest: Jayme Sczublewski, REDstar Creative

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

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

Chairperson Deb Geister called the meeting to order at approximately 12:04 p.m.

MINUTES—As a quorum was not present, the October 23, 2017 minutes were received, but not approved.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Social Media Statistics. Jayme Sczublewski showed an overview of the Facebook statistics for the past month. Total fans are 360 (up 2%) compared to last month of 355 and there were 19 posts compared to 20 in the prior month.

Top Posts					
	Post	Reach	Shares	Clicks	Likes
1.	Holidaze 2017 (2,533 post impressions)	1,148	9	78	16
2.	West Central Angel Fund I, LLC (1,569 post impressions)	958	3	41	7
3.	Worried About GMOs?	816	0	4	1
4.	Sixth Annual Veteran Small Business Services Event	450	0	0	1
5.	Small Business Expo by New Business Minnesota	389	0	2	1
6.	Willmar to apply for Small Cities Grant	264	1	8	10
7.	5 th Annual University of Minnesota Showcase	204	1	5	1
8.	MNwest CEO Forum	271	0		2

Emily Lien noted Heritage Bank also posted the West Central Angel Fund (WCAF) article and had a good response. Connie Schmoll reported the WCAF received 30 applications and chose 9 for funding consideration. Schmoll provided information on the criteria for WCAF to consider an application.

Sczublewski noted the EDC's LinkedIn page has 8 followers and asked committee members to please like and share the page. It was noted Schmoll should link her page to the EDC's LinkedIn page.

Fall Digital Newsletter. Backman reported he and Schmoll will be working on newsletter content this week. An article on the Grand Stay Hotel at Little Crow Golf Course will be included. A draft of the newsletter will be emailed to the committee for comments. If the newsletter is not done by the end of this week, it will wait until January. This would only delay the launch of the newsletter by a couple of weeks and allow more promotion time.

Tradeshow Display. The third panel of the new tradeshow display featuring a welder with a theme of growing Industrial Development was shown. In January 2018, Schmoll will attend the MN Ag Expo in Mankato; the cost to be an exhibitor is \$1,000. No decision has been made on having a booth. In February 2018, she will attend the World Ag Expo in California featuring natural food products. The EDC may share a booth with the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development. Schmoll noted dairy processing that expanded in California is starting to return to Minnesota. In October 2017, Schmoll attended the World Dairy Expo in Wisconsin where attendees were interested to learn of Kandiyohi County's ag industry. Schmoll stated the EDC's most popular handout at tradeshows is on the Willmar Industrial Park. Schmoll recommended that handout be updated as some of the lots have since been sold.

NEW BUSINESS

Highway 23 Coalition Website. The committee viewed the Highway 23 Coalition website and suggested the following changes:

Home page

- Change Highway 23 Coalition text to dark blue to match the logo
- Match the background color to the logo as it appears to be more purple
- Add a mission statement (7 to 10 words) to the name box to explain the purpose of the Coalition
- Make the columns Community, Growth and Industry wider so it looks like there is less text
- In the third bullet under Community change 'the interstate' to I-94
- Under Industry, need to add a bullet to the third paragraph
- Move the About Us section to the top of the Board of Directors page or as a separate page with a link at the top of the home page

News

- Correct the page so the words stay under the picture at all times; at present, they disappear if the mouse is not on the picture
- Keep the article teaser to a brief sentence

Members

- all membership levels should be in bold to differentiate between the membership heading and list of members and possibly also add a colon
- make all logos and names of the gold members a link to their websites

Contact Us

- make the blue box even with the white part on the page

Somewhere on the site, possibly under the About Us section, should be a section on “Why Become a Member.” The website needs to be positioned to draw readers in and help them understand why they should join the Coalition. Backman noted two domains were purchased: www.highway23coalition.com (primary) and www.hwy23coalition.com (secondary).

Agriculture and Renewable Energy Development (Ag) Committee Events. Schmoll noted the Ag Committee is trying to address items that arose from the Ag Producer BRE survey. The committee is focusing on holding three mini sessions on: 1) ag technology—soil issues and possibly GMOs; 2) workforce; and 3) the movie Food Evolution. The conferences will be held in 2018, either early morning or late afternoon. Plans are for the conferences to be free to attendees with funding by sponsors. Deb Geister suggested if attendance is an issue, the EDC could do webinars. Webinars would also allow a greater selection of speakers. It was recommended that attendees be required to register to obtain a future marketing list. Ideal length for a webinar is 60-90 minutes with time allowed for questions/answers. Once dates are determined, social media and the newsletter could be used for a Save the Date post followed by posts on the topics. Schmoll will present these ideas to the Ag Marketing Subcommittee for consideration. Geister will provide Schmoll with a planning outline for doing a webinar. Geister uses Zoom for her webinars. Zoom can also be used for chats and online meetings. The cost is fairly inexpensive (\$40 a month for 100 attendees) and can be purchased annually, monthly or per use. Participants can see other attendees, if you choose. A webinar could have co-sponsors and the EDC could share the list of participants with the co-sponsor. In addition, Zoom and other video conferencing services allow recording of the event. Creating a content library can then be added to the EDC website to add value and drive engagement.

Other. Backman informed the committee he will be on vacation from December 6-27, 2017. It was decided that if a meeting is held in December, it will be on December 18.

ADJOURNMENT—There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 1:10 p.m.

NEXT MEETING—The next committee meeting is 12 noon, Monday, December 18, 2017 at WORKUP, 1601 Technology Drive NE, Willmar.