

**KANDIYOHI COUNTY AND CITY OF WILLMAR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION (EDC)  
BROADBAND AND ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE MEETING  
MINUTES  
February 1, 2021  
Via ZOOM Video Conference**

Present: Mark Boesch, Donna Boonstra, Dean Bouta, Bruce DeBlieck, Jason Hulstein, Roger Imdieke, Tony Kirby, Michelle Marotzke, Rollie Nissen, Glenn Otteson, Ramsey Schaffnit and David Sisser

Absent: Sonja Bogart

Staff: Connie Schmoll, Business Development Manager

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

Chairperson Mark Boesch called the meeting to order at approximately 12:01 p.m.

**AGENDA**—Chair Boesch corrected the date of the Minutes to be approved to January 4, 2021 and added under Unfinished Business was the 2020 Border-to-Border Grant.

IT WAS MOVED BY Rollie Nissen, SECONDED BY Donna Boonstra, to approve the revised Agenda. MOTION CARRIED.

**MINUTES**—

IT WAS MOVED BY Dave Sisser, SECONDED BY Roger Imdieke, to approve the Minutes of the January 4, 2021 meeting as emailed. MOTION CARRIED.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

**2020 State Border-to-Border Grant.** Connie Schmoll reported more than \$20 million was awarded through the state Border-to-Border Broadband Development Grant Program to 39 projects, many of which were very small. State grants were matched by more than \$33 million in local funds. One project was larger at \$4.9 million with a local match of \$3.4 million. Schmoll stated it may be good to ask the state if it is wise to ask for a large amount. Nine grants were awarded at 45%, 7 at 40%, 9 at 35% and 9 at 30%. Schmoll will continue to review the data as it will be important for the EDC's grant application next year. Roger Imdieke suggested speaking with Angie Dickinson about the smaller grant applications in 2020. Schmoll stated that if another Kandiyohi County township is added, the total project will be close to \$8 million. It is unknown what funding will be available through the state grant program next year. Michelle Marotzke noted the state education budget will include a substantial amount for broadband and questioned if the legislature will think broadband is already covered or will there be two funding sources to use? Rollie Nissen indicated nothing will be known until May

as to the legislature. Imdieke suggested this committee should be messaging that the education budget not be included with the state grant program. Imdieke believes the education budget will finance devices and hot spots. Chair Boeschen noted Iowa made available \$5 million for its state grant program.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

**Resignation of committee member.** Chair Boeschen announced that Gregg Price resigned from this committee due to a change in his position at CarrisHealth.

IT WAS MOVED BY Michelle Marotzke, SECONDED BY Donna Boonstra, to accept, with regrets, the resignation of Gregg Price. MOTION CARRIED.

**Meeting time change.** Chair Boeschen announced that Larry Kleindl is interested in becoming a member of this committee again, but cannot meet at 12 noon; Chair Boeschen proposed this committee meet at 10:00 a.m. on the first Monday of each month. It was the consensus of the committee to meet at 10:00 a.m. on the first Monday of each month.

**Approve new members.** Chair Boeschen stated two individuals are interested in being on the committee, Tony Kirby, of CarrisHealth, who would replace Gregg Price and Larry Kleindl. Kirby stated he has been with Rice Memorial Hospital, now CarrisHealth/Rice and is a Network Engineer II.

IT WAS MOVED BY Rollie Nissen, SECONDED BY Dean Bouta, to approve Tony Kirby and Larry Kleindl as new members of the Kandiyohi County and City of Willmar Economic Development Commission Broadband and Advanced Technology Committee. MOTION CARRIED.

Schmoll noted the new members will be ratified by the EDC's Joint Operations Board at its meeting on January 11, 2021. Chair Boeschen thanked Gregg Price for his years of service and welcomed the new members.

**Federated Telephone Cooperative Project.** Schmoll reported she has had several conversations with Kevin Beyer of Federated Telephone Cooperative and reviewed the updated study by CNE (see attached). A meeting has been set for February 16, 2021 at 2:30 p.m. following the St. Johns Township meeting for Beyer to meet with the three townships to go over the plan and ensure their interest. Schmoll reported she appeared before the County Board of Commissioners concerning broadband funding and informed them of Federated's interest in contributing 25% of a local project. Schmoll asked the county to support local broadband projects by contributing \$25,000 per township, which the board appeared to be in favor of. Schmoll is working with Kleindl to prepare a resolution to bring to a future County Board meeting. It is estimated that each taxpayer would pay \$2,500 over a 10 year period, which would be added to their taxes. Schmoll spoke with Joel Johnson, who is willing to speak with Mamre Township residents. St. Johns is also willing to speak with its residents. With Dovre Township it will be key to have its residents behind the project; some

portions of Dovre Township may be considered served and will be contested with the state. The costs are based on getting 45% through the state grant program for the unserved and underserved areas. Marotzke spoke of a St. Johns Township resident who is considering moving because of the lack of broadband. Schmoll has asked Dovre Township residents to attend township board meetings to voice their concerns about broadband. Schmoll noted the EDC has received calls following her presentation to the County Board and the subsequent newspaper article. Schmoll stated the survey done by this committee will be extremely important for the project. Schmoll noted that with the state broadband speed test, there is a caveat that those who took the test may be able to subscribe for a higher speed than they currently receive. Chair Boeschon suggested a conversation be held about a 45% state grant versus 50%.

## **SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS**

**Education/Marketing.** Schmoll stated she updated the PowerPoint presentation previously used and suggested it could be further updated. Marotzke will have the subcommittee review the presentation.

**Grant Writing.** Schmoll asked committee members to ask residents in the three townships for letters of support. Schmoll asked Kirby to request letters of support from CarrisHealth employees who may live in the three townships.

**Adoption of Broadband.** Kirby volunteered to be on this subcommittee. Dave Sisser stated he and Jason Hulstein met and talked about having an up-front event and a post event after the state grant is received. The event would be for seniors and ethnic groups and cover what internet can provide, the future of internet, PCs for People and paying for service. They also discussed exploring service providers, plans for those struggling to pay for service, education of what internet speeds can do and what a person can expect from the service they have. Hulstein stated most area schools have provided devices to each student.

## **REPORTS**

**Minnesota Rural Broadband Coalition.** Imdieke reported he attended the January 13<sup>th</sup> Blandin Broadband “Lunch Bunch” session, but was unable to get online for the session on the 21<sup>st</sup>. Chair Boeschon stated he will attend the session on February 17<sup>th</sup>. Marotzke was able to attend the January 21<sup>st</sup> session. The sessions go through July. Schmoll will forward information on the sessions to the committee. Schmoll reported Nathan Zacharias has been lobbying on behalf of the Coalition at the state capitol.

**Other.** Schmoll stated she received contact from Arvig, which is still interested in doing a project in the county; she will continue to have discussions with them on potential projects. Glenn Otteson suggested having a conversation with Holland Township as to a broadband project as he spoke with a communication company that is very interested in doing a project. There is a concern that Frontier has been doing projects around the Prinsburg area and could contest a project. Dean Bouta stated the Prinsburg area is still in need, even after Frontier’s

work. Chair Boeschen stated the Prinsburg area appears to be in the RDOF (Rural Digital Opportunity Fund) auction. It is unknown if LTD moved forward with a formal application following the RDOF auction. Schmoll read an email from Charter thanking the EDC for its letter of support. Charter was not awarded a state grant for New London Township as TDS challenged the application stating it was going to be upgrading its service in that area to 25/3 within 18 months. Schmoll stated concerns about the challenge process by incumbents have been forwarded to legislators. Otteson suggested the concerns be brought to both state and federal legislators. Imdieke questioned if other legislators should be informed. Schmoll stated it will be important to bring concerns to the Coalition. Marotzke stated she can request a letter from Mid-Minnesota Development Commission. Schmoll stated the Coalition of Greater Minnesota Cities wants to lobby for cities to get 1G service as some rural areas have better service than cities.

**ADJOURNMENT**—There being no other business,

IT WAS MOVED, SECONDED AND CARRIED to adjourn the meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 12:58 p.m.

**NEXT MEETING**—The next committee meeting is **10 a.m., Monday, March 1, 2021** via ZOOM video conference.

**ARCTANDER TOWNSHIP**  
**2021 CONSTRUCTION COST ESTIMATE**  
**PROPOSED RST FEED AND DISTRIBUTION**

<b><u>FACILITY</u></b>	<b><u>QUANTITY</u></b>		<b><u>EXTENDED</u></b>
HANDHOLES/PEDESTALS	126		\$ 104,350
PLACING CABLES AND INNERDUCT	235,982	FT 44.70 MILES	\$ 717,467
MISC UNITS AND SPLICING			\$ 439,615
RST ELCTRONICS TERMINATION			\$ 180,310
DROPS EST.	247 Locations		\$ 846,173
ELECTRONINCS and CO	247 SITES	800.00	\$ 297,600
ENGINEERING ESTIMATED AT 15%			\$ 358,000
Contingencies			\$ 300,000
		GRAND TOTAL	<hr/> \$ 3,243,515

PREPARED BY:



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JANUARY 25, 2021

COLFAX TOWNSHIP

2021 CONSTRUCTION COST ESTIMATE

PROPOSED RST FEED AND DISTRIBUTION

<u>FACILITY</u>	<u>QUANTITY</u>	<u>EXTENDED</u>
HANDHOLES/PEDESTALS	205	\$ 166,565
PLACING CABLES AND INNERDUCT	280,770 FT 53.18 MILES	\$ 520,962
MISC UNITS AND SPLICING		\$ 383,615
RST ELCTRONICS TERMINATION		\$ 228,960
DROPS EST.	432 Locations	\$ 1,145,428
ELECTRONINCS	432 SITES 800.00	\$ 345,600
ENGINEERING ESTIMATED AT 15%		\$ 418,650
Contingencies		\$ 350,000
	GRAND TOTAL	<hr/> \$ 3,559,780

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JANUARY 25, 2021

LAKE ANDREW TOWNSHIP  
2021 CONSTRUCTION COST ESTIMATE  
PROPOSED RST FEED AND DISTRIBUTION

<u>FACILITY</u>	<u>QUANTITY</u>		<u>EXTENDED</u>
HANDHOLES/PEDESTALS	774		\$ 231,395
PLACING CABLES AND INNERDUCT	427,096	FT 80.90 MILES	\$ 1,447,851
MISC UNITS AND SPLICING			\$ 621,300
RST ELCTRONICS TERMINATION			\$ 410,220
DROPS EST.	774 Locations		\$ 621,300
ELECTRONINCS	774 SITES	800.00	\$ 619,200
ENGINEERING ESTIMATED AT 15%			\$ 593,000
Contingencies			\$ 450,000
		GRAND TOTAL	<hr/> \$ 4,994,266

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JANUARY 25, 2021

NORWAY LAKE TOWNSHIP  
2021 CONSTRUCTION COST ESTIMATE  
PROPOSED RST FEED AND DISTRIBUTION

<u>FACILITY</u>	<u>QUANTITY</u>	<u>EXTENDED</u>
HANDHOLES/PEDESTALS	130	\$ 117,465
PLACING CABLES AND INNERDUCT	220,672 FT 41.80 MILES	\$ 640,246
MISC UNITS AND SPLICING		\$ 237,425
RST ELCTRONICS TERMINATION		\$ 95,010
DROPS EST.	180 Locations	\$ 639,969
ELECTRONINCS	180 SITES 800.00	\$ 144,000
ENGINEERING ESTIMATED AT 15%		\$ 281,118
Contingencies		\$ 200,000
	GRAND TOTAL	<u>\$ 2,355,233</u>

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JANUARY 25, 2021