

**KANDIYOHI COUNTY AND CITY OF WILLMAR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION (EDC)
AGRICULTURE AND RENEWABLE ENERGY DEVELOPMENT (AG) COMMITTEE**

MINUTES

February 18, 2016

Christianson & Associates, PLLP, Willmar

Present: Arvind Auluck-Wilson, Rollie Boll, Kevin Halvorson, Larry Konsterlie, Dustin Kotrba, Dan Lippert and Dan Tepfer

Excused: Ian Graue, Keith Poier, Bruce Reuss and Donnell Williamson

Absent: John Duevel and Jon Folkedahl

Staff: Connie Schmoll, Business Development Specialist

With the absence of the chair and vice chair, Dan Tepfer volunteered to lead and called the meeting to order at approximately 7:35 a.m. The agenda was approved as presented.

MINUTES

[Kevin Halvorson joined the meeting and as Vice Chair conducted the remainder of the meeting.]

IT WAS MOVED BY Rollie Boll, SECONDED BY Dustin Kotrba, to approve the minutes of the January 21, 2016 meeting as presented. MOTION CARRIED.

REPORTS

Ag Investment Subcommittee. Subcommittee Chair Dan Tepfer reported that at the February 4 meeting the subcommittee approved the final draft letter of inquiry to be mailed to potential investors on March 1, 2016. Language was slightly changed to include agribusiness as one of the focuses. The group had been challenged to broaden its focus to all businesses, but after discussion and voting, decided to keep the focus as originally intended on agriculture and renewable energy industries. The group is further planning for a follow-up meeting scheduled for mid- April for those who state their interest in participating. It is the intent of the subcommittee to let the actual investors eventually lead and maintain their own group. The subcommittee will lead the organizing process until the time they are ready to do so. There will be more to report at the April meeting as the March meeting may be too soon to have the letter responses in data form.

Ag BRE Survey Subcommittee. Schmoll reported the subcommittee met on February 12th and decided on the following timeline: Community meeting at the end of March; survey to be

conducted during the summer months; collating and preparing a report, including findings during the fall months while ag producers are busy with harvest; and a final community meeting after harvest in November or early December. The next meeting is scheduled for March 25th with potential for participation from Jim Molenaar, who was on the leadership team in 2005 and produced much of the final report from the 2005 survey. There was discussion of the survey instrument to be used and the benefits and drawbacks of using instruments currently used by state agencies, including the University of Minnesota BRE program. One of the deciding factors to use an updated version of the same one used in 2005 is the ability to measure changes based on using some of the same questions. A final report will include data from other sources in order to compare the survey information to data from other regions and/or statewide data.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Review of 2015 Ag goals and recommendations for 2016 goals. In order to make recommendations for 2016 Ag Committee goals, Schmoll reviewed the 2015 goals and asked for feedback about continuing, changing or deleting goals and adding new goals. The following decisions were made:

Maintain overall goal from 2015: Target activities that leverage our assets in agriculture, with a special emphasis on ag business, manufacturing, bioscience, technology, energy and research.

Develop achievable and measurable objectives in the following:

1. Establish an Ag investment group
2. Bring projects to the investor group for consideration
3. Conduct the Ag Producers' Survey and decide on issues for response
4. Support development of additional sources and uses for area food products
5. Support and conduct ag education/develop a public relations strategy (still needed and a response to the past Ag Producers' BRE Survey)
6. Continue building relationships with and assist ag interest groups such as the Minnesota Dairy Association, Corn Growers, etc., with promoting production agriculture and reducing barriers to ag development
7. Continue to monitor and promote Kandiyohi County involvement in the Minnesota Turkey Research and Development Facility and Minnesota Dairy Training, Research and Consumer Education Facility

Meeting attendance. Schmoll reported on current practices of requesting an application for potential new committee members, informing new members of meeting dates and attendance requirements, and notifying voting members of accumulation of unexcused missed meetings and offering non-voting member participation in meetings. Konsterlie inquired about EDC policy on committee membership concerning number of members and recommended a discussion about what is most efficient in membership numbers for conducting business. Lippert further stated that representation in the numbers was also important and might also be considered in the makeup of the committee. Committee members decided they would like to review current attendance and have further discussion about committee membership.

IT WAS MOVED BY Larry Konsterlie, SECONDED BY Dan Tepfer, to include in the March 2016 committee agenda, a line item for review of membership attendance and discussion of the size and composition of the committee and to do such review annually in March. MOTION CARRIED with all present voting in favor.

NEW BUSINESS

The application for committee membership by Kim Larson was discussed (see attached). Larson is a lifelong resident of Kandiyohi County, a fourth generation farmer and has been involved in many agriculture associated activities, including past membership on this committee and current participation on the Ag Survey Planning Subcommittee. He has a passion for economic development and has been attending many of the Ag Committee meetings.

IT WAS MOVED BY Dan Lippert, SECONDED BY Dan Tepfer, to recommend that the Kandiyohi County and City of Willmar Economic Development Commission's Joint Operations Board accept Kim Larson for membership on the Agriculture and Renewable Energy Development Committee. MOTION CARRIED with all present voting in favor.

Auluck-Wilson introduced a discussion about the focus on sustainability by Minnesota-based General Mills. He questioned if there was an opportunity to capitalize on General Mills' goals and willingness to invest at higher rates in agriculture products that are considered "sustainable." Tepfer stated the definition of sustainable can be arbitrary and political yet communication with General Mills and inviting cross communication would be educational and beneficial for both. Kotrba stated it was important to be active at the forefront. Auluck-Wilson added that such a discussion fits in with presentations we have had with sustainability in energy and fertilizer production. The discussion concluded with a recommendation for including such a process in the measurable objectives of the 2016 goals.

Schmoll mentioned a meeting sponsored by the Kandiyohi County Corn Growers and Soybean Growers will be held tomorrow, February 19th. Konsterlie added that Congressman Peterson will be in attendance, as well as state Representatives Miller and Baker. He said the forum will include an open discussion and committee members are welcome to bring current issues to the table.

Also recommended were the March 7th presentation by Hill Capital Corporation and the West Central Ag Sales Association Ag Show on March 8th and 9th at the Willmar Civic Center.

ADJOURNMENT—There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 9:10 a.m.

NEXT MEETING—The next regular meeting is 7:30 a.m., Thursday, March 17, 2016, at Christianson & Associates, PLLP, Willmar.

Kim Larson

Requested Bio

Upon request, I am providing a personal backgrounder of sorts. This not being a résumé, allows be to be a little “lite & loose” in my writing, so be prepared. I am a lifelong resident of Kandiyohi, with only having moved across the road from where I was raised (boring).

I am a fourth generation farmer in the Township of Dovre in Kandiyohi County where, along with a drainage contracting business, I raise the basic corn and soybeans from a modest size farm. From an early age, I have involved myself in many agricultural associated opportunities outside of my own farming operation. The following is a chronological record of some of those ag only opportunities which I copied and pasted in reverse order, from my résumé (the only way I can background it simply):

1980-1989	<u>Founding Director</u>	MINNESOTA CORN PROCESSORS – Chair of Investors Relations; Co-chair Site Selection Committee
1993-1995	<u>Founding Director</u>	MINNESOTA VALLEY ALFALFA PRODUCERS – Chair of Cogeneration with Northern States Power Company
1993-1995	<u>Director</u>	MINNESOTA AG COALITION
1994-1999	<u>Advisory Board Member</u>	UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA CENTER FOR ALTERNATIVE PLANT & ANIMAL PRODUCTS
1989-1999	<u>Vice-chair</u>	AG TECH BIOTECHNOLOGY WORKING GROUP
1988-2000	<u>Board of Directors</u>	MINNESOTA SOYBEAN ASSOCIATION – Secretary (1991); Vice- president (1992); President (1993); Chair (1994)
1995-2000	<u>Board of Directors</u>	AMERICAN SOYBEAN ASSOCIATION – Chair of Membership & Corporate Relations (1997); Chair of Trade Policy & International Affairs Committee (1998-1999); VP/ Executive Committee Member (1997-1999)
1999-2002(2 nd Term)	<u>Board of Directors</u>	MINNESOTA CORN PROCESSORS (MCP) – Co-Chair of Board Restructuring
2004-2011	<u>Committee Member</u>	Kandiyohi County/City of Willmar EDC – Vice-Chairman (2006-2009) Chair - Ag Producer Survey (2004-05)
2007-2015	<u>Board of Directors</u>	MEADOW STAR DAIRY – Project Coordinator

Many times in life, the old adage is so true “.... *It isn't what you know as much as it is who you know.*” That is most certainly true here as my connection to others has provided me additional opportunities as well. In 2001 I was selected to develop Kandiyohi County's “Delegated Feedlot Program” where the county puts their own representative in charge of administering the State's “7020 feedlot rules”(today “7040”). After establishing an office and putting the program on its feet I resigned my position as a regulator in 2004 (admittingly, I am less of a regulator and more of a “builder”) and immersed myself into local economic development, becoming an advocate for a specialized committee within the newly re-aligned EDC advocating agriculture .

It was through my involvement on the Ag Committee that I began a stint of various Independent Contract positions, beginning with a position as the Ag Committee's “Agricultural Administrator”, again, on a contractual basis, overseeing many of the projects similar to what's being done today. Later, I also contacted with the Minnesota Valley Alfalfa Producers (Mn VAP) to research grant opportunities for their biomass energy intentions where we were successful in writing and obtaining a \$1.5 million grant. I followed it up with a coordinating effort of developing their biomass project through the grant funding commitment.

I only have a AA degree from Willmar College (Ridgewater today) so I was surprised when I got a call from a couple of Ridgewater's Ag Faculty, requesting that I apply for an open position in the college's Ag Department. I found out that experience counts when factored in an academic application. So, I somewhat reluctantly (little confidence) became a fulltime instructor to 16 Credits/Sem. worth of students to which over the 3yrs (2012-2014) I had to enjoy my relationship with those young people, it became a highlight in my career.

Finally, I am married to my wife Debbie and we have four grown children with two grandchildren (“one in the hopper”). My oldest son lives across the road where I grew up, and his son becomes the 6th generation to live on that farm. I think as you can already surmise from my background, I have a passion for economic development of local agriculture and would look forward to becoming an “official” representative on the Kandiyohi County/City of Willmar Economic Development Commission's Ag Committee.

Thank you for your consideration,

--Kim Larson