

KANDIYOHI COUNTY AND CITY OF WILLMAR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION (EDC)  
MARKETING AND PUBLIC RELATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING

MINUTES

February 22, 2016  
WORKUP, Willmar

- Present: Donna Boonstra, Shari Courtney, Jean Geselius, Ann Winge Johnson, Heather Koffler, Mike Negen and Julie Redepenning
- Excused: Lindsey Donner
- Absent: Caroline Chan and Sarah Isdal
- Guest: Jayme Sczublewski
- Staff: Aaron Backman, Executive Director and Connie Schmoll, Business Development Specialist
- Secretarial: Nancy Birkeland, Legal & Administrative Assistants, Inc. (LAA)

Chairperson Heather Koffler called the meeting to order at approximately 12:00 p.m.

MINUTES—

IT WAS MOVED BY Shari Courtney, SECONDED BY Jean Geselius, to approve the minutes of the January 25, 2016 meeting as emailed. MOTION CARRIED.

[Aaron Backman joined the meeting.]

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Website. Connie Schmoll noted the EDC's new website is up and running and the changes requested to be made last month have been done other than the list of major employers. Julie Redepenning reviewed the updated list of employers she obtained (see attached). The committee agreed to list all employers with 50 or more employees and to list all companies under the Life-Science Innovations umbrella. The source of this information (Reference USA) will also be added to the page.

Quarterly newsletter. Schmoll reported the four-page newsletter was printed by Print Masters and was in last Tuesday's *West Central Tribune*. Upcoming deadlines with the *West Central Tribune* are May 19 for May 24 publication, August 18 for August 23 publication and November 17 for November 22 publication. The next newsletter will be on retention and

Schmoll has been working with Barb Abrams and Kristen Allen on potential content. Suggestions for content included followup data from the three BRE surveys and any projects that resulted. Some BRE projects were reported under Vision 2040, but it would be good to also report them from the EDC's perspective. Jean Geselius commented on a Small Business Summit hosted by the Hutchinson Chamber of Commerce last fall. Redepinning stated 68 small businesses attended and heard presentations on bookkeeping, marketing, succession planning, etc. This year, the business summit will have breakout sessions.

## NEW BUSINESS

Chamber ADvantage. The committee decided to use the four-page newsletter for the next Chamber ADvantage. Committee members felt the Chamber ADvantage is good exposure to key people in member businesses for a somewhat nominal cost. The ADvantage is printed in April, June, August, October and December.

2016 Marketing Plan. The committee reviewed the 2015 Marketing Plan (see attached) and suggested the following updates for 2016:

### Strategy 1:

#### Objective 1.

##### Projects:

- a) Has been completed and should be removed.
- b) Updating marketing materials was put on hold during the search for a new Executive Director; however, this should be addressed as the current materials have the EDC's old address. Aaron Backman stated he typically does on-demand printing related to a certain need.

#### Objective 2.

##### Projects:

- a) Should be changed to "review and update website and annually check major employers and statistics."
- b) For social media, it was suggested to use articles from the newsletters and to create an EDC LinkedIn page.
- c) Creating an editorial calendar was mentioned. Schmoll stated the West Central Tribune would like articles for the paper and she is willing to write some of the articles. It was recommended to do an article in the paper once a month.
- d) Quarterly newspaper inserts will be done in May, August and November.
- e) Advertise in the Chamber ADvantage four times (April, June, October and December)

#### Objective 3.

##### Projects:

- a) Continue.
- b) Completed and can be removed.
- c) Schmoll noted the EDC is doing a lot of in-kind donations.

- 1) The EDC is fiscal host for the Kandiyohi County CEO loan program and will review the students' loan applications.
- 2) A meeting will be held in March to decide on Hack<sub>2</sub>0  
Add the Job Fair and others as done.
- d) Eliminate the West Central Tribune *Business2Business* section as it is no longer done.

Strategy 2:

Objective 1.

Projects:

- a) Completed and can be removed.
- b) Change to update customizable proposal template to attract businesses.

Objective 2.

Projects:

- a) Schmoll reported DEED will not hold a site selector in 2016 so this can be removed.
- b) Can be removed.

Objective 3.

Projects:

- a) Julie Redepenning explained the existing human resources network in the area. It was mentioned it would be a great benefit to offer a concierge service via area realtors. Koffler suggested this idea be brought to the Vision 2040 concierge group.
- b) It was recommended the EDC create a LinkedIn page.
- c) This is a workforce issue (network to develop direct and online contacts with post-secondary students graduating from Willmar, New London/Spicer and Atwater-Cosmos-Grove City). It may be difficult to develop a network or database as schools have data privacy issues. Need to do a better job of having the EDC on a digital platform and making the connection that way versus a database. Facebook and LinkedIn are the two avenues used the most in recruitment. The committee decided to remove item c and do better with a strategic plan to target post-secondary students.

It was recommended the committee formally develop Strategy 2 next month.

ADJOURNMENT—There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 1:06 p.m.

NEXT MEETING—The next committee meeting is 12 noon, Monday, March 28, 2016 at WORKUP, 1601 Technology Drive NE, Willmar.

		Kandiyohi County Employees	Total Employees	
Affiliated Community Medical Center	<a href="http://www.acmc.com/">http://www.acmc.com/</a>	900	1200	Healthcare - Clinic
Bethesda	<a href="http://bethesdawillmar.com/">http://bethesdawillmar.com/</a>	420	420	Healthcare - Resident/Nursing Care
Buhler Versatile Inc	<a href="http://www.versatile-ag.com/">http://www.versatile-ag.com/</a>	70	70	Manufacturing - Ag Equipment
Cash Wise Foods	<a href="http://www.cashwise.com/">http://www.cashwise.com/</a>	341	3780	Retail - Grocery
Cub Foods	<a href="https://www.cub.com/">https://www.cub.com/</a>	150	12904	Retail - Grocery
Divine Home Care	<a href="http://www.divinehomecare.com/">http://www.divinehomecare.com/</a>	148	362	Healthcare - Home Health Services
Duininck Companies	<a href="http://www.duininckcompanies.com/">http://www.duininckcompanies.com/</a>	243	652	Construction & Manufacturing
Greater Minnesota Family Services	<a href="http://www.greatermnnesota.org/">http://www.greatermnnesota.org/</a>	27	195	Healthcare - Social Assistance
Gurley's Foods	<a href="http://www.gurleysfoods.com/">http://www.gurleysfoods.com/</a>	90	90	Wholesale - Food
Herberger's	<a href="http://www.herbergers.com/">http://www.herbergers.com/</a>	150	2370	Retail - Department Store
Heritage Bank	<a href="https://www.heritagebankna.com/">https://www.heritagebankna.com/</a>	72	133	Finance - Banking
Home Depot	<a href="http://www.homedepot.com/">http://www.homedepot.com/</a>	95	4950	Retail - Home Center
Jennie-O Turkey Store	<a href="http://www.iennio.com/">http://www.iennio.com/</a>	1650	6500	Manufacturing - Poultry Processing
Kandiyohi County	<a href="http://www.co.kandiyohi.mn.us/">http://www.co.kandiyohi.mn.us/</a>	300	300	Government - County
Life-Science Innovations & Affiliates	<a href="http://www.Life-ScienceInnovations.com">http://www.Life-ScienceInnovations.com</a>	664	1620	Agriculture, Engineering & Biotech
Menards	<a href="https://www.menards.com/">https://www.menards.com/</a>	130	5860	Retail - Home Center
Minnesota Department of Transportation	<a href="http://www.dot.state.mn.us/d8/">http://www.dot.state.mn.us/d8/</a>	92	4730	Government - State
New London-Spicer Schools	<a href="http://www.nls.k12.mn.us/">http://www.nls.k12.mn.us/</a>	225	225	Schools
REM South Central Services	<a href="http://Remminnesota.com/">http://Remminnesota.com/</a>	150	5000	Healthcare - Social Assistance
Rice Memorial Hospital	<a href="http://www.ricehospital.com/">http://www.ricehospital.com/</a>	998	998	Healthcare - Hospital/Nursing Care/Retail
Ridgewater College	<a href="https://www.ridgewater.edu/">https://www.ridgewater.edu/</a>	315	573	Education - Community College
Target	<a href="http://www.target.com/">http://www.target.com/</a>	137	14000	Retail - Department Store
TPI Hospitality	<a href="http://www.tpihospitality.com/">http://www.tpihospitality.com/</a>	196	1425	Hospitality - Hotels & Restaurants
Walmart Supercenter	<a href="http://www.walmart.com/">http://www.walmart.com/</a>	220	7700	Retail - Department Store
Willmar Electric Service Inc	<a href="http://www.willmar-electric.com/">http://www.willmar-electric.com/</a>	150	150	Construction - Electric Contractor
Willmar Public Schools	<a href="http://www.willmar.k12.mn.us/">http://www.willmar.k12.mn.us/</a>	812	812	Schools
Woodland Centers	<a href="http://www.woodlandcenters.com/">http://www.woodlandcenters.com/</a>	173	173	Healthcare - Social Assistance
Marketing Concepts	<a href="http://www.marketingconcepts.com/">http://www.marketingconcepts.com/</a>	99	99	Business Services
Quam Construction	<a href="https://quamconstruction.com/">https://quamconstruction.com/</a>	97	97	Construction - Excavating
West Central Steel	<a href="http://wcsteel.com/">http://wcsteel.com/</a>	90	90	Steel Works
West Central Tribunte	<a href="http://www.wctrib.com/">http://www.wctrib.com/</a>	60	60	Newspaper
West Central Sanitation	<a href="http://www.wcsanitation.com/">http://www.wcsanitation.com/</a>	95	95	Waste Management
Relco	<a href="http://relco.net/">http://relco.net/</a>	92	92	Manufacturing - Metal Fab
Heartland Community Action Agency	<a href="http://www.heartlandcaa.org/">http://www.heartlandcaa.org/</a>	100	100	Social Service Organization
Hanson Silo	<a href="http://www.hansonsilo.com/">http://www.hansonsilo.com/</a>	85	85	Manufacturing - Metal & Precast Concrete
Best Buy	<a href="http://www.bestbuy.com/">http://www.bestbuy.com/</a>	40	40	Retail
Nova Tech Engineering	<a href="http://www.novatechengineering.com/">http://www.novatechengineering.com/</a>	149	149	Engineering
Prinsco	<a href="http://www.prinsco.com/">http://www.prinsco.com/</a>			Manufacturing
Christensen Systems	<a href="http://christianson.com/">http://christianson.com/</a>			Manufacturing
Family Practice Medical Center	<a href="http://www.fpmc-willmar.com/">http://www.fpmc-willmar.com/</a>			Healthcare
Chappell Central	<a href="http://www.chappellcentral.com/">http://www.chappellcentral.com/</a>			Construction
ACGC	<a href="http://www.acgc.k12.mn.us/">http://www.acgc.k12.mn.us/</a>			Education
KMS	<a href="http://www.kms.k12.mn.us/">http://www.kms.k12.mn.us/</a>			Education

Life-Science Innovations & Affiliates Total organization: 1650

Employees in Willmar/Kandiyohi County: 669

Companies in Willmar:

Life-Science Innovations: 77

Nova-Tech Engineering: 149

Epitopix: 51

MinnWest Technology Campus: 5

PALS: 42

PALS Propane: 5

Willmar Poultry Farms: 37

Farm Service Elevator: 21

AgForte Willmar Poultry Company: 252 in Willmar (767 total, rest spread out across MO, VA, OH)

Willmar Logistics: 30 in Willmar (66 total, rest spread out across MO, VA, OH)

Syntiron 9 – all employees located in St. Paul

Turkey Valley Farms – 421 – all employees located in Marshall

No Response

Life Science Affiliates



## **MARKETING PLAN**

**Updated as of 10/26/2015**

**Situation Analysis:** The Kandiyohi County and City of Willmar Economic Development Commission (EDC) is a government agency whose mission is to be a catalyst for economic growth of the greater Kandiyohi area. We do that in a wide variety of ways, including supporting existing businesses, assisting area entrepreneurs and recruiting targeted industries that are a fit for our region. While we have been successful in that mission, we face the ongoing challenge of educating our community, prospects and partners about how that is accomplished and what kinds of services we offer. We also lead area efforts to market our community to businesses outside of our region that are interested in locating or expanding here—a process that requires ongoing review and refinement in order to stay competitive.

### **Target Audience Groups:**

1. **Local/Regional:** The EDC must reach our local and regional community for two reasons. First, we must educate them regarding our purpose and activities as a government-funded, volunteer-driven organization. Second, we must make our services and expertise known and available to local businesses and entrepreneurs who need help starting or expanding.
2. **Outside Region:** The EDC must aggressively market our area outside of our region for the purposes of attracting new businesses and talent to our community. We need to promote our brand to enhance our economic development efforts, showcase our quality of life and bring more people to the community.

**STRATEGY 1: *Create awareness of EDC activities and services in our local/regional community.***

### **OBJECTIVES**

1. Refine/remix EDC “brand”

### **PROJECTS**

- a) Create branding elements: new website design + old JUMP IN campaign
  - 1) Utilize creative talents from both REDstar Creative and Johnson Group in updating the brand to reflect the new direction of the marketing materials
- b) Update/create templates for marketing materials
  - 1) Panel brochure used in packets and booth displays
  - 2) Update booth display
  - 3) Update Finance brochure
    - a. Update target industries brochures/flyers:

- i. Advanced Manufacturing and Technology
  - ii. Retail
  - iii. MinnWest Technology Campus
- 2. Be an agent of positive messaging about our business community and economy

**PROJECTS**

- a) Complete new website with a searchable database, customized demographic reports and recruitment tools to assist companies
  - b) Create/publish social media content
    - 1) Facebook
    - 2) Twitter
    - 3) LinkedIn
  - c) Create/publish monthly articles for the West Central Tribune business section (third Tuesday publish date, email to [business@wctrib.com](mailto:business@wctrib.com))
 

2015 publication deadlines:

    - 1) July 14—Jean
    - 2) August 11—Steve
    - 3) September 15—
    - 4) October 13—New director
    - 5) November 10—
    - 6) December 15—
  - d) Create/distribute newsletter insert in the *West Central Tribune*
    - 1) November 2015
    - 2) May 2016
  - e) Create advertising campaign and flight plan for full year
    - 1) Chamber ADvantage (800 copies)
      - a. February—Open House for EDC’s new location
      - b. April—Volunteer of the Year (Beverly Dougherty)
      - c. June—Kandiyohi County CEO Program
      - d. August—WORKUP and MEETUP
      - e. October—Location, Location, Location flyer
      - f. December—EDC’s new website
    - 2) Radio—to be determined
3. Educate community about services/resources of EDC

**PROJECTS**

- a) Sponsor WORKUP programming partnership targeting start-ups and entrepreneurs (includes WORKUP, Ridgewater, KCEO and Heritage Bank)
  - 1) QUP, third Wednesday of each month, 8:00-9:15 a.m.
  - 2) MEETUP, fourth Wednesday of each month from 12:00-1:15 p.m.
  - 3) “Why Willmar is for Entrepreneurs”
- b) Create signage or visibility with projects on which the EDC works (yard signs created)
- c) Support community organizations—be a part of messaging where appropriate
  - 1) Kandiyohi County CEO program, 2015-2016 school year

- 2) HACK<sub>2</sub>0, September 18-20, 2015 at WORKUP
- 3) Animal Science Conference, September 24, 2015, MinnWest Technology Campus
- 4) Vision 2040, Boomtown USA event, September 29, 2015, MinnWest Technology Campus
- 5) University of Minnesota Showcase, October 29, 2015, MinnWest Technology Campus
- d) Create advertising campaign and flight plan for full year
  - 1) West Central Tribune, *Business2Business* section (no longer being done)

**STRATEGY 2: *Market our community outside of our region in order to attract targeted business and talent.***

**OBJECTIVES**

- 1. Deliver specific, sought-after area metrics such as workforce, demographics and accessibility

**PROJECTS**

- a) Finish website tools
  - b) Create updated, customizable proposal template to attract business
- 2. Create customized packages to attract business interest

**PROJECTS**

- a) Hosted site selector through DEED Marketing Partnership, September 13-15, 2015
  - b) Attend The Site Selectors Guild Fall Forum, October 26-28, 2015 in Philadelphia, PA (not done due to Jean Spaulding leaving the EDC)
  - c) Advertised in DEED's new statewide marketing publication
- 3. Support the recruitment efforts of area businesses for workers and talent

**PROJECTS**

- a) Work with human resource departments to develop online resources
- b) Create LinkedIn page for recruitment
- c) Network to develop direct and online contacts with post-secondary students graduating from Willmar, New London/Spicer and Atwater-Cosmos-Grove City
  - 1) Develop partnerships with area school foundations
    - i. Hire an intern to develop databases and newsletter content
- d) Develop a friends and family campaign
- e) Develop a formal Trailing Spouse Network
  - 1) Develop partnerships with area school foundations