

KANDIYOHI COUNTY AND CITY OF WILLMAR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION (EDC)
BROADBAND AND ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE MEETING
MINUTES
February 3, 2020
EDC Office, Willmar

Present: Mark Boesch, Dean Bouta, Bruce DeBlicke, Roger Imdieke, Les Nelson, Rollie Nissen, Glenn Otteson, Gregg Price, Ramsey Schaffnit and David Sisser

Excused: Donna Boonstra and Michelle Marotzke

Guest: Tim Furr, Chief Information Officer, Ridgewater College

Staff: Connie Schmoll, Business Development Manager

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

Vice Chair David Sisser called the meeting to order at approximately 12:00 p.m.

AGENDA—

IT WAS MOVED BY Roger Imdieke, SECONDED BY Les Nelson, to approve the Agenda as emailed. MOTION CARRIED.

MINUTES—

IT WAS MOVED BY Rollie Nissen, SECONDED BY Ramsey Schaffnit, to approve the Minutes of the January 6, 2020 meeting as emailed. MOTION CARRIED.

Sisser introduced Tim Furr, Chief Information Officer of Ridgewater College, who provided his background information, including being a part of the former KandiLink organization. Furr is interested in students not being able to get broadband to access online education.

IT WAS MOVED BY Roger Imdieke, SECONDED BY Dean Bouta, to approve Tim Furr as a member of the Kandiyohi County and City of Willmar Economic Development Commission Broadband and Advanced Technology Committee. MOTION CARRIED.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Township projects. Connie Schmoll reported on a meeting last week between the township chairs, Compass Consultants and Arvig. Dovre Township questioned how it can assess all of its property owners if the project only benefits some of its residents. Sisser recommended the township attorney be asked how to only have the affected residents vote on the project. Sisser fears if Dovre Township backs out of the project, then Mamre and St. Johns Townships may also.

Schmoll stated if residents are outside the project area, they would not be part of the state Border-to-Border grant. Roger Imdieke questioned if fiber would go past the residents who are already served. Rollie Nissen mentioned that if Dovre Township drops out of the project, Arctander Township would be interested in joining the project. Schmoll reported she spoke with Howard Pierce this morning about a project for Arctander Township and how quickly he could get approval from his township board. Pierce is going to bring up the matter with the Arctander Township supervisors tomorrow night at their meeting.

Glenn Otteson questioned some of the routes being proposed by Compass Consultants and felt the cost could be less, but noted he does not have access to all information that may be available. Sisser gave a breakdown of the estimated costs for the project. Schmoll reported she spoke with Federated Telephone Cooperative, but currently it is unable to take on another project and Midco will not do a fiber project. It was initially reported that Arvig's television service would be available, which was of interest to the township supervisors; however, Arvig is now saying it would not provide television service. Dean Bouta recommended education as to television service be done as most people are going away from traditional television service. Access to local channels is above the cost of streaming. Schmoll agreed that education will need to be a part of any project. Schmoll announced Dovre Township will be meeting tomorrow at 7:00 p.m.; Mamre Township will meet on February 10th at 7:00 p.m. and St. Johns Township meets February 18th. Sisser and Boeschen will attend the meetings with Schmoll to answer any questions.

[Mark Boeschen joined the meeting.]

Sisser reviewed the costs per person (see attached). The costs can be brought down with the state grant and if the provider participates. The townships' share of the cost estimate is \$1,792,000. There was also mention of the county participating. Otteson stated companies generally budget a payback of seven years. Chair Mark Boeschen stated the total cost per site is \$9,074 before any other participation. Arvig stated the state grant application should only be for 38% of the project; however, it was noted that nine of the current applicants had 50% of their costs paid. Boeschen researched the state grant scoring information and stated matching funds of 55% or more results in a higher score. Percent of eligible project costs requested: 46-50% is 0 points, 41-45% is 3 points, 36-40% is 5 points, 31-35% is 8 points and 30% or less is 10 points.

Otteson reported Polar Communications of North Dakota received loan and grant funds through the USDA ReConnect Program; CNE has two projects with them. Harmony Telephone also received federal loan and grant funds. Otteson indicated if a wireless project is approved, it may end any future funding programs. It was noted wireless providers are already in the county and affecting projects. Otteson stated it may be beneficial to contact TDS as the incumbent provider to possibly do a project. CenturyLink is a resource for Dovre Township, which may look at a state grant on its own. Boeschen recommended no contact with TDS until the townships hold their meetings and we find out their interest levels. Bouta recommended all funding options be explored. Boeschen noted that if the townships are willing to fund a project, other providers may be interested.

NEW BUSINESS

Broadband Day on the Hill. Schmoll announced she will attend the Minnesota Rural Broadband Coalition's Broadband Day on the Hill on March 12, 2020. The Coalition brings in speakers, there is an opportunity to speak with legislators and they usually hold a hearing. Otteson stated the Minnesota Telecom Alliance is holding its annual convention March 9-11, 2020 in Minneapolis. He stated they have speakers and presentations that are usually enlightening as to what is going on in the industry.

Digital Inclusion Task Force. Schmoll reported Donn Winckler provided information, but she and Bruce DeBlieck have not had a chance to meet. Schmoll asked Tim Furr to assist in this area.

Minnesota Rural Broadband Coalition. The next meeting is February 25, 2020.

Membership. Imdieke asked if the committee should replace the representative from Kandiyohi Power Cooperative. Schmoll has contacted them and will follow up. Schmoll reported she attended the board meeting where they discussed wanting interested participation. Bouta stated it needs to be the right person, who is open minded and willing to champion broadband with the Cooperative.

ADJOURNMENT—There being no further business,

IT WAS MOVED BY Glenn Otteson, SECONDED BY Bruce DeBlieck, to adjourn. MOTION CARRIED.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 12:57 p.m.

NEXT MEETING—The next meeting is **12 noon, Monday, March 2, 2020**, Room 2057 at the Kandiyohi County Health & Human Services Building, Willmar.

Cost / prop	# of props	Total project	Grant Amnt	Grant %
\$ 10,617.00	909	\$ 9,650,853.00	\$ 2,895,318.00	30%
\$ 2,558.00	481	\$ 1,230,398.00	\$ 430,780.00	35%
\$ 2,679.00	420	\$ 1,125,180.00	\$ 393,890.00	35%
\$ 7,647.00	350	\$ 2,676,450.00	\$ 936,759.00	35%
\$ 6,540.00	568	\$ 3,714,720.00	\$ 1,857,376.00	50%
\$ 9,201.00	69	\$ 634,869.00	\$ 222,222.00	35%
\$ 8,526.00	170	\$ 1,449,420.00	\$ 579,781.00	40%
\$ 5,225.00	478	\$ 2,497,550.00	\$ 1,248,790.00	50%
\$ 5,416.00	1020	\$ 5,524,320.00	\$ 1,657,550.00	30%
\$ 3,171.00	47	\$ 149,037.00	\$ 74,540.00	50%
\$ 3,766.00	265	\$ 997,990.00	\$ 499,072.00	50%
\$ 4,163.00	399	\$ 1,661,037.00	\$ 830,587.00	50%
\$ 2,179.00	345	\$ 751,755.00	\$ 376,000.00	50%
\$ 8,866.00	136	\$ 1,205,776.00	\$ 602,916.00	50%
\$ 3,974.00	24	\$ 95,376.00	\$ 42,921.00	45%
\$ 10,567.00	101	\$ 1,067,267.00	\$ 440,000.00	41%
\$ 2,648.00	105	\$ 278,040.00	\$ 139,039.00	50%
\$ 4,821.00	206	\$ 993,126.00	\$ 297,940.00	30%
\$ 1,363.00	677	\$ 922,751.00	\$ 230,835.00	25%
\$ 4,660.00	219	\$ 1,020,540.00	\$ 510,358.00	50%
\$ 5,561.00	507	\$ 2,819,427.00	\$ 1,253,955.00	44%
\$ 11,296.00	125	\$ 1,412,000.00	\$ 635,400.00	45%
\$ 8,355.00	109	\$ 910,695.00	\$ 346,282.00	38%
\$ 8,607.00	128	\$ 1,101,696.00	\$ 385,600.00	35%
\$ 5,095.00	88	\$ 448,360.00	\$ 156,954.00	35%
\$ 4,632.00	1353	\$ 6,267,096.00	\$ 2,562,916.00	41%
\$ 4,846.00	908	\$ 4,400,168.00	\$ 1,760,423.00	40%
\$ 1,429.00	281	\$ 401,549.00	\$ 195,848.00	49%
\$ 11,322.00	109	\$ 1,234,098.00	\$ 555,355.00	45%
\$ 8,097.00	316	\$ 2,558,652.00	\$ 1,151,526.00	45%
\$ 5,927.57		Mean		42%
\$ 5,160.00		Median		43%

\$ 177,827.00 10913 \$ 59,200,196.00 Avg/prop 5424.741