

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

MINUTES

May 20, 2021

Via Zoom Video Conference

Present: Rollie Boll, Kevin Halvorson, Dustin Kotrba, Dan Lippert, Michelle Marotzke and Keith Poier

Absent: Larry Konsterlie, Kim Larson and Dan Tepfer

Staff: Connie Schmoll, Business Development Manager and Sarah Swedburg, Business Development Manager

Secretarial: Diane Beck, Legal & Administrative Assistants, Inc.

Chairperson Kevin Halvorson called the meeting to order at approximately 7:35 a.m.

Connie Schmoll introduced Sarah Swedburg, newly-hired Business Development Manager, who replaces Schmoll due to her retirement. Swedburg provided an update on her EDC activities to date. She was formerly the Planner for the City of Willmar. Self-introductions were conducted.

AGENDA—

IT WAS MOVED BY Keith Poier, SECONDED BY Rollie Boll, to approve the Agenda as emailed. MOTION CARRIED.

MINUTES

IT WAS MOVED BY Rollie Boll, SECONDED BY Keith Poier, to approve the Minutes of the April 15, 2021 meeting as emailed. MOTION CARRIED.

REPORTS

Industrial Hemp Exploratory Subcommittee. Poier reported the Industrial Hemp Exploratory Subcommittee met approximately a week ago. They discussed new hemp regulations regarding the change for THC (tetrahydrocannabinol) from .03 to .10 and the frequency of their meetings. The subcommittee currently meets quarterly and decided to meet monthly from September to April and more frequently if important industrial hemp information arises. Schmoll reported Laura Arne is currently attending the Industrial Hemp Conference and Exhibition in Orlando, Florida. She will be invited to the next Ag Committee meeting to report on the conference.

Schmoll provided information on her meeting with Cory Becker of U.S. Representative Michelle Fischbach's office. Schmoll, Michelle Martozke and Poier provided an update on the current industrial hemp regulations. Becker was interested in learning about the issue regarding industrial hemp regulations and felt it is a valuable commodity for farmers and voiced support for industrial hemp farming. Schmoll shared letters were mailed to local legislators regarding the industrial hemp regulations. Swedburg shared the EDC's Marketing and Public Relations Committee will be updating the Industrial Hemp and Ag Committee flyers.

Partners in Ag Innovation Conference. Dustin Kotrba shared the budget for the conference is approximately \$24,000 and they raised approximately \$20,000. With the carryover of \$6,000 from last year's conference, the 2021 budget has been met. There is good sponsorship this year and all speakers are finalized. A marketing push was recently done. Discussions have taken place regarding an emcee. Joanna Schrupp and Kotrba will introduce the speakers. John Cosgrove agreed to assist with emcee duties and to lead some of the question/answer and trivia sessions. Schmoll discussed prizes for the trivia session and suggested a Chromebook at a cost of approximately \$200. She announced there is money in the budget as lunches will not be provided this year.

IT WAS MOVED BY Michelle Marotzke, SECONDED BY Keith Poier, to approve purchasing a Chromebook to give away as a trivia prize at the 2021 Partners in Ag Innovation Conference. MOTION CARRIED.

EDC BOARDS' STRATEGIC PLANNING SESSION. Schmoll shared both of the EDC's boards agreed with this committee that agriculture is an important focus area. Following a discussion on the number of meetings this committee meets per year, three of the committee members were in favor of keeping the current meeting schedule. This topic will be placed on a future agenda for continued discussion.

AG/RENEWABLE ENERGY COMMUNITY EVENTS/PROJECTS. Dan Lippert shared he is planning a trip to Montana in August and plans to visit a hemp plant located in Fort Benton. Lippert will provide information on the hemp plant visit at the September committee meeting. Poier voiced an interest in meeting Lippert at the hemp plant.

Schmoll and Swedburg provided information on two companies interested in locating to the Willmar Industrial Park—a logistics company and a bioenergy company. Swedburg shared the capital investment for the bioenergy development is approximately \$300 million and will provide 50 new full time employees.

Schmoll announced her retirement reception will be held from 3:00-5:00 p.m., Tuesday, May 25, at the EDC office. Chair Halvorson thanked Schmoll for her dedicated years of service to the EDC. Schmoll shared she will be continuing to work on broadband matters for the EDC on a contract basis through year end.

NEXT MEETING—A discussion was held if future Ag Committee meetings can be held in-person. Schmoll commented in-person meetings will be discussed at the next Joint Operations Board

meeting. The next meeting is **7:30 a.m., Thursday, June 17, 2021** via Zoom video conference or in-person at Christianson's, subject to the decision of the Joint Operations Board.

ADJOURNMENT—

IT WAS MOVED BY Dan Lippert, SECONDED BY Rollie Boll, to adjourn the meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:11 a.m.