

MARKETING AND PUBLIC RELATIONS COMMITTEE

MINUTES

May 29, 2018

WORKUP, Willmar

Present: Donna Boonstra, Deb Geister, Jean Geselius, Pam Rosenau, Joanna Schrupp and Brittany VanDerBill

Excused: Shari Courtney, Melissa Knott and Emily Lien

Guests: Kim Augeson, ProCore and Jayme Sczublewski, REDstar Creative

Staff: Aaron Backman, Executive Director

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

Chair Deb Geister called the meeting to order at approximately 12:08 p.m. Added to the Agenda under New Business was *Business in Focus*.

MINUTES—

IT WAS MOVED BY Donna Boonstra, SECONDED BY Joanna Schrupp, to approve the Minutes of the April 23, 2018 meeting as emailed. MOTION CARRIED.

Social Media Statistics. The committee reviewed the EDC's Facebook statistics over the past month: 33 posts, post reach 4,680 (up 47%), impressions 8,027 (up 47%), clicks 165 (up 104%), reactions 193 (up 113%), engaged users 528 (up 86%) and page and post engagements 264 (up 92%) and new fans 5. The top posts in the past month were:

1. How Sweet It Is Candy Shoppe—impressions 1,243, likes 7, clicks 145, shares 11, reach 763
2. Detour for Highway 71 North project—likes 6, clicks 67, shares 3, reach 669
3. Ridgewater College nursing program—likes 11, clicks 20, shares 3, reach 365
4. Mayor Marv Calvin is running for second term—likes 5, clicks 60, shares 2, reach 314
5. KCEO program hosting 4<sup>th</sup> annual Trade Show—likes 7, clicks 23, shares 2, reach 260
6. Governor's fishing opener—likes 15, clicks 27, shares 0, reach 177
7. Coffee & More receives first dollar—likes 13, clicks 20, shares 0, reach 161

Sczublewski stated the Highway 23 Facebook page gained 10 followers after the last posting on funding.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS—

Highway 23 Coalition. Aaron Backman reported 12 local representatives traveled to Washington, D.C. last week to lobby for funding for Highway 23 and the railroad Wye. The group met with

seven different congressional members plus staff. Backman presented a draft report in follow up of the trip (see attached), which he asked the committee to review for suggested changes. This report will be sent to the Coalition's membership. During the trip, discussion was held on extending the end points of the Coalition beyond I-94 to Duluth and beyond Marshall to Sioux Falls, South Dakota. Backman distributed a draft press release (see attached) in anticipation of receiving funding from the bonding bill. Backman reported the Coalition had a table at the Governor's Fishing Opener where members wore and distributed buttons. All of the older yellow and blue buttons went, as well as many of the new blue buttons. Additional buttons with yellow have been ordered. The new popup display for the Coalition was shown to the committee.

Spring Newsletter. Sczublewski showed a draft of the spring newsletter that will be emailed this month. The articles include the EDC boards' strategic planning session, Midtown Plaza, Highway 23 and a Spotlight on Spicer that includes Urban Escape, Lone Tree Board & Paddle, Family Roots Chiropractic and Coffee & More. The newsletter includes links to the full articles on the EDC's website.

Ag Talent & Technology Workshop. Backman reported six businesses have agreed to sponsor the Talent & Technology Workshop. Sczublewski reported Jean Geselius drafted the flyer and REDstar created an event on Eventbrite and an e-invite in Constant Contact and a graphic for sponsors to use. Geselius stated the goal is for the invites to be sent the second week in July. The Ag Marketing Subcommittee would like a save the date email to go out first. Ads will be put on three local radio stations and in the West Central Tribune. Geselius will draft a press release to send to local media.

#### NEW BUSINESS—

*Business in Focus.* Backman reported he was contacted by FMG Publishing about placing an ad in this year's *Business in Focus* magazine. Last year, the EDC participated in a half page ad in partnership with the City of Willmar and Willmar Municipal Utilities at a cost of \$2,750. The magazine has asked the EDC to be included in this year's magazine which will focus on workforce and agreed to a full-page ad at the same price as last year's half-page ad. Chair Geister recommended some identifier be used to measure the effectiveness of the ad. The City of Willmar and Willmar Municipal Utilities are willing to partner in the ad at \$1,000 each. Geselius suggested including the KCEO program and Backman suggested ProCore and Nova-Tech Engineering be included.

IT WAS MOVED BY Brittany VanDerBill, SECONDED BY Jean Geselius, to place an ad in the *2018 Business in Focus* magazine at a cost of up to \$1,000.

ADJOURNMENT—There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 1:03 p.m.

NEXT MEETING—The next meeting is 12 noon, Tuesday, June 25, 2018, at WORKUP.



## HIGHWAY 23 COALITION WASHINGTON, D.C. FLY-IN

### ITINERARY

#### **Tuesday, May 22, 2018**

- 7:00 a.m. CST** Leave MSP Airport  
**10:30 a.m. ET** Arrive in Washington, D.C.  
**12:00 p.m.** Lunch at Masala Art Restaurant  
**2:00 p.m.** Check-in at Hyatt Place  
**3:00-4:00 p.m.** Meeting with Jay Hansen, National Asphalt Pavement Association (NAPA) and Whitmer & Worrall at Capitol Hill Club  
**4:30 p.m.** Small group discussion with Kodiak Hill-Davis of David Turch & Associates at Tortilla Coast, 400 First Street SE in D.C.  
**7:00 p.m.** Dinner guests of Jon Chiglo, VP Transportation, WSB & Associates, Inc. at Bobby Van's Steakhouse in D.C.

#### **Wednesday, May 23, 2018**

- 7:30 a.m.** Breakfast at Hyatt Place  
**9:00 a.m.** Small group meets with U.S. Senator John Thune (R-SD), U.S. Senator Mike Rounds (R-SD), and U.S. Rep. Kristy Noem (R-SD) at 511 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
**11:15 a.m.** Full group meets with U.S. Senator Tina Smith, (D-MN), 309 Hart Senate Office Building  
**12:00 Noon** Meeting with U.S. Rep. Tom Emmer (R-MN), 315 Cannon House Office Building  
**12:30 p.m.** Lunch with U.S. Rep. Collin Peterson (D-MN), U.S. Capitol, Members' Dining Room, H-117-120  
**2:15 p.m.** Capitol Dome Tour  
**3:45 p.m.** Meeting with U.S. Senator Amy Klobuchar (D-MN), 302 Hart Senate Office Building (hallway meeting)  
**6:30 p.m.** Dinner with David Turch and staff of David Turch and Associates, Monocle Restaurant in D.C.

#### **Thursday, May 24, 2018**

- 7:30 a.m.** Breakfast at Hyatt Place  
**10:00–10:45 a.m.**  
U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT), 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE, West Building, Conference Room Q-W82-302 (OST)  
Office of Infrastructure Finance and Innovation  
• R. Howard Hill, Policy Analyst, Office of the Under Secretary  
**11:00 a.m.–12 p.m.**  
Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE, East Building  
Office of Freight Management and Operations  
• Caitlin Hughes, Director  
• Crystal Jones, Team Leader  
**12:00 p.m.** Checkout of hotel  
**1:00 p.m.** Depart hotel  
**3:00 p.m.** Flight departs Reagan National Airport  
**5:20 p.m.** Flight arrives at MSP Airport



## HIGHLIGHTS

Twelve members of the Highway 23 Coalition traveled to Washington, D.C. on May 22-24, 2018 to lobby for additional funds for the Highway 23 Corridor and to have Highway 23 added to the National Highway Freight Network. The 12 members who attended were: Steve Ahmann, Steve Ammermann, Aaron Backman, Jeff Bertram, Donna Boonstra, Marv Calvin, John Chiglo, Jason Duininck, Audrey Nelsen, Rollie Nissen, Mel Odens and Steve Rambow.

### **A) WHO WE MET—COALITION MET ALL MEMBERS OF THE CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATION**

The attendees were able to meet face-to-face with **7 members of Congress**, including Senator Amy Klobuchar, Senator Tina Smith, Senator John Thune, Senator Mike Rounds, Rep. Collin Peterson, Rep. Tom Emmer, Rep. Kristy Noem, as well as their legislative staff. We were told that the other transportation coalitions visiting D.C. that week were not as successful meeting the congressional delegations. Coalition members had several agency meetings in D.C. We met with R. Howard Hill, Under Secretary Policy Analyst for the Office of Infrastructure Finance & Innovation, U.S. Department of Transportation; and with Caitlin Hughes, Director of the Office of Freight Management & Operations and Crystal Jones, Team Leader, in the same office. Attendees also had the opportunity to meet with two lobbying groups that specialize in transportation issues, David Turch & Associates and Whitmer & Worrall.

### **B) WHAT WE DISCUSSED—COALITION, STATE FUNDING AND THE ASK**

Coalition members updated the U.S. Senators and U.S. Representatives on the Coalition's development, our efforts to obtain Corridors of Commerce funding for Highway 23 improvements, the status of the bonding bill that funds Highway 23 four-lane gaps, an update on the Willmar Wye Project and the ask for Highway 23 to be added to the National Highway Freight Network.

### **C) OUTCOMES—EXPAND THE COALITION AND SEEK FREIGHT CORRIDOR DESIGNATION**

A number of the people we met in Washington, D.C. indicated that it is important for the Highway 23 Coalition to be visible in St. Paul and Washington, D.C. and that we need to be assertive in pursuing federal freight corridor designation and funding. A number of the participants highly recommended reaching out to other communities along the corridor, including the cities of Duluth and Sioux Falls to become members of the Coalition (or associate members). After seeing the progress the Coalition has made in the bonding bill, Benton County may be interested in joining the Coalition. The Minnesota Congressional delegation indicated they were willing to write letters of support seeking the rural component of the Critical Freight Corridor to obtain the Freight Corridor Designation. We were encouraged to apply for BUILD, INFRA and other federal funding sources that would apply to corridors such as MN Highway 23. The overall goal would be to access resources from the National Highway Freight Fund.

**Subject:** Bonding Bill Press Release

## Governor Signs Bonding Bill funding Highway 23

The Office of Governor Dayton has announced that he has signed the 2018 Bonding bill, including \$101 million for fully funding the both four-lane gaps between Willmar and I-94. Jason Duininck, Chair of the Coalition’s Legislative Committee stated, “the Highway 23 Coalition is pleased with this announcement. This is great news for the 1,100+ transportation-related businesses along this critical corridor connecting Greater Minnesota from Duluth to St. Cloud and Willmar to Sioux Falls, South Dakota. The 90 members of the Coalition have dedicated a lot of resources, time and effort to move this project forward. We are happy that Governor Dayton and the Minnesota Legislature recognized the need, supported this project, and provided MnDOT with the direction and the means to complete it.”

In the recent past, Highway 23 in MnDOT District #8 has received over \$2.3 million in Corridors of Commerce funding for environmental assessments for both gaps. In addition to transportation improvements, the Highway 23 project has the opportunity to tie into various local road projects and the Willmar Wye Project, a \$48 million railroad bypass project the previously received a \$10 million TIGER Grant. By completing a continuous four-lane between Willmar and I-94, this investment by the State of Minnesota provides additional opportunities to attract business development, expand the tax base, initiate job growth and reduce freight shipping costs throughout Greater Minnesota. For more information regarding the Highway 23 Coalition, check out our website at [www.highway23coalition.com](http://www.highway23coalition.com) or call 320-235-7370.

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