

**KANDIYOHI COUNTY AND CITY OF WILLMAR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION (EDC)  
BROADBAND AND ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE MEETING  
MINUTES  
July 10, 2017  
Kandiyohi County Health & Human Services Building, Willmar**

Present: Mark Boeschen, Travis Bonnema, Donna Boonstra, Dean Bouta, Kathy Dillon, Scott Froemming, Larry Handlin, Larry Kleindl, Michelle Marotzke, Brian Mort, Les Nelson, David Sisser and Donn Winckler

Excused: Bruce DeBlicek

Guest: Rollie Nissen, Kandiyohi County Commissioner

Staff: Connie Schmoll, Business Development Specialist

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

Chairperson Dean Bouta called the meeting to order at approximately 12:01 p.m.

**MINUTES—**

IT WAS MOVED BY Mark Boeschen, SECONDED BY David Sisser, to approve the minutes of the June 5, 2017 meeting as emailed. MOTION CARRIED.

**BORDER-TO-BORDER GRANT PROJECT**—Chair Bouta reported a conference call was held on June 28, 2017 between Consolidated Telecommunications Company's (CTC) officers; Kandiyohi County representatives; Connie Schmoll; Rep. Dave Baker; Kevin Beyer of Federated Telephone Cooperative and Danna MacKenzie, Executive Director of the Minnesota Office of Broadband Development. At that meeting, CTC voiced its concern that although 42% of the project area was signed up, only 21% had sent in the \$25 deposit and because of that, CTC would be unable to do the project. With only 21% committing to the project, CTC and Beyer stated the project would be \$2-3 million short. Kleindl and Schmoll negotiated with CTC that the public was never given a deadline by which they had to sign up and pay a deposit and CTC was agreeable to giving the public a deadline of July 24, 2017. Schmoll was pleased that CTC was open to a deadline and agreed the EDC will help market the project more. CTC provided the EDC with lists of the individuals who signed up for the project, those who have paid and those who paid, but did not sign up through Crowd Fiber. Approximately 90 more sign ups and 330 more deposits are needed by the deadline. Schmoll distributed information on the meeting with CTC and plans to promote the project (see attached).

County Commissioner Roger Imdieke met with West Central Tribune to write an article and County Commissioner Rollie Nissen and Schmoll were on KWLM's Open Mic this morning to announce the deadline. The deadline given to the public is July 21, 2017. Radio ads to be paid for by Kandiyohi County have been recorded and Lakeland Broadcasting will use portions of today's Open Mic interviews in future news reports. The ads say that the \$5 million grant will be returned to the state for another area to use, if

signups and deposits are not met. Imdieke, Nissen and Dave Baker will write letters to the editor. Kleindl will ask County Commissioner Harlan Madsen to promote the project deadline when he is on Open Mic on July 19. Marotzke will ask John Harren to write a letter to the editor. CTC has agreed to email Schmoll daily with names of additional sign ups and deposits paid. The EDC will send a letter to those who signed up, but have not yet paid. CTC is sending self-addressed envelopes to enclose with the letter. Those who are available are asked to help address and stuff the letters at 5:30 p.m., July 12, at the Oaks. Help is also needed to follow up with phone calls and Schmoll has a script that can be used. A table will be set up at the New London Legion on July 17 from 4-6 p.m. for individuals to stop by and pay their deposit and obtain more information, if they are not yet signed up. Schmoll distributed a schedule of events during New London Water Days at which the project will be marketed and asked committee members to help (see attached). Imdieke and Michelle Marotzke will deliver flyers to New London businesses to post. A flyer will also be selectively handed out during the New London parade. Unfortunately, payment of the deposit cannot be made online, but individuals may call CTC and make a payment over the telephone. Scott Froemming offered information to be distributed during Kandiyohi Power Cooperative's event at the Stingers game this week. The committee agreed it is important to communicate the same message to the public, create a sense of urgency and not focus on a negative message. Schmoll will keep the committee updated as the deadline approaches.

#### **UNFINISHED BUSINESS—**

**Continuation of Hack<sub>2</sub>0.** Larry Handlin reported he has not found anyone interested in taking over Hack<sub>2</sub>0, however, he has not yet checked with WORKUP. The RITA grant has ended and Hack<sub>2</sub>0 will not continue after August 15, 2017, if a coordinator is not found.

**NEW BUSINESS—**Donn Winckler stated he assisted Meeker County in applying for grant to do a feasibility study. Chair Bouta stated the Blandin Broadband newsletter included information on MVTV providing higher speeds to some customers. Saturday's *West Central Tribune* had an article on broadband. Dave Sisser reported Spectrum is starting to lay fiber in the Industrial Park and other areas for 25 mg with a 60 month commitment for \$360 per month—installation is at no charge if the build is under \$20,000.

Chair Bouta thanked committee members and Commissioners Nissen and Imdieke, who have been door knocking in the project area and promoting the project. Schmoll stated it is important to thank those who have signed up with CTC.

**ADJOURNMENT—**There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 12:48 p.m.

**NEXT MEETING—**The next meeting is **12 noon, August 7, 2017**, at the Kandiyohi County Health & Human Services Building, Willmar.

July 6, 2017

CTC pulled a conference call together for Wednesday, June 28<sup>th</sup>, with Larry Kleindl, County Administrator, and Connie Schmoll representing the EDC. CTC also invited Danna McKenzie of the State Office of Broadband, Rep. Dave Baker and Kevin Beyer of Federated to participate in the call. Baker was not able to participate. Larry asked the 2 County Commissioners in the project to participate and Dean Bouta to represent the Broadband Committee. I asked Donna Boonstra to participate to represent the EDC Board.

CTC stated that the number of paid sign-ups was only at 21% and there was no chance of securing enough to move forward on the project. They said that at that sign-up rate they would be up to \$3 million short in funding the project over the 20 years. They also said they needed to let the State Office of Broadband know soon what their intentions were for the \$4.9 million allocated for this project.

We of course went away devastated and angry. We asked them to send us the written list of the reasons they were pulling the project. On Wednesday, after the long holiday, some of this same group of people got together to start to draft a press release. In the discussion, it was apparent that everyone felt it was unfair to the residents of the project area to not have given them a deadline and that such a deadline could prove effective. We decided to ask CTC to consider another 2 weeks with a definite deadline in place, to try to secure the last of the signups and \$25 commitment fees. CTC responded favorably and granted the two weeks and said they would assist in the efforts.

This same group of people: Connie, Larry K., Rollie Nissen, Roger Imdieke, Dean Bouta and Rep. Baker met on Thursday, July 7<sup>th</sup> to make some plans on pushing an "Urgent – Sign Up Now" campaign."

**Here are some of the plans to date:**

1. Secure the lists from CTC – 1) signed up; 2) paid; and 3) not paid. CTC has already agreed to do this.
2. Draft a letter to those who are registered, but have not yet paid. Handwrite the envelopes and put "URGENT" on the outside. Include a stamped envelope addressed to CTC for easy follow-through for the residents. We have selected Wednesday, July 12<sup>th</sup> – 5:30 p.m. at the Oaks to do this task. We need many hands to help with this task. Dave Baker will make the arrangements at the Oaks. Larry will prepare the envelopes. Connie and Nancy will draft the letter.
3. Call people who have not paid, report the urgency to do so by July 24<sup>th</sup> (mail in by July 20<sup>th</sup>) and assist them in this important step. EDC and Kandiyohi County staff.
4. Conduct a community meeting to collect checks, answer questions and assist with additional sign ups. Invite CTC to be there to take credit card payments. We have selected July 17<sup>th</sup> for this event and have secured permission to have a table in the entry of the N. L. Legion. We need several people to help.
5. Have a table at the New London parade and hog roast on Saturday, July 15<sup>th</sup> 10 to 3 p.m. at the N.L. Fire Hall. Sign people up on forms and accept \$25 commitment fees.
6. Contact radio stations and newspapers and ask that they do news releases on the deadline. Roger will contact Raymond and Spicer/New London newspapers. Rollie will contact the Tribune. Larry will contact Lakeland Broadcasting and ask to have the ad revised. Then Connie will contact KDJS.
7. Write "Letters to the Editor:" Roger and Dave Baker committed to do this.
8. Contact by email, all who have signed up and ask them to talk to their neighbors about the deadline and need to sign up and send in the \$25 commitment fee. EDC office can do this when the list is received.
9. Call those who are contacting people on behalf of the project and let them know about the urgent deadline: Roger to call Cherish and Rollie to call Darlene and Jessica.
10. Open Mic - to talk about the project: Rollie and Connie—Dean Bouta as backup. Connie to schedule this.

**Other opportunities to promote the project:**

Little Crow Water Ski Show – 7:30 p.m. on Friday evening July 14<sup>th</sup>

Lions Breakfast – Peace Church 7:30 to 10:30 on Saturday, July 15<sup>th</sup>

NLS Community Band at Holm Park – 3 p.m. on Sunday, July 16<sup>th</sup>

Door-to-door knocking by those who have some commitments yet to complete.

# Broadband Urgent – Sign up NOW! Campaign

Letter stuffing –Wednesday, July 12 The Oaks 5:30 P.M.

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_
6. \_\_\_\_\_

Little Crow Ski Team – NEER Park, N.L. Signup and collect checks, Friday, July 14, 7:00 p.m.

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_

Lion’s Breakfast - signup and checks, Peace Lutheran Church, N.L. Sat. July 15, 10:00 a.m.

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_

Parade Route hand out flyers - Sat. July 15, 10 – 12:30

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_

Parade and Hog Roast – Fire Station N.L. – Sign up/collect checks, Sat. July 15,

10-12:30

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_

12:30-3:00

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_

NLS Community Bank –Sign up and collecting checks, Holm Park, N.L. Sunday, July 16, 2:30 p.m.

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Calls to those “Not Paid”

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_
6. \_\_\_\_\_