

**KANDIYOHI COUNTY AND CITY OF WILLMAR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION (EDC)  
BROADBAND AND ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE**

**MINUTES**

**April 3, 2023**

**Kandiyohi County Health & Human Services Building, Willmar and Via ZOOM Video Conference**

Present: Duane Anderson, Kelsey Baker, Mark Boeschen, Bruce DeBlieck (via Zoom), Jesse Gislason, Roger Imdieke, Tony Kirby (via Zoom), Michelle Marotzke, Ryan Nelson and Rollie Nissen

Guest: Chuck Stranberg

Excused: Jason Hulstein and David Sisser

Absent: Goldie Smith

Secretarial: Cathy Skindelien, Legal & Administrative Assistants, Inc.

Chairperson Mark Boeschen called the meeting to order at approximately 10:10 a.m.

**MINUTES—**

IT WAS MOVED BY Rollie Nelson, SECONDED BY Duane Anderson, to approve the Minutes of the March 6, 2023 meeting as emailed. MOTION CARRIED.

Self-introductions were conducted.

**NEW BUSINESS—**

**New Vision Foundation.** New Vision Foundation will be rescheduled to May.

**Resignation of Brian Zawierucha and Goldie Smith.**

IT WAS MOVED BY Roger Imdieke, SECONDED BY Duane Anderson, to accept with regrets the resignations of Brian Zawierucha and Goldie Smith. MOTION CARRIED.

**Addition of Chuck Stranberg.**

IT WAS MOVED BY Roger Imdieke, SECONDED BY Duane Anderson, to approve the addition of Chuck Stranberg to the Kandiyohi County and City of Willmar Economic Development Commission's Broadband and Advanced Technology Committee. MOTION CARRIED.

## UNFINISHED BUSINESS—

**Updates on Additional Potential Projects.** Chair Boesch presented a map of broadband locations for consideration in the next round of Border-to-Border Broadband Development Grants (see attached). The map reflected the following proposals:

- Mediacom—Norway Lake Township
- Federated Telephone Cooperative (FTC)—Colfax and Lake Andrew Townships
- Charter—New London and Willmar Townships
- Arvig—Edwards, Whitefield, Holland and Roseland Townships
- Vibrant—Kandiyohi, Genessee, Fahlun and Lake Lillian Townships

Projects covering more than one township are a priority due to available American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds and impending supply and labor shortages. Mediacom is no longer interested in Norway Lake Township due to lack of population density. FTC cannot add Norway Lake Township to the Colfax/Lake Andrew Township project because the cost would exceed the Border-to-Border Broadband Development Grant limit. The Colfax/Lake Andrew Township project will include approximately 60 passings in St. Johns Township that were part of the Rural Digital Opportunity Fund area and did not receive service. Charter, if awarded a grant, will cover New London Township and part of Lake Andrew Township, with FTC picking up the remainder of Lake Andrew Township. Project proposals will be finalized after the current round of grants is awarded in May or June.

## REPORTS—

**March 2023 State Border-to-Border Broadband Development Grant Update.** Chair Boesch reported Vibrant Broadband has applied for two Border-to-Border Broadband Development grants for Harrison Township and East Lake Lillian and Lake Elizabeth Townships. No challenges have been received and none are anticipated.

**Digital Connection Committee.** Michelle Marotzke reported the Office of Broadband Development provided an opportunity to set up local Digital Connection Committees to identify equity gaps in service. Marotzke sent an email to a broad list of people inviting them to join the committee, which now consists of David Sisser from this committee; Andrew Bregar, Willmar Public Library; Debi Brandt, United Community Action Partnership (UCAP); Kim Madsen and Mickell Maloyd, Woodland Centers; Fadumo Hussein, FAJ Language Services LLC; Joel Johnson, Mamre Township; and Sharon Oleson, Lake Andrew Township. Marotzke will create a schedule for meetings occurring between April 3 and June 30, 2023. Requirements include attending state meetings, sharing information, surveys and one-on-one interviews to evaluate access to broadband. A grant of \$4,000 was received from the state to cover committee member's time and marketing efforts.

**Current Local Projects – West FTTP – FTC.** Chair Boesch reported FTC is on track with the West Project. The list of residents given to the state will be the final list served. Any additions will be handled after FTC completes the Chippewa County project. The Broadband Committee will keep a spreadsheet of anyone who is building in the area and would like to obtain service. FTC is planning to bid on appropriate line extension applications. The reverse bid process will start in May. Kandiyohi County reserved \$300,000 for a local line extension program, but will wait to see how well the state program works before implementation. Residents of Kandiyohi County have submitted more applications than most counties, indicating the state program has been well-advertised.

**City of Willmar.** No update available.

**Rural Broadband Coalition.** No update available.

**ADJOURNMENT**—There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 10:49 a.m.

**NEXT MEETING**—The next regular committee meeting is **10:00 a.m., Monday, May 1, 2023** at Room 2057, Kandiyohi County Health and Human Services Building, Willmar and via Zoom video conference.