

**SERN Meeting
Southeast Quadrant
May 22, 2014
The Black Crow Restaurant – Beatrice, NE**

The May 22, 2014 SERN meeting was called to order at 10:00 am by Jen Olds chair of SERN. Jen welcomed attendees to the Black Crow Restaurant; Beatrice NE. Host of the SERN meeting is Michael Sothan of Main Street Beatrice.

SERN is a regional group, resource providers working to connect with communities. Meetings are held quarterly in different areas of the areas. This is the second meeting of 2014.

Treasures Report – The treasury balance is \$1,029.39. An expenditure \$43.60 for lunches from the last SERN meeting was the only expense presented.

Minutes of the February 20, 2014 SCC meeting were approved as presented. Quarterly meeting minutes were approved as presented on the SENDD website www.sendd.org.

Education Committee sign-up sheet was passed around for volunteers.

Michael Sothan from Beatrice Main Street welcomed the group to the Black Crow, a destination restaurant driving Beatrice tourism.

Glennis McClure new N-Gage Director also welcomed the SERN group to Beatrice and Gage County. Her office is at the Carnegie building with the Chamber of Commerce building. Glennis noted that workforce development and training is important for economic development as well as business retention and tracking businesses data, and small business culture.

Angie Bruna the Director of Tourism Beatrice also addressed the group. She discussed the transitioning to the tourism position. Beatrice and Gage County has the Homestead monument, Historic Downtown 5th street, picturesque parks, hike and bike trails, Museum and Stone Barn, Welsh Heritage Center, Old west trail center and Rice lodge in Odell. Activities and Events include Homestead Days, Pickrell Days, Sam Wymore days, and Cortland Days. There is a Community theater currently featuring Les Misère, Community Orchestra, a local Art Gallery, and Homestead Harmonizers. She noted that there are lots of recreational opportunities including a race track and water parks.

Round Table Updates:

Michael Sothan (Main Street Beatrice) – Michael noted it is a busy time of year for Beatrice with Homestead Day June 8 -15, 2014. All are invited to Ribfest Saturday June 14th 1:30pm until Midnight. He noted that he is continuing to work on growing Beatrice through the Downtown and Main Street 4-point approach. Currently, Beatrice Main Street is actively seeking applicants for their USDA RBEG program. Also Main Street is working with SCC on a Business incubator program. The Houses and Home Smithsonian traveling exhibit in Beatrice until Memorial weekend. There is a new popcorn stand in the downtown at 5th and Court Street. Main Street continues to work on partnerships in their communities and tourism resources.

Steve Bors (Director SCC Entrepreneurship Center) – In the process of pushing the center's services into communities outside of Lincoln. The center recently received three SBA awards

(Brooke Robbins, Zach Zimmerman, Argyle Octopus). SBA awarded Brook for advocate women's businesses, Zach and Octopus for business of the year.

Brooke Robins (SCC Entrepreneurship Center)

Kelly Morgan (SCC Beatrice Campus) – Kelly manages the noncredit classes. Summer camps on Campus for kids K-8. She also discussed the Land Records and Geology conference.

Becky Hanna (Hanna:Keelen) – Working on Housing, Community and Blight studies.

Patt Lentfer (Fillmore County Economic Development Corporation) – FCDC is working on a new logo and vision for the next 25 years. Milligan hosted super bowl commercial with Pepsi. June Jubilee will have Kris Kagle and Kentucky Headhunter June 13-15. York and Geneva career fair day was held in March. Geneva has a new business downtown the "bindery" which rebinds thousands of books.

Beckie Cromer (Falls City Edge) – Beckie noted that workforce is needed due to industrial growth. Falls City Catholic school is starting a new activity center addition. Dickie's BBQ opened in Downtown Falls City. Falls City and Partners for Progress (P4P) are looking at doing a regional comprehensive plan due to the Niobium projects in Elk Creek which continues to develop. Falls City is hosting State Softball at the end of July.

Max Kathol (City of Crete ED) – Crete has been working on a local CDA, new Blight study and redevelopment plan. Currently working on redevelopment of Dairy Queen and Union Bank TIF projects - \$250,000 recapture to develop in the Hwy corridor. Housing Study from Hanna:Keelen has been complete. Saline County has never had a Historic Survey and will be surveyed this year. Max also noted that he attended the Heartland Institute this April.

Pat Compton (NDED) – Business retention and expansion surveys are the focus this summer. The Director of DED has resigned. Currently in Nebraska there are more jobs than there are people, creating a need for new housing units.

Monica Braun (REAP Women's Business Center) – REAP hosted a resume session and is looking to host some book keeping classes. Imelda Catalan has been working with Hispanic Businesses in Crete and Nebraska City.

Elizabeth Yearwood (SBA) –To date SBA has done 90 million in 231 federally guaranteed loans.

Corrine Peterson (NMPP Energy) – Corrine gave a NEDA conference summary: Gary Krumlen discussed the open meetings act which includes many public groups. Storm chasers discussed natural disasters (tornadoes, floods, fire). Always ask what would tear your community apart. Think of the things you need to survive.

Laureen Riedesel (Beatrice Public Library) – The Library is working on the basement for a geology center and an art center.

Jen Olds (SEND D Lincoln) – SEND D serves 15 counties. SEND D also houses two non-profits SENAHC and Send, Inc. (an NDO). SEND D was successful in assisting Deshler with obtaining a Local Civic/Community Center Financing Funding for a new library and has assisted both Deshler and Friend with CDDA tax Credit applications. SEND D has also been submitting many

housing applications for owner occupied housing rehabilitation and down-payment assistance programs.

Paula Rhian (EXCEL Development) – EXCEL has housing projects in Falls City and Seward. Currently, there are 4 homes in Seward for sale for market rate housing. EXCEL is working on Historic preservation housing building near the capital building.

Emily Bausch (SEND) – SEND continues to work with communities on nuisance enforcement contracts.

Marguerite Hummelberg (SCC) – SCC is working with companies for specialist training and how to recruit employees with training. August 5 8-20am SCC Continuing Education Center is hosting a free grant informational workshop on grants for employee training.

Jim Ulrich (President Plattsmouth Main Street) – Plattsmouth's 300th Anniversary of discovery of the mouth of the Platte celebration will be June 21/22. Historical data and map of the time period will be featured and musical guest Michael Murphy will play the flute and tell stories. There will also be youth activities and food vendors near downtown. There will be dedication of the markers and plaques. David Marsh will be there and play historic instruments. There will also be fur trapping and trading demonstrations.

Charles Jones (Plattsmouth Main Street) – Charles discussed the Downtown fire on Main Street and the specific process for the building. The building is currently under demolition. The Downtown is losing 3 store fronts, bar/pub/ medical facilities returns to downtown, Chiropractor located to another area of town. There are still some vacancies Downtown. City will be purchasing housing development on the river front, looking for camp ground. The entertainment plaza will open in July.

Cheryl Brandenburg (Black Hills Energy) – Cheryl welcomed new Economic Development Directors including Glennis McClure at Ngage in Beatrice and Lisa Shiev in Cass County. Cheryl provided an update on the Northeast Nebraska Norfolk line - a 50-mile natural gas line from Bancroft to Norfolk.

Bob Jones (NDED) – Bob highlighted the changes in Staff and Director at DED. He noted the annual cycle redistributed of funds 1/3 of funds in the 3 congressional districts. DED received 50 applications of pre-applications, which is three times the requests as funding. CDBG Cycle pre-applications due May 30 full apps due July 18, 2014.

Ray Ringlein – (Mike Johann's office) – Federal programs trickling down to regional and local program. There are opportunities for video conferences.

Rick Claybaugh –(Beatrice Main Street) – Rick discussed the Nebraska Governors pheasant hunt and that a Professional athletes will be special guest.

Community Spotlight

Mark Engler – Superintendent Homestead National Monument of America – Established in 1936, the Homestead Act signed in 1862. 1/3 of the nation's population attributed to the Homestead Act, one of the most significant pieces of the legislation throughout US history. Immigrant law, agriculture law, impact on native people, 160 acres was given to each person whether they were a citizen or not. Homestead Monument will be featured on the Nebraska Quarter. Homestead Monument is a source of pride and identity of southeast Nebraska. The

National Park service can help facility with river front and trail development. Park Service also helps with fire disasters. Everyone is encouraged is to visit Homestead National Monument it is free and no passes needed.

ROUND TABLE Updates Continued

Keith Ellis – NPPD – Wind energy conference update.

Stephanie Shrader – NCAED – Rural Futures Initiative will be September 30, 2014 in Nebraska City. NE City has the most golf courses and museum per capita in the state. Fiber optic will be around town. M29 – Marine intercostal highway designation, south of Sioux City to Kansas City. Working with MINK cross promotion of economic development and tourism

Carol Schuester – Schuester – Small interior design studio out of the home. Works with multi residential design.

Lora Young– Beatrice Chamber of Commerce - June 8-15 Beatrice Homestead Days. Beatrice is designing and redeveloping entry signs. There are 3 new restaurants in Beatrice. There will be 50 ball teams coming to town for Memorial Day weekends. Butler Ag and ethanol will be opening in the next month.

Karen Stohs – Department Labor – New app for job search has been launched. 3.3% unemployment rate in Nebraska. Southeast Nebraska area trying to recruit veterans with job skill to located to Nebraska.

Glennis McClure – NGage – Signup sheet for survey Heartland leadership. Intern Nebraska program.

President of Main Street Beatrice – Assist 3 business with some small business loans. Jewelry store project. Running for Mayor of Beatrice

Feature Presentation

Ruben Acosta – Making preservation local

What is Historical Preservation? Landmarks Historic preservation is thinking about landmarks, collections of buildings, public building. Thinking managing and makes communities unique, and recognize what we have.

What is a Certified Local government? – Preservation to at the local level – National Park service, NSHPO, and local community planning and investigation. Primarily involves City Ordinances and tailor needs of the communities. Currently 8 CLG Communities.

What are the Benefits? –CLG are eligible for grant funding. Nebraska Historic Building Survey, GIS system to map historic building. Tax incentive rehabilitation project.

What are the Responsibilities – Must keep building inventories up. 50 years of age is considered historic. Training and Education through training a preservation commissions. National Register of Historic Building is an honorary title with no way to protect them.

How is a CLG Established? – Community leadership desire to preserve historic structures. Zoning regulation allow for community to establish protective ordinances. Local district can regulate ordinance whereas National district cannot.

Heritage Tourism in NE – Bob Puschendorf

Preservation is not an impediment but an opportunity. Communities can use heritage for tourism. What makes communities special. Historical Sites and museums. Historical markers like the Cather Childhood home. Heritage highway tourism include sites and living history.

Cultural Tourism – Performing arts and events example Midwest Theater, south Omaha, Native American heritage

Recreation and Outdoor Activities – Survey for outdoor recreational facilities showed that visiting historical site was 5th most important item.

Eco Tourism – Bird watching and eco-system

Agri-Tourism – hosting events and alternative farming.

Preservation is economic development

Adjournment 1:56pm