

**SERN Meeting
Northeast Quadrant
February 20, 2014
SCC- Entrepreneurship Center Lincoln, NE**

Called to order at 10:00am by Jen Olds chair of SERN. Host, Elizabeth Chase, Nebraska Main Street Network, Inc. welcomed attendees to the Entrepreneurship Center at the Southeast Community College (SCC) continuing education building in Lincoln.

Overview of SERN for new attendees:

SERN is a regional group of resource and service providers, and community leaders interested in the betterment of Southeast Nebraska. SERN is a networking group working to connect resources to communities. Meetings are held quarterly throughout the southeast region. This is the first meeting of 2014.

Treasures Report: No changes in the treasury. Beginning and ending balance is \$1,072.99. No receipts or expenditure.

Acceptance of Minutes: minutes of the November 6, 2013 Hubble meeting was approved as presented. The quarterly meeting minutes were approved as presented on the SENDD website www.sendd.org.

PRN Grant Program & Training Opportunities: Jen Olds presented a grant program available through the PRN that would allow up to \$750 for training activities. This could be potential funds to apply for to conduct another Local Elected Officials training or other type of training in the SERN area. There was some discussion on the training needs for Southeast Nebraska. Volunteers are needed on an "education committee" to plan a future event, contact Jen Olds if you are interested in serving on the committee to plan a training event.

Speakers

Steve Bors, Director SCC Entrepreneurship Center – Steve updated the group on the center's business coaching and business incubator. SCC also connects people to the resources to help them. The business coaching session, are 10 sessions and then the person can be invited into the business incubator. There are a large number of resources provided within the SCC building. Currently, the business incubator has 10 businesses in it. SCC holds a weekly coffee at 10:00am on Thursdays. Incubator tenants and resource providers are encouraged to exchange information, everyone is invited. Steve is currently looking for an advisory board member that is a small business owner outside of Lincoln area.

Brooke Robbins, Assistant Director SCC Entrepreneurship – Brooke also discussed programs offered by SCC Entrepreneurship Center.

Round Table Updates

Rod Armstrong (AIM) – AIM InfoTech, the region's leading information technology, will take place April 15-16, 2014 at the Century Link Center in Omaha. Over 1,500 attended the event last year. Internship 101 a panel presentation on internship programs, will take place on Thursday March 13th at the Assurity Center, 2000 Q Street in Lincoln. The program & Networking is scheduled from 3:30 to 5:00PM, with optional tours of the Assurity Center (Lincoln's First LEED Certified Commercial Building) at 3:00. Panelists are Allison Hatch with

the Department of Economic Development InternNE program, Kim Michael with 1st Job Lincoln, Kelli Smith UNL career service and Armen Badeer with Assurity. There is no cost to attend. Contact Rod Armstrong at 402-323-0703 or rarmstrong@aimforbrilliance.org. The 2014 Broadband Connection Nebraska conference will take place on October 1-2, 2014 at the Younes Conference Center in Kearney. This will be an excellent opportunity for businesses and economic developers to learn about tools and strategies to leverage technology to drive growth.

Jim Ulrich (Plattsmouth Main Street Association) – Plattsmouth Main Street Association held a brainstorming sessions to discuss the mission and vision for 2014. Main Street Association goals for 2014: Educate members on what Main Street can do for them and what the vision and mission are. Establish a good marketing program with professional input. Develop upper level downtown housing- research grants and low interest loans available.

Charles Jones (Plattsmouth Main Street Association Executive Director) – One of the oldest Church buildings in Nebraska located in Plattsmouth is looking at for use as a consolidated building for the Chamber, Main Street, Cass County Economic Development and Tourism. There was a large fire Downtown Plattsmouth, the building has been challenging, considering using LB191 tax credit to help restore the building after all parties involved discussing.

Craig Eberle (SENDD Business Loan Officers) –Craig works in the Lincoln Office and at the western field office in Bradshaw NE. SENDD offers loan programs for small businesses in the SENDD district. Assisting communities look to recapitalize community investments with local revolving loan programs (RLF's) and LB840 programs.

Emily Bausch (SENDD Lincoln Office) – Emily works with communities on a variety of development projects including code enforcement. The SENDD Nuisance Enforcement program assists communities to implement a systematic approach to clear violations from properties.

Robin Ambroz (Nebraska Investment Finance Authority) – Currently in 1st round of application for low income housing tax credit program. NIFA has received 18 applications for Threshold review. The Capital City Breakfast club meets monthly in Lincoln at Thee Egg and I at 70th and A. The First Friday meetings hosted by NIFA includes lunch and provides an opportunity for communities to learn about the resources available.

Jonathan Jank (Seward County Economic Development Corporation) – SCEDC is on the move with recently completing a Seward County Housing Study, contact SCEDC for housing development opportunities. SCEDC received a MAEDC award for their Seward/Lincoln Regional rail campus flier; contact SCEDC for industrial development opportunities. On March 25, 2014 Seward County will be partnering with York and Fillmore counties on a Career day and Job fair at York College contact SCEDC with interest in participating.

Kyle Martin (Nebraska Investment Finance Authority) - Kyle is working with small towns on ways to make blighted areas more attractive.

Carrie McCaleb (Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality) – Brownfields program provides assessment of sites where redevelopment/reuse is hampered by potential contamination. Assistance is free to communities; applicant must be local unit of government or nonprofit development organization. Access agreement needed.

Karen Stohs (Nebraska Department of Labor) –Nebraska Department of Labor has been busy in the region working with Plattsmouth, Weeping Water and Auburn Public Schools on their Revision projects. The Departments role is to help identify high demand, high skill, and high wage occupations within their areas that are in need of workers. The schools then look at what Career and Technical Education courses they can add to enable their students to become either employable with certificates or be ahead in their education to obtain degrees. The Departments Business Service Representatives are busy making contacts with Chamber, Economic Development Organizations and employers to make sure everyone is knowledgeable about services available through the Department of Labor. The Department can assist with hiring needs, business layoff/closure service, veteran services, and information on general labor market data, worker training grants, and labor law safety issues. Businesses having labor issues or question can be referred to one of the Department of Labor offices. The next application deadline for Worker Training Grant dollars is March 31. This money is to help broaden the state's skill pool through grants for training projects that help build productivity, enhance earning capacity and provide job security. The training helps employers improve the quality of goods and services to benefit Nebraska.

Lora Young (Beatrice Chamber of Commerce) – Lora is the New Chamber Director in Beatrice. The Chamber is working on building relationship with businesses, educating on what the chamber can offer both internally and externally. The Chamber is looking to bringing in new education on electronic Marketing/Social media.

Dale Simmions, Rick Clabaugh, & Michael Sothan (Beatrice Main Street) – Beatrice Main Street is moving forward with many community developments and networking. Main Street is looking at developing a Business Incubator program in Beatrice. Retooling our internal marketing efforts form downtown Beatrice with website and social media. Other programs include revolving loan funds, upper story housing, façade renovation and getting a base setup for their potential in Host NE Governor's Pheasant Hunt the 1st weekend in November. Main Street will also hosting Smithsonian exhibit "House & Home" in downtown Beatrice April – May 2014.

Glennis McClure (Nebraska Enterprise Fund) – NEF has a good pipeline of business clients they are busy with currently – excellent bank referrals for gap financing. NEF met with Senator Deb Fischer in Bellevue yesterday along with a couple of their businesses that are doing well and growing. NEF is helping to support GROW Market Tech events and the Women's Business center conference in Grand Island on March 19, 2014.

Bob Pushendorf (Nebraska State Historical Society) – Several programs federal tax credit to assist with housing. LB191 Nebraska Job Creation and Mainstreet Revitalization Act, would authorize a 20% State income tax credit for rehabilitation of income producing historic buildings. On February 20, 2014 LB191 passed general file with 32 ayes 0 nays. It now goes to select file. The program would assist developers and business people with their historic commercial or rental residential projects. Senator Nordquist has named it his priority bill. 20% state income tax credit for Historical Preservation development.

Cat Leverett (SCC Business Coach) – She noted that there was great turnout for Small Business showcase last night.

Brooke Robbins (SCC Business Center) – The center focuses on Business design center and helps prepare business prior to business going into the incubator. SCC is looking to expand into the 15 county areas to have more incubators. Offer Introduction to Entrepreneurship and it

is on all three campuses. Education and food services also take Entrepreneurship to create a diverse program.

Elizabeth Chase (Main Street) – The Nebraska Main Street program provides direct hands-on assistance to our 16 member communities in a variety of different areas including upper floor housing, strategic planning, organizational development, historic preservation. We help our members with very specific needs like after the fire in Plattsmouth and with business incubator development in Beatrice. Our next webinar will be on the various tax incentive programs for historic preservation and how these programs work. The webinar will be open to any community and will be hosted in several of our member communities. The date, time and locations are TBA. Any community can join Main Street. The deadline for communities wishing to become an Associate Member in the first round is June 15th. The second round for 2014 will be December 15th. We will also be launching an individual and business level membership as well as donor opportunities for those who want to give at a higher level. We have our 501c3 designation and our mission is to provide education so communities plan and implement downtown revitalization wisely.

Jerry Magorian (SCC Training Solutions)

Marguerite Himmelberg (SCC)

Amber Guaita (SCC Training Solutions)

Lisa Beethe (SENDD Humboldt) – Lisa is assisting communities with grant and grant administration for affordable housing projects, downtown revitalization, and public works projects.

Jen Olds (SENDD Lincoln) – SENDD is busy with writing grant applications for home owner occupied housing rehabilitation programs, Downtown revitalization, Public Works, and Down payment assistance with Demolition for communities in the 15 county region. SENDD just completed Comprehensive Investment and Stabilization needs assessment projects in Plattsmouth and Nebraska City. The next step will be to make application for the implementation phase in those communities..

Pat Compton (Nebraska Department of Economic Development Housing) – There is new business development field staff representatives based out of Kearney with service area counties to the east including Fillmore, Jefferson, Saline, Thayer, Butler, Polk, York, Nance, Boone, Hall, Merrick, Nuckolls, Adams, Hampton, and Clay. They will provide assistance to start-up and existing businesses for expansion or development; connect businesses with resources available. Housing needs are important and partner with business development.

Lori Richards (Nebraska Film Officer) – Nebraska film office has been involved in coordinating and connecting Nebraska resources from communities across the state. Norfolk and Madison County activating surrounding the film “Nebraska” is good example of many communities coming together to support a feature film. Please call me 402-202-1905 if your community is approached or if you have questions. LB840 LOMEDA 62 communities participate, Fremont Film Community and the community will vote to engage that language to provide incentive to encourage commercial and feature film activities.

Anissa Rasmussen (Nebraska Department of Economic Development) – Annual Cycle housing grant Pre-application due March 7, 2014 and full applications are due April 30, 2014. The CDBG

Owner Occupied Rehabilitation Cycle pre-applications are due May 30, 2014 and full applications are due July 25, 2014.

Paula Rhian (Excel Development Group) – Ambassador and President 71 Units of affordable housing across from the capitol building is a rental rehabilitation project is on target to be funded this week. Wilderness Falls II in Fall City has been submitted to NIFA and DED for 14 senior units. Four townhome units are under construction for sale in Seward.

Roberta Pinkerton (Nebraska Chamber of Commerce Leadership Nebraska) – Roberta is now the Executive Director of the State Chamber's Leadership Nebraska. Leadership Nebraska is now accepting application until April 11 for Class VII which will begin in early June. Leadership Nebraska is a 9 month leadership program for emerging leaders across Nebraska to allow them to better understand the challenges and issues across the state. 25 people will be selective through the application process.

Cheryl Brandenburgh (Black Hills Energy) – Heartland Economic Development basic training is April 6-10, 2014. There are some scholarship options, the Jenny O Scholarship and NEDA scholarship. Black Hills held Natural Gas 101 training in Omaha. Black Hills and NPPD helped package the Seward County ED strategic plan. The Utility Economic Development Association meeting is next week. Doug Gusness relator visits with Lincoln. BHE just compiled our franchise agreements for Wymore and Blue Springs. After the Home Builders show Waverly, Hickman and Seward participated.

Keith Ellis (NPPD Economic Development Consultant) – Economic Development Briefing video conference April 24, 2014. NPPD can assist with strategic planning facilitation for local governments, economic development groups, and chambers of commerce. Upcoming tradeshows in late May Wind Power, AWEA supply chain in Atlanta and will partner with DED and OPPD. NPPD Services include community position, Phd Economist and research staff, Labor Studies, Industry opportunity studies, trend economy studies, and community guide 64 page color magazine. Target Industries include bio fuels/ethanol, food processing, logistics, data center, metal manufacture, wine supply chain manufacturing. Building relationship on regional and national level.

Roger Meeks (USDA Rural Development) – USDA has lots of money for housing programs. Call 402-437-5551 for information. All USDA offices have been moved to the Federal building.

Ray Ringlein (U.S Senator Mike Johanns Office)- Senator Johanns state staff function as the main point of contact for the constituent contacts and concerns, especially on local impacts or federal agency regulations.

Jed Wagner (Job Well Done Concierge)– Small Business owner in the SCC business incubator Job Well Done is Corporate Concierge for administration services on a contract bases.

Nisha Avey (Nebraska Department of Economic Development) –2014 Launch of Edward lone Economic Gardening for second stage business and Ice House Entrepreneurship program to empower learners by exposing them to entrepreneurial thinking.

Corrine Peterson (NMPP Energy) – Work with communities on development. Grand Island last week to view high school career center. Exporting 101 in South City Nebraska – exporting products and services, stamps of origins are added by chamber commerce. Pender Nebraska open house to invited students to industries.

Business Spotlight

Rick Wallace – (Community Development Resource CDR) – Deploy capital to small business, by offering gap financing for creating jobs and supporting business. Offer microloans and CDC loans for real estate deals for existing business. CDR is a Non-profit using loan funding to deploy capital to non-profits to help sustain. CDFI allows them to be responsive to communities.

Zach Zimmerman (Nebraska Business Development Center SBA) -Works lending programs to guarantee the loans. Also helps package loans to encourage lending to small businesses and works with business owners and funders to communicate information with each other. Also NBDC has an office in Auburn.

Jerry Manoria, Marguerite Himmelberg, and Amber Guaita (SCC Continuing Education Programs) – Training people so they have the training they need to be competitive with jobs. Client Solutions looks at changing demographics and leadership development for specific individuals. SCC is working on a blueprint reading class for Southeast NE, and on flexible short term or long term training.

Heidi Grossman (Grow Nebraska) - Global market and preserve local life style. Goal of Grow Nebraska is the promotion of businesses and marketing through education. Website education ecommerce store, and technology. Grow also has service members as well as non-profits.

SERN Business Meeting was adjourned at 12:15 p.m.

Lunch and tour of SCC Entrepreneurship Center followed
