

Southeast (Nebraska) Resource Network (SERN)  
Minutes from SERN Meeting  
August 25, 2016  
York, NE

Hosted by Lisa Hurley, York County Development Corporation  
Facilitated by Craig Eberle, SENDD

46 individuals were present for the business meeting including the following: Kim Betancur (Ayars & Ayars, Inc.), Kelsey Bergen (Henderson Chamber of Commerce), Steve Bors (SCC), Cheryl Brandenburgh (Black Hills Energy), Margaret Brink (City of York), Cheryl Broman (Agri-Products), Keith Carl (Hanna-Keelan), Amy Chesley (SCC), Craig Eberle (SEND D), Steve Eckman (York College), Peggy Galloway (Fairbury Community Foundation), Mandy Hansen (NMPP Energy), Ryan Hansen (Agri-Products), Chuck Harris (Mayor, City of York), Deb Heskett (YCDC), Marguerite Himmelberg (SCC), Lisa Hurley (YCDC), Dr. Paul Illich (SCC), Denise Jensen (NE Department of Corrections), Mary Johnson (Fillmore County Development Corporation), Charles Jones (Plattsmouth Main Street Association), Todd Kirshenbaum (Seward Chamber of Commerce), Lynn Kohout (Nebraska Department of Economic Development), Ryan Kramer (UPN), Loren Kucera (NBDC-Wayne State College), Sharon Kluck (USDA-Rural Development), Brooke Lenhoff (SCC), Patt Lentfer (Fillmore County Economic Development), Glennis McClure (Gage Area Growth Enterprise), Roger McCullough (NBDC), Mike Nagle (Nebraska Manufacturing Extension Partnership), Charlotte Narjes (Nebraska Extension), Rex Nelson (Nebraska Extension), Ruth Peters (NE Department of Labor), Mary Plettner (NPPD), Jordan Rathke (Cornerstone Bank), Griselda Rendon (REAP), Ray Ringlein (Office of Senator Ben Sasse), Marilyn Schlake (Nebraska Extension), Kevin Schluckabier (BCDM Architects), Sarah Skinner (Office of Senator Deb Fischer), Jim Ulrich, (Plattsmouth Main Street Association), Craig Vincent (NPPD), Kim Wallingford, (SCC), Taryn Serwatowski (NDEQ), Joe Luna (Pellet Technology USA).

### **Welcome/Regular Business**

Called to order at 10:05 A.M. by Craig Eberle, SERN Chair. Craig Eberle welcomed attendees to the York College Mackey Center – Miller Room. He then provided an initial orientation to everyone in attendance on the meeting agenda and format.

#### A. Treasurers Report

Chair Eberle directed the attendees to the treasurer's report that was included in the meeting packet. The current balance in the general fund is \$1,155.10. The treasurers report was accepted as presented.

#### B. Acceptance of Minutes

Minutes from the previous SERN meeting (June 2, 2016) in Geneva were distributed with the meeting packet and posted on the SENDD website [www.sendd.org](http://www.sendd.org). No corrections were suggested from the attendees. The previous meeting minutes were accepted as written.

#### C. Other Items

Chair Eberle informed the group that the next SERN meeting will be in Auburn. It will be hosted by Auburn Development Corporation. A date and location should be determined shortly, either

in October or November of this year. Once a date and location is determined he will send out a save-the-date notice to the SERN distribution list.

### **Welcome – Chuck Harris, Mayor of the City of York**

Chuck Harris welcomed everyone attending to the City of York. There are many exciting projects going on York. Some of these include the construction of a new 8 field ball complex. Pellet Technology USA is locating a new facility in York, with construction underway.

### **Round Table Updates – Resource Providers & Community Updates**

*Griselda Rendon (REAP Latino Loan Specialist)* – Working with Latino Entrepreneurs across South Nebraska through technical assistance, trainings/workshops – which can be small groups or one on one, and also microlending. REAP Latino Business Center has partnered with UNL Extension to better assist our clients. Sales Acceleration Workshop is coming September 10, 2016. Two new loan programs: New American Loan Fund and Credit Builder.

*Cheryl Brandenburgh (Black Hills Energy)* – BHE participated in IFT (International Food Technology) Show. Attended corporate headquarter visits with Walmart and Tyson. Looking forward to Husker Harvest Days. Sponsoring and participating with Nebraska Economic Developers Association (NEDA) Training on September 8 and Nebraska Diplomats Program September 9-10. Lincoln Partnership will be doing a farm tour in SE Nebraska (Auburn & Falls City).

*Brooke Lenhoff (SCC)* – Assistant Director with SCC Entrepreneurship Center. Resource hub to grow businesses. Celebrating its 10<sup>th</sup> year.

*Denise Jensen (Nebraska Department of Corrections)* – She is the Agency Recruiter for the Nebraska Department of Correctional Services.

*Kelsey Bergen (Henderson Chamber of Commerce)* – Tour potential: Vision Expedition 2016. Plant your business in York County October 21. New mainstreet this summer. New restaurant – PERKS has opened in Henderson. Created new community events: Rock the Block September 24. Husker tailgate, half time hosting on September 10. Working on starting new daycare center in the community.

*Kevin Schluckabier (BCDM Architects)* – Focus on creating environments that form people. Education, religious “Holy Family Shrine”, Tennant improvement. Long term partners creating functional facilities.

*Lisa Hurley (YCDC)* – Organizing industry tours for educators and salute to manufacturers for National Manufacturing Day. Wrapping up a housing study that shows 500+ units needed. Construction on going on at PTUSA, York Kamground, Ballfield complex, Truck wash and Dairy Queen. Housing strategies are starting to be developed. Partnering with York College to facilitate Marketing Hometown America.

*Mandy Hansen (NMPP Energy)* – First SERN meeting. Moved into Member Service Coordinator role @ NMPP last fall and with that took in economic development duties. Attending this meeting to learn more about economic development issues in NMPP member communities.

*Marilyn Schlake (Nebraska Extension)* – Nebraska Extension is working with the Partners 4 Progress (P4P) team in Southeast Nebraska on developing a regional development plan. Will be offering Marketing Hometown America program in Seward County (Fall) and York County (spring 2017). Also new youth entrepreneurship education/programs will be available this fall for all ages. Currently looking for locations.

*Todd Kirschenbaum (Seward Chamber of Commerce)* – Working on annual Christmas festival. Working on eclipse event for next year – they are on the northern edge of path. Participating in Marketing Hometown America program.

*Taryn Serwatowski (Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality)* – NDEQ has resources available for Phase I and Phase II Environmental Site Assessments and asbestos abatement. Willing to speak at a future meeting to go into more detail.

*Margaret Brink (City of York-Four Corners Health Dept.-President, Board of Health)* – Budget-City – city election – good interest = Future Housing initiatives. 8 plex ballfields in Northeast York across from FAC (Family Aquatic Center). Holthus Convention Center – SCC office, Satellite office and classroom. I-80 and 81 interchange-camper overnight park – more infrastructure across the interstate to come.

*Mary Plettner (NPPD)* – Upcoming events at NPPD: World Dairy Expo – October 4. Job Tech Expo – November 18, co-sponsor with Lincoln Partnership and DED.

*Lynn Kohout (Nebraska Department of Economic Development)* – Field Service Representative for Douglas, Sarpy, Cass and Burt counties. Also main point of contact for Department's Economic Development Certified Community Program. Governor and Department has announced state brand "Good Life. Great Opportunities". Department is continuing to engage with existing companies through business retention & expansion visits.

*Kim Betancur (Ayars & Ayars, Inc.)* – True design-build company. Love small towns, do business all over United States. Current projects: OCT, Hebron, Aurora, (Hamilton County), First State Bank, Wenger Mfg. in Sabetha, Kansas. Assisted living facility in Overland Park, Kansas. Pet food facility in Omaha. Just finished Davita, NRD. Always at the University.

*Peggy Galloway (Fairbury Community Foundation)* – Fairbury Courthouse 125<sup>th</sup> rededication celebration: Saturday September 10, 8am – 2pm.

*Sarah Skinner (Office of US Senator Deb Fischer)* – During August news for Congress, Senator Fischer continues to hold community coffees/listening sessions across the state, as well as meetings, tours & events. She chaired a Small Business & Entrepreneurship Committee field hearing in Lincoln addressing access to capital, regulations & microloans, as part of a bill Senator Fischer introduced. Senator Fischer introduced legislation with Senator Lankford for greater congressional oversight of taxpayer expenditures from the Judgement Fund. Senator Fischer's PIPES ACT bill was signed into law by the President & provides more safety oversight of pipelines across the country.

*Jordan Rathke (Cornerstone Bank)* – Works in commercial lending at Cornerstone Bank in York.

*Glennis McClure (NGage /Beatrice Gage County)* – New downtown historic district designation. Utilizing housing study – Calling developers. E-ship work –growing new & work with transitions. BRE – existing business & industry growth. Community branding – "Stake Your Claim"

(NGAGE, BPS, City, Main Street, Chamber). Support SCC Bond Issue. Eclipse for 2 minutes and 35 seconds on August 21, 2017 – “Get Mooned in Beatrice.” Wymore-Blue Springs Area Fund – affiliate with NEF.

*Sharon Kluck (USDA Rural Development)* – Rural Development has been holding Town Hall meetings in 38 communities to inform lender and, general public on housing loans, grants & rentals. Interest ratio direct HA loans 2.8%. The guarantee annual fee is .35%. Community programs have participated with York Adopt-a-Pet animal shelter, McCool Junction (water & sewer), Henderson Health Care Hospital, Ulysses Sew project & HVAC for community auditorium. Business & Industry – Guarantee Funds available. Start-up business & job creation with Rural Micro entrepreneur Assistance program. Intermediary Relending Program, Rural Business Development Grant. MFH available program is Guaranty, on and off farm labor housing.

*Charlotte Narjes (UNL Ag Economics)* – Nebraska Extension has been focused on offering programs/processes statewide. Examples of programs include: Marketing Hometown America, ECAP, SET. The common thread for each of these programs is engaging the communities to move to action. Pilots for the programs were held in Ashland, Central City & Thayer County for ECAP. Looking for other communities to participate. There are 2 extension education positions open in Southeast Nebraska. One in David City and one in Hebron. Encourage people to apply. Go to: <https://employment.unl.edu>.

*Craig Vincent (Nebraska Public Power District)* – NPPD’s service territory includes 86 of Nebraska’s 93 counties. In addition to being an electric supplier, we partner with our customers And communities to add value to the electric commodity. Among the services we provide in the area of economic development are marketing materials, strategic planning and positioning and industrial recruitment. Possibly the most important economic development service we offer is assistance with business retention and expansion. We also partner with communities and other agencies to market Nebraska at industry trade shows. Lastly, we work with individual customers on energy use issues.

*Keith Carl (Hanna-Keelan Associates, P.C.)* – Completed a housing study Gage & Fillmore County. Downtown Revitalization Project – Phase I, Beatrice (In Progress). Two blight & Substandard Determination Studies & General Redevelopment plans, Beatrice. Completed Comprehensive Plan & Community Housing Study in Pawnee City.

*Mike Nagle (Nebraska MEP)* – Promoting food safety programs through the Food Processing Center at Innovation Campus. Working with small to medium size manufacturing companies throughout Nebraska to make them more productive and sustainable.

*Charles Jones (Plattsmouth Main Street Association)* – Riverfront, New Apartments, 97% fill rate. Branding Study. October Car Show – October 7, Harvest Festival 85<sup>th</sup> annual. Summer music program ends this week.

*Kym Wallingford (SCC –York)* – SCC-York Learning Center. Currently offering credit classes, contract trainings for area business and professional skills trainings for the public. Entrepreneurship coffee @ Captain Red Beards October 12, 2016 @ 10:00 a.m.

*Jim Ulrich (Plattsmouth Main Street. Association)* – Success: 2000 sq. ft. loft style apartment open. Remodel existing apartment building, creating 2 new apartments, restoring 2 facades on Main St.

*Marguerite Himmelberg (SCC)* – SCC Continuing Education is developing Lean Six Sigma Continuous Improvement training with Green Belt Public. Enrollment classes beginning September 13<sup>th</sup>. Meeting with Plattsmouth task force teams next week to learn about priorities and interests for the learning center – soon to be open.

*Ruth Peters (Nebraska Department of Labor)* – York Career Centers. Focus on York and Fillmore County. Have 383 jobs. Struggle to find employers to fill those positions. Work with both employers and employees to find jobs. Look at ranges of wages. Also work with schools.

*Roger McCullough (NBDC/PTAC)* – NBDC/PTAC has a variety of training/networking workshops. Past “Greet the Buyer” events included State of Nebraska, Lincoln/Lancaster, NE National Guard, UNL, and Lincoln Electric Systems. Future events will be held on November 4, 2016: SBA, Offutt AFB, Army Corps of Engineers, DOT, DOR, National Parks, VA, HUD and GSA. We also do training for business, certificates, women owned businesses.

*Rex Nelson (UNL Extension)* – I am in the development stage for a new position with UNL Extension. Business development bank systems. I will be offering programming and technical assistance to new and expanding businesses in fresh and processed foods and agri-tourism.

*Ray Ringlein (U.S. Senator Ben Sasse Office – Lincoln)* – Senator Sasse held a series of 23 constituent service town halls across the state in August. Highlighting the work his in-state staff focuses on in helping Nebraskans navigate difficulties they are having with Federal Agencies.

*Amy Chesley (SCC Dean of Continuing Education)* - After conducting an analysis of our regional needs, it was quickly discovered educational activities were lacking in the 12 of 15 counties throughout SCC’s service area. In 2015 we implemented a comprehensive 5-year Strategic Plan which included the establishment of 6 Learning Centers. Our first Learning Center began in January 2016 in York, operating out of the Holthus Convention Center. Since then, we have leased space in downtown Nebraska City and after some minor construction, we are happy our second facility is now operational with a nice mixture of credit and noncredit opportunities and services being offered this fall. Next in line is our Plattsmouth Learning Center and following will be Falls City, Wahoo and Hebron. We are excited to bring educational services to the communities within our service area and look forward to forging partnerships to attract, grow and sustain economic activities in Southeast Nebraska.

*Loren Kucera (NBDC – Wayne State College)* – Wayne State College is in the process of securing funding for a state-of-the-art Center for Applied Technology to address workforce and economic development in Nebraska. Wayne State College’s School of Business and Technology has a strong reputation of graduating well prepared students who serve as industrial technology educators and leaders. The Center for Applied Technology will continue to attract first rate students and faculty and increase the number of industrial technology teachers, diversified manufacturing managers, construction and safety managers, drafters and computer programmers. Wayne State College is the only four-year institution in Nebraska that offers an Industrial Technology Education major. One hundred percent (100%) of the students in this program are employed in school districts upon graduation and 75% are in Nebraska.

*Patt Lentfer (Fillmore County Development Corporation)* – Construction continues on the new aquatic pool in Geneva. The Fillmore County-wide Housing study is complete. Major construction improvement projects are completed in the area schools, Shickley, Fillmore Central and Exeter-Milligan. The 2016 Career Tour for juniors in Fillmore County will be held September 14. The concert “String Beans” was held in the front of the Rialto II Theatre and approximately 140 young people and adults attended. Construction is continuing on the

Fortigen nitrogen plant. Two day cares have opened in the county. The Fillmore County Hospital continues to grow and need employees. Fillmore County held a tire recycling in August. A welcome home is being planned this Saturday, August 27th for Fillmore Central Maggie Malone, a 2016 Olympic javelin thrower. Odegeo Leadership for Fillmore County 2016-2017 starts in September, runs through May 16<sup>th</sup>.

*Mary Johnson (Fillmore County Development Corporation)* – Works alongside Patt Lentfer at FCDC.

*Craig Eberle (SEND)* – SEND office has moved to a new location (2100 Fletcher in Lincoln). SEND provides grant writing, administration and technical assistance for a wide range of programs involving housing, public works, community and economic development. Oversees SEND, Inc. which is a 501(c)(3) that is approved as an NDO and also has loan funds available for small businesses. Administer 14 different revolving loan funds for counties and communities, including CDBG Program Income Reuse, LB840 and USDA-RD REDLG.

## **Community and Business Spotlights**

### *Joe Luna, Pellet Technology USA*

Joe Luna is the Manager of Business Strategy for Pellet Technology USA. He delivered a power point presentation to the SERN group on this business. Seven years ago a small group of guys started with a business concept. Taking field waste and transforming it into a marketable commodity. They are taking corn stover and converting it to a high value energy feed. A very scientific technology is being used to convert fiber to energy. Their existing commercial facility is in Gretna, NE. The York area was a perfect fit to expand their operations, with many farmers and quality corn stover available within a 50 mile radius. They have started construction on the new facility in York. They can produce 200,000 tons of animal feed. This business model can provide a stable income to area farmers, as well as quality feed for area feeders. Total project is \$38 million, estimating about 40 new jobs for now.

## **LUNCH – York College – Mackey Center (Miller Room)**

### **Adjourn SERN Business Meeting**

SERN Business Meeting was adjourned.

### **Feature Presentation: Cheryl Brandenburgh and Mary Plettner – Community/Economic Development Readiness**

Cheryl Brandenburgh with Black Hills Energy delivered a presentation Community/Economic Development Readiness. This included an executive summary emphasizing that efforts by local community members are likely to have the greatest and most sustainable impact in solving local problems. She then indicated a need to evaluate the current situation in the community. Economic development is a collaborative process that builds strong adaptive economies. Leadership is key. Some of the basics include LOIS, web presence, relationships with businesses/key leaders and partnerships with state agencies, just to name a few. She described some of the risks of implementing, or not implementing. Cheryl described what Black Hills Energy can do for communities, as well as a timeline for the process.

Mary Plettner with Nebraska Public Power District (NPPD) delivered a presentation about NPPD's role in economic development. This started with an overview of NPPD's generation

profile and resources. NPPD's vision and missions were then shared, as well as who is on NPPD's economic development team. She described NPPD's economic development program focus, which includes Community/Regional Positioning and Business Development. She then went into further detail on how they assist communities with each focus area. NPPD does put together full color-magazine style community guides. A lot of information can be found on NPPD's economic development website (<http://econdev.nppd.com/>). Other online features include LOIS assistance, site and building brochures, and web development assistance for communities.

Mary continued her presentation by going over Nebraska's economic outlook. NPPD provides marketing and research assistance to communities. NPPD facilitates and partners in many expansion and retention activities. She described NPPD's wholesale economic development incentive rate. NPPD staff attend trade shows, participate in geographic recruitment trips, and attend site selector meetings and events. NPPD can provide assistance with consultation, prospect proposals, and prospect visit planning. Mary concluded her presentation by sharing some tips from Janet Ady of Ady Advantage.

### **Dr. Paul Illich – SCC Bond Issue Update**

Dr. Paul Illich gave a presentation to the SERN group on the SCC bond issue. He provided everyone with some history on how SCC began, and has evolved through the years. Southeast Community College implemented its new 2015-2019 Strategic Plan to meet student, employer and community needs in its 15 county service area. This plan is designed to address two main issues: 1. Lack of qualified workers and 2. High cost to attend college. SCC did a Facilities Master Plan as a part of this planning process. In this Facilities Master Plan it identified the need to be more accessible to people in the 15 county area. Thus they are in the process of implementing six new learning centers across the region, including one here in York. The plan also includes replacing facilities on the Beatrice Campus and renovating/adding new facilities on the Milford campus. They also plan to renovate the 8800 "O" Street Lincoln campus, and establish a new campus near downtown Lincoln. Information about the 2016 bond issue can be found at [www.southeast.edu/bondissue2016](http://www.southeast.edu/bondissue2016).

### **The Clayton Museum of Ancient History**

The Clayton Museum of Ancient History featuring the Stanback collection includes a wide array of artifacts, with the core of the collection focused around the Roman soldier. This facility offers enhancements for classroom instruction in history and biblical studies, and provides an excellent collection that the college shares with the public. The museum is housed in the lower level of the Phyllis Mackey Center.

At this time tours of The Clayton Museum of Ancient History were conducted for SERN meeting attendees.