

SouthEast (Nebraska) Resource Network (SERN)
Minutes from SERN Meeting
June 29, 2017
Beatrice, NE

Hosted by Gage Area Growth Enterprise (NGage)
Facilitated by Crystal Dunekacke, SENDD

34 individuals were present for the business meeting including the following:

Patt Lentfer (Fillmore County Development Corporation), Jacob Nutter (Fillmore County Development Corporation), Lonnie Dickson (Hanna:Keelan), Stan Wirth (Mayor – City of Beatrice), Myron Dorn (Gage County), Crystal Dunekacke (SENDDD), Tom Bliss (SENDDD), Jaclyn Fee (SENDDD), Brook Lenhoff (SCC), Cat Leverett (SCC), Whitney Antons (NE Department of Labor), Tom Hanson (Department of Education), Walker Zulkoski (NGage), Glennis McClure (NGage), Michael Sothan (Main Street – Beatrice), Ray Ringlein (Senator Sasse), Kurt Montoya (Heartland Center for Leadership Development), Elizabeth Chase (NE Main Street Network), Jerrod Reimers (Senator Smith), Roy Baker (Nebraska State Senator), Diane Wettstein (TCEDA), Monica Braun (REAP), Denise Jensen (NE Department of Corrections), Jessica Jones (NE Extension – Johnson County), Jen Olds (Peter Kiewit Foundation), James Frager (Fairbury), Judy Frager (Fairbury), Marguerite Himmelberg (SCC), Deb Eggleston (DED), Marilyn Schlake (NE Extension), Quentin Farley (NBDC), Sarah Skinner (Senator Fisher), Beckie Cromer (Falls City EDGE), Dan Mauk (NCAEDC),

Welcome/Regular Business

Called to order at 10:00 a.m. by Crystal Dunekacke with SENDD. Walker Zulkoski and Mayor Stan Wirth welcomed everyone to Beatrice.

A. Treasurers Report

Crystal Dunekacke directed the attendees to the treasurer's report that was included in the meeting packet. The current balance in the general fund is \$1,122.10. Moved by Cromer, seconded by Mauk to approve the treasurer's report. Motion carried.

B. Acceptance of Minutes

Minutes from the previous SERN meeting (March 23, 2017) in Nebraska City were distributed with the meeting packet. Moved by Mauk, seconded by Himmelberg to approve the minutes as presented. Motion carried.

C. Other Items

No other items were discussed at this time.

Round Table Updates – Resource Providers

Michael Sothan – Main Street Beatrice – It has been busy in Beatrice. 2016 to today 24 businesses have started, 15 have closed/moved. We are an active business incubator

for our community. Downtown recently listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Two HTC projects have started. Some interest in downtown housing. New DTR/CDBG Phase II grant for façade improvements. Expecting 2-4 million in downtown investments. Starting a market-driven retail study w/downtown emphasis this summer during 2017-2018.

Ray Ringlein – Senator Sasse – The month of August is a state travel month for congressional office. If there are any businesses in your community that would be interested in having the Senator tour and work with employees let our state offices know. We can send the invitations to the schedulers. Encourage people to call our state offices to share thoughts and concerns.

Kurt Montoya – Heartland Center for Leadership Development – Completed our facilitation work in Pilger, NE. Wrote a community development curriculum for a network of Minnesota CD professionals. October – Helping Small Towns Succeed. Rural Futures Interns – helped with community selection and course teaching. North Platte, McCook, York, West Point.

Elizabeth Chase – Nebraska Main Street Network – Recently launched our new design program in Neligh. Had a very successful building redevelopment workshop in Omaha with restoration exchange. Working with our Main Street communities on the new refresh of the approach and had a great webinar Tuesday to launch the refresh. We will be hosting the National Main Street CEO at the end of July in Fremont and Beatrice.

Tom Hanson – Department of Education – Committee of education – workforce development with high schools.

Jerrod Riemers – Senator Smith – Eastern part of the state. Choice Act, Davis-Bacon re-do. New sub-committee chairmanship. Farm Bill listening tours. Three in August travels.

Whitney Antons – Nebraska Department of Labor – Operation Employ! – Auburn, Beatrice, Falls City, Hebron. 10-20 employers & 20-40 job seekers attend. August 23, 2017 Explore It @ SCC-Beatrice. 400 high school students & 40 employers including a panel for career and technical education.

Myron Dorn – Gage County – Gage County Board of Commissioners Chair. Hannah:Keelan zoning update. Assess zoning regulations with ag and acreages, infrastructure. Work to keep up to date roads paved around hospital to connect to Homestead 40 years in the making. Bridges in need of updates for functional needs of today.

Roy Baker – Nebraska Legislature – Represents Legislative District 30. Gage County, Southern Lancaster and south part of Lincoln. SE Nebraska Career Academy founder. SCC/High School business partnerships.

Patt Lentfer – Fillmore County Development Corporation – Fortigen Geneva, L.L.C. – construction is in full swing with about 200 workers on site. Production of anhydrous ammonia is slated to begin the end of July 2017.

Milligan 41 Express – continues construction on the corner of Highway 41 and Road 24 by Milligan. They are planning on opening sometime in July.

Flint Hills Resources – started construction on their new \$50 million expansion that will produce NexPro, a high protein animal and fish feed from about 20% of their distiller's grain.

The Odegeo Leadership for Fillmore County held their graduation ceremony June 20 with sixteen graduates.

Fillmore County Development Corporation – has a summer intern, Jacob Nutter. He is from Geneva and is attending UNK at Kearney.

FCDC staff and board members along with utility partners Rick Nelson and Craig Vincent from NPPD and Deb Eggleston from DED visited twenty manufacturing businesses to complete Business Retention and Expansion surveys in the month of June.

A ribbon cutting was held at the new Geneva Aquatic Center on May 26. The aquatic center cost \$3.9 million, which was lower than the original bond.

Milligan, Ohioa, Fairmont and Strang held their summer celebrations in June. Geneva and Exeter will hold events in July.

A Household Hazardous Waste recycling collection was held April 1 at the County Shop.

Blue Stem Energy will start building three wind towers west of Fairmont with the power being purchased by Perennial Public Power.

Since Fillmore County will be totally in the dark during the solar eclipse on August 21, 2017. Communities are making plans for lots of visitors. Parking areas and food will be available.

“Endless Possibilities” a flea market type retail store opened in Geneva and is located on F Street (Highway 41) across from the courthouse.

Have a 54,200 square foot building for sale in Geneva (former Sunflower Marketing manufacturing plant).

Diane Wettstein – Thayer County Economic Development Alliance – Busy times. In the Carleton area the Nebraska Shrimp Co. is in construction. Hoping to have shrimp in to start up raising process by the end of July. Working with realtors to get L.O.I.S. going for county promotion of what is available. Two communities working together with TCEDA to get Leadership Certified. Visiting Hemingford, NE to get assistance in the process and see the community. Working with the Rural Fire Department on construction of a new firehouse in Bruning. Daycare – Bruning (northern Thayer County) committee planning & site development for new daycare. Strong need for daycare throughout the county. Waiting list of 25 children and families that are planning

for future. SCC open in Hebron. Crystal Fangmeyer – offering classes in future to help build skills in local mechanical/manufacturing areas. Business moving into Hebron from a person's home. New Mexican restaurant – 3 Compadres. Opened May 29th. Corner of Hwy 81 & 9 – spot purchased with plans in the works for a new travel/gas stop.

Monica Braun – Rural Enterprise Assistance Project (Women's Business Center) – ESI (Youth Entrepreneurship) camp in Seward – July 6-12, 2017. Co-Sponsor with SCCDP, Seward County Extension and SCC. Sales/Use tax seminar with NGage on September 6. Online Marketing Strategies – Hebron on September 18 w/SCC Learning Center. REAP is continuing to do loans in all regions. Alice Integrity Loan Fund Loans in select counties.

Walker Zulkoski - NGage – Conduction hotel study, retail study. Wrapping up housing study projects. Working with Excel Development on a Workforce/Senior Housing project to tear down an old hospital and replace with homes.

Denise Jensen – Nebraska Department of Corrections – New hiring is ongoing.

Jessica Jones – Nebraska Extension – Extension Educator out of Johnson County. Non-profit boot camp. Board Development – upcoming this fall.

Jen Olds – Peter Kiewit Foundation – Foundation recap. July grant cycle. July 15/October 15.

Lonnie Dickson – Hanna:Keelan Associates – Planning throughout the region. Housing market studies, DTR planning, Blight & Substandard plans.

James Frager – Jefferson County – Bonham Theater, four new downtown businesses. PVI. Highway 136 is closed. Swimming pool project - \$5 million grant. Industrial Hemp. Pivot Guard. Windtower.

Marguerite Himmelberg - SCC – Highlights from President's May Board Meeting:

- With the recent renovation of the Hebron Center completed, we now have Four Learning Center facilities operational offering both credit and non-credit courses. We purchased 9 acres in Falls City where we plan to build a center and are working with the Coordinating Commission for Postsecondary Education on the review and approval process as required for capital construction.
- Provided a brief update on Phase I of the Facilities Master Plan: Our needs have not changed. We still have a worker crisis and the need for affordable access to higher education. The Board has reviewed proposed projects; implementation based on Board approval would likely be sometime in the 2017-18 year. SCC will be communicating to its entire service area once the Board has approved the initial projects and financing;
- Dual Credit and SENCAP programs have experienced significant enrollment increases over the past few years in part due to recent cuts in the tuition for dual credit courses. 37 schools participate in SENCAP and more than 1900 students enrolled in dual credit courses in 2016.

Continuing Education Highlights in the area:

- Motor Controls class recently held at the Beatrice Campus
- Welding class recently held in Auburn
- Fall Nursing Assistant Classes scheduled in Beatrice, Auburn and Falls City
- Fall Med Aid classes scheduled in Beatrice and at Nemaha County Good Samaritan
- GAP Tuition Assistance is available for short-term training for in-demand jobs. Full or partial tuition assistance based on eligibility for courses such as Med Aide, Leadership, Lean/Six Sigma, Manufacturing.
<https://www.southeast.edu/cefinassist>
- Fall Lean Manufacturing, Six Sigma White, Yellow and Green Belt training. These are GAP Tuition approved courses. [**Six Sigma White & Yellow Belt Training**](#)

Deb Eggleston – DED – LB 518 – guidelines and process being worked on. LB840 – workforce housing added – plan amendment process being shared with development districts and communities. Daycare third most common business concern – think about being proactive. BRE's – Geneva, Hickman. Ribbon cuttings and celebrations, Endicott Clay, Dietrich Shrimp Farm upcoming. Recently Beatrice, Falls City and Geneva. Linda Black – SE P4P – manufacturing, education, partnerships.

Marilyn Schlake – Nebraska Extension – Southeast P4P/SET continues to move forward. June 1, 2017 held youth entrepreneurship summit. Awarded U.S. Chamber Talent Pipeline focused on workforce development. Next meeting July 7, 2017 in Auburn. Currently looking for communities wanting to conduct community encouragement/planning for the Fall of 2017/2018. Eship Summit will be held November 2, 2017 in Kearney. UNL – working to get a Master Certificate program developed for community/economic development, purpose for offer in Fall 2018. Nebraska Youth Eship team lining up communities for 2017/2018. Education program 3rd – 12th grades. RFP seeking a community to host the Connection Entrepreneurial Communities Conference, hold in April 2018.

Brook Lenhoff - SCC – Everyone's invited to Perk Up – Thursday open coffees. 10:00 a.m. every Thursday. Ending our ten year anniversary celebration. Rebranding our business incubator to focus suites. Now able to accommodate established businesses and not just start-ups. Flexible lease terms and business coaching available. We are looking for new advisory committee members. Email Brook @ blenhoff@southeast.edu if interested.

Quentin Farley - NBDC – DUNS and SAM registrations, assist with market research on government contracts. Have offices in Omaha, Lincoln, Wayne and Kearney. Services are free. Businesses doing work for the federal government will need to have compliant cybersecurity plans in place by the end of the year. Contact me for the list of requirements. Greet the buyers event in September will have UNL, LES and National Guard.

Beckie Cromer – Falls City EDGE – Falls City welcomed a new industry, Falls City Foods, a meat by-product supplier to the pet food industry. This project included \$425,000 in new and reuse CDBG funding. Installed a new power generator at the power plant. \$12 million investment. We were the launching point for BRAN 2017. Gained approval for construction of the SCC Learning Center by Nebraska Post Secondary Coordination Commission. \$10 million hospital expansion. Partnering with DED on Nebraska Talent Team on workforce and people recruitment. Total solar eclipse event site and event. Kearney welding is completing construction on a 10,000 square foot facility including 5 new employee on a three acre site.

Tom Bliss – SENDD – Daycare/workforce. Federal Funds/CDBG/USDA-RD/EDA. Keep these on radar – talk to federal officials.

Glennis McClure – NGage – Excel Development – old hospital teardown, add senior housing and workforce housing. Retail Market Study – will contract with Todd Barman. Recent ribbon cuttings – Worldlawn new facility and Duonix Bio-Diesel. Working closely with small businesses – existing and new. Beatrice High School proactively working to connect students to work based opportunities. Eclipse – NASA site. Education – manufacturing/business connections. Wymore – park project, new foundation group.

Sarah Skinner – Senator Fischer – Senator Fisher supported the National Defense Authorization Act in the Armed Services Committee, and as Chair of the Strategic Focus Subcommittee, particularly funding for nuclear deterrence. In May Senator Fisher welcomed Agricultural Secretary Perdue to her ranch for an agricultural roundtable. Senator Fisher is working on FAA reauthorization and led a bipartisan letter to Transportation Secretary Chap to protect programs vital to community airports. Senator Fisher has worked on the EPW committee for E15 and renewable fuel options year round. Senator Fisher has continued efforts to bring infrastructure solutions, including broadband and roads.

Dan Mauk – Nebraska City EDC – Partners 4 Progress/SET – entrepreneurship educators workshop at Peru State College. Daycare and housing are top two issues. Ground breaking in July. 65 room Holiday Inn Express. NIFA LIHTC award – 28 units senior housing @ the Ambassador. NE 150 Events every month. Chautauqua. LB840 report/public hearing. \$667,000 loan balance all repaying loans. Both the 4th Corso viaduct and the No. 11th Street Bridge will be replaced. Both Cargill and Honeywell are adding 100 employees each – next year.

Community & Business Spotlights – *Patty Kaufman – Exmark Manufacturing*

Patty Kaufman, Exmark financial planning manager and Community Giving Committee member presented on the variety of projects that Exmark and their employees have supported. These project range in size from mover giveaways to playgrounds in Beatrice and surrounding communities.

Lunch

Classic's Bar & Grill

SERN Business Meeting adjourned at 12:50 p.m.

Feature Presentation and Tour

5 Minute Community “NGage”ment Stories:

1. Rice Lodge – Odell

Representatives from the Rice Lodge and Conference Center in Odell, Nebraska presented an overview of their project. Originating with a donation of the Rice Hospital by the Bank of Odell to the Odell Community Foundation, the Rice Lodge and Conference Center is now currently owned by the Village of Odell. No Village funds have ever been used to benefit the restoration or operation of the Lodge, as the Lodge is self-sustaining. The Lodge has 10 bedrooms, each with its own private bath. The facility has a total sleeping capacity of 26.

2. Odell Market

Two representatives from the Odell Market presented on the Odell Community Market. Now an LLC owned by a group of residents, the business is the result of the determination of Odell’s citizens to maintain a grocery store in their community.

3. Pickrell Park Improvements

Marilyn Schlake presented on the Pickrell Park Improvements. The community of Pickrell Nebraska (population 195) has come together to identify projects and improve their community park.

4. Little Libraries – Beatrice

Beatrice Little Free Library project has created small free libraries in locations throughout Beatrice to increase access to books throughout the community.

5. Beatrice Downtown Revitalization & Historic Designation

Michael Sothan, Executive Director of Main Street Beatrice presented an overview of the projects and accomplishments of Main Street Beatrice.

Golf or Industry Tour

Industry Tour : WorldLawn – 401 N Commerce in Beatrice.