

Ne Development Network-Central Region
Guide Rock NE City Building
October 12, 2011

Present:

Laurie Ely, Guide Rock
Lee Doughman, Guide Rock
Tim Cole, Guide Rock
Tonia Schmids, Superior
Jay Hall, Red Cloud
Dena Beck, Minden Rural Enterprise Assistance Project-REAP, NDN-CR Secretary
Gerold Ohmsteds, Guide Rock
Sherry Kniep, Superior
Shawn Kaskie, Kearney UNK Center for Rural Research and Development, NDN-CR Co-Chair
Paul Bartlett, Kearney USDA Rural Development
Larry Brittenham, Superior
Alison Ficociello, South Central Economic Development District-SCEDD Disaster Preparedness Coordinator
Jodi Garrelts, SCEDD Business Manager
Jim Gorman, Franklin SCEDD Board Member
Rick Nelsen, Columbus NPPD
Keith Ellis, Lincoln NPPD
Merrill Duntz, Clay Center South Central Public Power District
Cindy Sanders, Guide Rock

10:00 am Welcome Tim Cole, Village Board Chair.

Introductions of the 19 attendees.

10:08 am Business Meeting, Shawn Kaskie, Co-Chair

Minutes from August 2011 approved.

Financial Report, Rick Nelsen, Treasurer. First Bank and Trust Co of Minden; balance \$3,021.76. Currently Rick, Sharon Hueftle and Dena Beck are on the signature card.

Election of new Treasurer. Postponed elections until the strategic planning meeting in December. Approved unanimously. Business can still be conducted with the members on the signature card.

Old Business

Annual Newsletter, Andrea McClintic was not present. Newsletter is not on the web site yet.

Website Updates –**members are encouraged to check out the web site for updates and information.** www.ndnrc.com The web site will be reviewed at the strategic planning meeting.

Merrill Duntz, South Central Public Power – discussed the Cairo meeting in August. He met with the economic development group after the NDN-CR meeting.

New Business

10:21 am Roundtable Reports:

Merrill- South Central Public Power – Energy Wise program – heat pumps, lighting, wells, etc. incentives, these will only last through 2011. Street Lights in communities is a project they are focusing on.

Keith- Business Consultant with NPPD, moved from South Sioux City to Lincoln and will take over Rick Nelsen's area serving communities.

Rick – new NPPD Economic Development Manager. Offices out of Columbus now. NPPD did not fill some positions and are looking at evaluating procedures, etc. There are 11 NPPD staffers across the state.

Jim-serves on SCEDD board; discussed SCEDD grant writing, community counseling, community needs surveys, etc. Franklin has a Heritage Ne *Fading Places* building west of the library. He is hopeful that last building with the Franklin Academy standing will be able to receive funding to restore the building.

Jodi-SCEDD Business Manager, strategic town hall meetings, grant for communities including storm sewers, street improvement, etc. Nuisance Abatement is a new offering of SCEDD. Nuisance Abatement was explained and how it could be helpful in small communities. Also, offering brownfields workshops to bring information to the communities in the SCEDD area. A brownfield is an area in the community that is underutilized.

Alison-SCEDD Disaster Recovery & Preparedness Coordinator has a program for communities and businesses that are for SCEDD communities; she has spoken with Chambers, large and small businesses, service clubs, emergency managers, etc.

Larry-Superior Economic Development Board and Tourism.

Paul- USDA Rural Development has 40 programs; some grants and some loans. #1 thing to remember, call the nearest office if you have questions; 308-237-3118.

Shawn-UNK Center for Rural Research and Development; Entrepreneurship Education is the general focus; Central Ne Business Idea Contest - \$1000 prize for the best 60 second video pitching your business idea. Business Transition training for community members is coming up Nov. 29th is the first session. UNK has a speaker series everyone is welcome to attend. UNK CRRD does Community Needs Assessments will be needed prior to applying for certain grants.

Feasibility and Market Research for businesses- some free (secondary market research) and some for a fee (primary market research). UNK also has access to interns to assist small businesses in the area. Labor Market Survey is offered as well.

Larry- Superior Tourism and Economic Development Corporation.

Sherry-Superior Chamber of Commerce Director and Economic Development Corporation.

Gerold-discussed Trailblazer RC&D and some of their projects including electronics clean up, tire recycling, household hazardous waste, etc. Twin Valley Weed Management area and their work on the river and rural water system in Guide Rock (loan and grant from Rural Development).

Dena-REAP is the nation's largest microenterprise development organization serving rural in the nation. Serving small businesses (10 full time equivalent employees and less) in the rural areas (communities of 50,000 and less). Loan fund goes up to \$50,000; average loan size is \$7,800. To date REAP has loaned close to \$7 Million. MarketPlace will be in Kearney again this year the last Wednesday in February. MarketPlace is a one-day workshop for small businesses.

Jay-gave history of experience with SW Ne Development Network group and some activities of that group including a labor market surveys. I-80 Coalition did a labor market survey about 10 years ago. It needs to be re-done. Red Cloud is working on Hometown Competitiveness (HTC). Alison mentioned EDA monies for Regional Clusters.

Questions from the group: How did the Development Networks form? 18 years of history was given and the grassroots efforts that keep it functioning. A clearinghouse of resource providers that move across the region to learn about what is working and what is not working in the communities, offering resources and programs as needed.

Next Meeting - Strategic Planning Kearney NPPD office 10 AM-2 Wed., Dec. 14, 2011. Rick Nelsen will check on the availability.

11:30 Lunch at THE ROCK cafe

1 PM Regional Community Development Needs Discussion – Red Cloud, Guide Rock, Superior were represented during the meeting.

Guide Rock: had a recent clean up day and used the money from scrap metal to purchase playground equipment (utilizing Kewitt Foundation and Glenwood Community Grant). Currently doing street studies, working on USDA grant for matching funds-looking at 2013 for implementation. Discussing a new siren for the community. Recently updated their pagers for a narrow band frequency for transmission.

Working on renovating the gym, removing the stage to create a handicap accessible entrance as well as a handicap accessible bathroom.

Guide Rock has an equine arena. Is that being marketed well? They have some old ball fields, concession stands, etc. Regional Baseball tournaments? Increasing camping spots in the site? Need signage for camping area on the Highway with camping and dog park. The Dept. of Roads in Hastings needs to be approached regarding signage. <http://www.dor.state.ne.us/district4/>

Could they capitalize more on hunting people? Would need to have a “cleaning station” and perhaps a place to store meat in a cooler.

Medical Clinic has been in town 5 years where medical staff come in from Red Cloud staffed 2 days/week.

No Chamber or Business Association.

Dept. of Economic Development staff can work in housing and SCEDD for Nuisance Abatement. Guide Rock Needs Assessment was probably done 7-8 years ago and recently had a town hall meeting with SCEDD (Appreciative Inquiry).

Tried to save the grocery store, been closed approximately 3 years. One restaurant in town and 1 convenience store have filled some of the gaps. Convenience Store on the highway is privately owned, carries some groceries as well as some convenience items and lunch items.

Having some trouble finding leadership to step up and fill roles in the community. Dena Beck has a program on *Engaging Different Generations in Your Community*. denab@cfra.org

Saw a sign in a park in Texas where the Dept. of the Interior as listed? The group was not sure about that, perhaps has Native American significance. Paul Bartlett, USDA will research.

A lot of truck traffic in town, perhaps have cookies and coffee at the elevators during harvest have some signage for upcoming events, needs in the community.

Watchable Wildlife could be expanded in Guide Rock, especially with the rifle pits west of town.

Red Cloud: no municipal camping facilities; but 2 privately owned camping sites. Red Cloud has worked with DOR on entrance signs. Lots of historical significance and signage due to Willa Cather State Historical Site.

Red Cloud 1917 sewer system needs replaced, community is in the process to rebuild the system. Probably have to raise taxes to pay for it. State and Federal Aid for this project was discussed. “get in line” for funding; resources are scarce and competitive. USDA should be involved. Jay will share with the City Council Person.

Library project is expanding the facility. The Ald family donated money for the facility. It is not handicap accessible. The original cost of \$300,000 has been re-evaluated to \$400,000. Want to install an elevator to access the basement of the library. Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation granted them computer lab facilities. Accessing court system records/legal documents online from the library-Red Cloud is a pilot for this project.

Red Cloud has a new superintendent, Brian Hoff. He has set up a scholarship fund, adding to the fund from his salary, without the use of his name. The Sherwood Foundation, a local foundation has set up a scholarship for local (Red Cloud) non-traditional students. What is available is up to \$1,500/semester.

Hometown Competitiveness (HTC) is in Red Cloud; building your community from the grass roots. Leadership, Youth involvement, Entrepreneurship (start up and transitioning), Philanthropy. Started in 2009.

Red Cloud has a city sales tax that is paying for community center and an assisted living facility, bond issue passed.

Ne Dept. of Roads – Hwy 281 was supposed to be resurfaced from KS to Hastings; Red Cloud south will be done in 2017. Plan is to cover the brick streets. The community is divided on whether or not to save the brick streets.

Red Cloud and Guide Rock have a web site together they received from BECA funds. They have a relationship with Ne Rural Living, but the city has not agreed to pay the \$1/person to subscribe. See many opportunities that are not accessible to Webster County because of the lack of financial support. www.nebraskaruralliving.com is the web site. People that support them receive inquiries of people wanting to visit and/or relocate.

Red Cloud has a Chamber with monthly activities. There is a small group of people doing economic development, they are burning out.

Leadership Development is their #1 need right now. May need a presentation on Generational Differences and drawing them into the community.

EDGE course was held in conjunction with Superior in 2010.

Superior:

The Mayor was present and shared her vision for the community. Need a strategic planning for the community. 2 years ago did a community Needs Assessment. She feels the community needs help with visioning for the future.

A lot of partnership with the RC&D, SCEDD, NPPD, etc. are of grateful for them.

Tearing down buildings is a constant battle and challenge with an increasing list of places. Excited about Downtown Revitalization. Leadership needs to sit down together and plan. www.cityofsuperior.org

Wants to be on the NDN-CR Listserv. The sign in sheet was passed around where people could sign up to be on the listserv.

The City Auditorium was closed 15 years ago, built as a WPA project. Needs a lot of work to be brought up to code. Do we restore or demolish? 2.5 Million to restore. The community is divided. Alumni Association meets annually and should be tapped into for financing. The community needs to decide to restore or demolish. It is on the Historic Registry. Looking for angles to save the building. CDAA (program with the Dept. of Economic Development) has funding for tearing down buildings. What is the vision for Superior for the art deco building? A community center is the #1 need. Serving alcohol is a diving issue as well. Architecture is a platform to possibly tap into.

UNK CRRD (Shawn Kaskie) has an “option finder” type voting mechanism for communities to use. Responses are anonymous and instantaneously. Cost would be free or nominal from UNK. Engineering firms charge ~ \$4,500. Phelps County Development Corp. utilized UNK for this type of activity: Monica Boyken, Director 308-995-4148 for more information.

Superior needs ball fields...Guide Rock welcomed them to use their fields. Merle Illian, Red Cloud has resources for ball fields. American Legion may be an option. Dept of Transportation funds can be used for Highway Enhancement Funds for trees and shrubs around the ball field, Jim Pearson *may* be the contact. Environmental Trust funds may be an option as well.

Sewer system is a concern for Superior as well as pressure and availability of water with the hydrants.

Two schools sold to private investors – Superior is thrilled.

Need to expand businesses in town. Not sure how to do that. Need to find out – check the former Community Needs Assessment or add the questions into it that will help determine what businesses are needed.

Respectfully submitted,

Dena Beck, REAP

Ne Development Network-Central Region (NDN-CR) Secretary