



**Flint Hills Regional Council Board of Directors
Meeting Notes of August 23, 2013**

**Flint Hills Regional Council Board of Directors
Annual Board Retreat Meeting Notes – August 23, 2013
Konza Prairie Biological Research Meeting Hall
Manhattan, KS 66502**

Present from Board of the Regional Council: **Cecil Aska**, Junction City Mayor; **Ben Bennett**, Geary County Commissioner; **Vic Enns**, Wamego City Commissioner; **Honey Grant**, Grandview Plaza Vice-Mayor; **Stan Hartwich**, Pottawatomie County Commissioner; **Vern Hay**, Morris County Commissioner; **Linda Hoeffner**, Fort Riley; **Rich Jankovich**, Manhattan City Commissioner; **Joe Kormanik**, Alta Vista Commissioner; **Dave Lewis** (*for Robert Boyd*), Riley County Commissioner; **John Ray**, Abilene City Commissioner; **David Shover II**, Riley City Mayor; **Megan Umscheid**, Kansas State University; and **Phil Weishaar**, City of Chapman Mayor.

Absent from the Board: **John Armbrust**, Governor's Military Council; **Dan Deiter**, Alma City Councilman; **Dan Deiter**, Alma City Councilman; **Galen Johnson**, Dwight City Mayor; **Keith Kahnt**, White City Councilman; **MarySue Roller**, City of Woodbine Councilwoman; **Debi Schwerdtfeger**, Council Grove Councilwoman; and **Jimmy Thatcher**, Clay Center Mayor.

Present from the Greater Regional Council Membership: *No additional members present.*

Present from Staff Support: **Gary Stith AICP**, Interim Executive Director; **Unique Hiram M.S.**, Administrative Manager; **Jeff Adams PhD**, Regional Planner and **Stephanie Watts**, Transportation Planner.

Guests: **William J. Clark**, Incoming FHRC Executive Director.

BOARD RETREAT START TIME:

- Ben Bennett, FHRC President, called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

2013 REVIEW:

- Jeff Adams, Regional Planner, and Gary Stith, Interim Executive Director, presented a PowerPoint presentation about the events that have occurred during calendar year 2013.
- The presentation was broken down into sections that included milestones, program areas (Frontiers, FHEDD, FHMPO & FHRC) and budget. Stith advised the board that the bylaws/articles would need to be revised if Emporia, which is located in Lyon County, wants to become a part of the FHRC.

**Flint Hills Regional Council Board of Directors
Meeting Notes of August 23, 2013**

REGIONAL PLANNING ORGANIZATIONS:

- John Cyr, North Central Regional Planning Commission Special Projects Coordinator, gave a brief presentation on Regional Planning Organization's Sources/Funding Streams.
- The traditional collaborative structure of a non-profit RPO is its membership.
- The building blocks of a sustainable RPO will include multiple sources of funding which involves core funding and service fees. The core funding is comprised of basic operational funding (match funds from the city/county memberships). The service fees offer funding that can be generated through planning (i.e. assisting local communities with land use analysis) and technical (i.e. financial packaging, project management & grant writing) expertise.
- Additional service fee programs that could provide funding sources are housing programs that include home weatherization, housing rehabs and inspections (i.e. lead based paint/asbestos and housing quality standards).
- Future potential programs that could be implemented are as follows: GIS (i.e. creating an educational program that provides on-going training and tech support to local government staff); Housing Development (i.e. building single family/multi-family homes); Joint Purchasing (i.e. office supplies & equipment and road equipment); and Off-Site Data Storage (i.e. servers).
- Federal and state programs are giving money to regional projects; therefore, you will have to "think locally, act regionally."
- Suggested Reading: "The Necessary Revolution: How Individuals and Organizations are Working Together to Create a Sustainable World" by Author Peter Senge.

ORGANIZATIONAL PLANNING:

- John Divine, The Leadership Firm, conducted an organizational planning strategy session with the board members to pinpoint key concerns, issues and possible solutions to reaching sustainability.
- The thought-provoking question at the opening of the session was "where do you want to be?" (This was looking into the future at least 8 years from the present)
- The goal is to identify action steps that can be implemented within 12-15 months.
 - **ACTIVITY - List positive experiences from being a part of the Flint Hills Regional Council:**
 1. Joe Kormanik – input/voice
 2. Phil Weishaar – community benefits
 3. Vic Enns – K18 project (collaborative effort)
 4. Megan Umscheid – community events
 5. Linda Hoeffner – partnership formed with communities and Fort Riley
 6. Ben Bennett – dependence upon communities & relationship between communities
 7. Dave Lewis – greater sense of pride in the region
 8. Stan Hartwich – building partnerships
 9. David Shover – outreach from the beginning

**Flint Hills Regional Council Board of Directors
Meeting Notes of August 23, 2013**

10. Vern Hay – equal voice, acceptance of all communities & ability to speak in one voice
 11. Ceci Aska – common issues identified & listening and supporting each other
 12. Honey Grant – having a vote and appreciation of one another
 13. John Ray – realization of accomplishments when working together
 14. Rich Jankovich – cooperation & “WE” mentality
 15. Gary Stith – events in communities & well-kept secret
 16. Bill Clark – quality of life
- **ACTIVITY - Draw a picture of how the Flint Hills Regional Council will look in eight years and briefly describe it:**
 1. Rich Jankovich – Happy, Heart, Prosper
 2. John Ray – Working Together
 3. Honey Grant – One Hand Together, Helping Each Other
 4. Cecil Aska – Flint Hills (Heart)
 5. Vern Hay – Smiley Face (Happiness)
 6. David Shover – Community
 7. Stan Hartwich – No borderlines (Happy Faces)
 8. Dave Lewis – Working Together
 9. Ben Bennett – Tied Together, Working Together (Circles within Circles)
 10. Linda Hoeffner – One Team “Place of Choice”
 11. Megan Umscheid – Open Communication/Collaboration (Listen & Speak)
 12. Vic Enns – All One (Map)
 13. Phil Weishaar – Sunny/Bed of Roses (All Together)
 14. Vic Enns – Own Office/Fundraising
 15. Gary Stith – Interconnected (Map)
 16. Bill Clark – Expansion of Vision (Diagram & Notes)
 - Some of the shared visions for the council include unity, growth, communication, collaboration, staying together, sharing, quality of life, interconnectivity and optimism.
 - Future regional opportunities that the FHRC can be an integral part of include welcome center, NBAF, K18 completion, increased tourism and national exposure.
 - Some of the concerns about moving forward in a regional aspect are: funding, people not understanding who we are and our value; participation; community leadership and their impact; change in attitudes of elected officials; maintaining collaboration and cooperation within the FHRC membership; expanding services; building on successes and needed strong support.
 - In eight years, the measurement of success for the FHRC would include: strong and sustainable funding; regular meetings; additional services to area communities; reach of influence beyond elected officials; BIG wins that people can see; “Us” vs. “Them” voices quieted; quality marketing plan; increased tourism; pooling resources together; strategic communications; local communities seeking out the FHRC for support; and expansion.

**Flint Hills Regional Council Board of Directors
Meeting Notes of August 23, 2013**

- There was a question posed by the facilitator in regards to the process of making the FHRC dynamic and the main answer was funding (seven counties plus 80% of the cities to be sustainable in eight years). Pottawatomie Commissioner / FHRC Treasurer Stan Hartwich also added that the FHRC needs the tools and ability to inform businesses of what the Flint Hills region has to offer.
- Some of the answers that were generated from the question – “How will you know that the FHRC Vision has been reached in eight years?”: sustainable funding (Vic Enns); communities trust (Linda Hoeffner); expansion of services & capabilities (Bill Clark); self sustaining organization (Vern Hay); message efficiently and effectively delivered to elected officials who can clearly see the FHRC vision (Cecil Aska); and community / public engagement (collective response).
- **ACTIVITY - Identifying specific goals (colored dots):**
 1. Strong, sustainable funding
 2. Telling our story
 3. Building marketing information base and tools
 4. BIG wins
 5. Additional Services (what do we offer)
- Funding is the immediate focus for the organization in order to become sustainable. There are a number of items tied to federal funding that include staffing, survival and accomplishing organizational goals. The impacts of achieving this objective are credibility, communities feeling better to use services and increased capacity.
- Goal(s) for 12-15 months are planning, community growth, economic development and transportation. Some of the services that could be administered in the future are grant administration / grant writing, distribution of information, collection of information, coordination of information sharing and economic development district.
- Sustainable Funding Streams (Future) include opportunity grants; private donations; clear understanding of the new Fort Riley program (i.e. what parts would bring value to the region and suggested uses as well as approaches); and extension of HUD funding.
- Future Services offered that would assist in potential funding streams: site selection tool (FHEDD); comprehensive planning (community level); public transportation; GIS; packaging SBA deals; and affordable housing.
- In regards to marketing (12-15 months), these are the items that need to be implemented: develop a value statement, elevator speech presentation; consistent & transparent; start developing a database of what the organization does; development of a consistent presentation for members to give to the public; and building relationships with key media people.

**Flint Hills Regional Council Board of Directors
Meeting Notes of August 23, 2013**

FINAL COMMENTS:

1. Rich Jankovich – critical mass, need strong focus on critical issues (focus on where we need to be in 12 months)
2. John Ray – great meeting
3. Honey Grant – no further comments
4. Cecil Aska – elevator package
5. Vern Hay – need information disseminated on a timely basis
6. David Shover – no further comments
7. Stan Hartwich – no further comments
8. Linda Hoeffner – no further comments
9. Vic Enns – no further comments
10. Phil Weishaar – graphic about funding
11. Joe Kormanik – no further comments
12. Jeff Adams – excited about the future
13. Stephanie Watts – no comments
14. Unique Hiram – no comments
15. Gary Stith – can work with communities (i.e. Chambers to create a regional marketing program)
16. Bill Clark – ready to go to work
17. Ben Bennett – staff to FHRC Board (constant communications)

OTHER ITEMS:

- FHRC Board President Ben Bennett would like to move monthly meetings from the third Friday to the fourth Friday. There will be further discussion about this item at the September 27th regularly scheduled meeting.
- Facilitator John Divine reiterated three key items: regional concept is important, the FHRC can help to change the mindset of individual thoughts and utilization of local staff members can help to augment the FHRC staff. He will be returning over the next three quarters to discuss updates on progress.
- Member Joe Kormanik motioned for the FHRC Annual Board Retreat to adjourn. Member David Shover seconded. The annual retreat was unanimously adjourned at 3:10 p.m.