



**Flint Hills Regional Council Board of Directors**  
Board Meeting Minutes – March 1, 2013  
Columbian Theatre  
Wamego, KS 66547

Present from Board of the Regional Council: **Ben Bennett**, Geary County Commissioner; **Robert Boyd**, Riley County; **Dan Deiter**, Alma City Councilman; **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; **Galen Johnson**, Dwight City Mayor; **Keith Kahnt**, White City Councilman; **John Ray**, Abilene City Commissioner; **MarySue Roller**, City of Woodbine Councilwoman; **Debi Schwerdtfeger**, Council Grove Councilwoman; **David Shover II**, Riley City Mayor; and **Jimmy Thatcher**, Clay Center Mayor.

Absent from the Board: **John Armbrust**, Governor's Military Council; **Cecil Aska**, Junction City Commissioner; **Jackie Hartman**, Kansas State University; **Joe Kormanik**, Alta Vista Commissioner; and **Phil Weishaar**, Chapman 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 **Scott Moore**, Community Liaison.

Guests: **Abby Amick**, Wabaunsee County EcoDevo Director; **Ben Van Becelaere**, Fort Riley Plans Chief; **Bob Cole**, Pottawatomie County EcoDevo; **Karen Davis**, Manhattan Community Development Director; **David Dillner**, Abilene City Manager; **Tyler Ficken**, City Clerk (City of Junction City); **Karen McCulloh**, Citizen (City of Manhattan); **Lauren Palmer**, Assistant City Manager (City of Manhattan); **Lyle Peterson**, Kansas Department of Commerce; **Julie Roller**, Pottawatomie County EcoDevo; **Angie Schwerdtfeger**, TCT Public Relations Director; **Mike Spohn**, Rock Springs Operations Manager; and **Monty Wedel**, Riley County Planning & Development Director.

**MEETING START TIME:**

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

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**WELCOME:**

- Member Stan Hartwich welcomed the Board, Staff and meeting guests to Wamego. He gave a brief overview about the meeting facility and the paintings located within it, which dated back to the 1893 World Fair.
- There were a few updates about things going on in Pottawatomie County from the following individuals:
  1. Stan Hartwich – There is a full study being done on Highway 99 and the City of Onaga has successfully acquired a \$17M bond for the hospital expansion/renovations.
  2. Bob Cole – Green Dot Holdings LLC in Cottonwood Falls, KS has acquired a manufacturing plant in Onaga, KS through an acquisition of MGP's Bioplastic Division.
  3. Julie Roller – The 2014 & 2015 Kansas Sampler Festival will be held in Wamego. It is a two-day educational fair event. PowerUps will have their "Day on the Hill" in Topeka on March 6. The 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Fabulous Finds will be held on September 27 & 28 along Highway 99. For more information about this event, go to [www.findson99.com](http://www.findson99.com).

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

- Member Dan Deiter motioned for approval of the minutes from January 22, 2013 with the following revision: "Member Ervan Stuewe will be recorded as absent from the board meeting." Member Ben Bennett seconded. The motion was carried unanimously.

**FINANCIAL REPORT:**

- There were no questions from the board members about the current financial report. It will be filed for audit purposes; no vote is required for approval.

**FLINT HILLS FRONTIERS PROJECT:**

- Jeff Adams, Regional Planner, gave a presentation on the Flint Hills Frontiers Project.
- The Flint Hills Frontiers Project is defined as "a vision for the region; a set of principles and goals; and a toolbox for and by communities." The principles and goals of the three frontiers are as follows: economic vitality, national defense and cultural/natural resource preservation.
- There are a number of interconnected systems throughout the region, which include: farming/ranching (operations/sales), cultural systems (employment/businesses), social systems (urban/rural areas), economic/opportunity systems (state/local government, rural & military), mobility/transportation and built environment (affordable housing).
- The Flint Hills Economic Development District is currently participating in citizen strategy work and undergoing a SWOT analysis. The public engagement sessions will begin over the coming months.

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- Adams has suggested incorporating the Frontiers' Issue Areas working group system into the Flint Hill Regional Council's agendas on a quarterly basis: April (economy), July (housing), October (transportation) and January (recreation).
- The centralized source for any information or data relating to the Frontiers project can be accessed here: [www.flinthillsfrontiers.org](http://www.flinthillsfrontiers.org). There is also a forum where community members can participate in idea sharing by accessing [www.forum.flinthillsfrontiers.org](http://www.forum.flinthillsfrontiers.org).

**LEGISLATIVE ISSUES – COMPILATION, ASSESSMENT & DISCUSSION:**

- Ben Bennett, FHRC Vice-President, informed the board tax issues are a huge concern such as the facilities and equipment exemption (e.g. fixtures may be exempt from this and could turn out to be costly).
- The board members are being encouraged to contact their legislators about public funds being eliminated for the use of lobbyists.
- The governor's bill has passed about doing away with income taxes but leaving sales taxes, which will cause local governments to increase their perspective taxes (e.g. property). Currently, the City of Junction City has the highest tax in Kansas at 9.5%.
- Restaurant and motel inspections will only be done by the state departments of KDHE & Agriculture if there is a complaint; otherwise, these inspections will have to be conducted by the Health Department due to there being no locally assigned inspectors.
- Member Rich Jankovich has concerns about a forced cap being put on property taxes in the 2014 state budget.
- Staff members Gary Stith and Scott Moore brought up two bills of concern, which are H.B. 2188 (Non-Profits) providing a searchable format for expenditures for public record and H.B. 2366 (Sustainable Communities) that would prevent public funds from being used for any of these projects, respectively.
- Member Vern Hay has encouraged the membership to fill out questionnaires for their state legislators in regards to the areas of concerns.

**MPO DESIGNATION UPDATE:**

- Gary Stith, Interim Executive Director, provided the meeting attendees with a brief description on the Flint Hills Metropolitan Planning Organization (FHMPO). It is made up of the City of Manhattan, City of Junction City, Geary County, Pottawatomie County and Riley County.
- The first official meeting for the FHMPO was held on February 20, 2013; the elected Chair is David Lewis and Vice-Chair is Gary Yenser.
- The Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) is made up of staff members throughout the FHMPO consisting of 14 voting members and 4 non-voting members.
- Member David Shover motioned for the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to be adopted, accepted and signed by FHRC President Vern Hay. Member Robert Boyd seconded. The motion was carried unanimously.

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**FORT RILEY UPDATE:**

- Ben Van Becelaere, Fort Riley Plans Chief, gave a briefing on the Economic Impact Summary (October 2011 – September 2012). There were 50 different sources utilized on/off post to gather this information.
- The total direct economic impact was \$1,876,978,070 – Payroll \$1.2B, Construction \$155,006,951.00, Education \$19,322,516 and Health Care \$137,265,064 (with \$78M – outpatient care).
- The total population was 56,944 – Military 19,468; Family Members 26,415 (10,870 on-post & 15,545 off-post); Retirees 3,591 (3,164 – Army & 427 – Other Services) and Civilians 7,470 (includes contractors).
- The projected population forecast is 14,000-16,000 boots on ground; the fort will be at full nest during June/July 2013 and deployments will begin again in August with the Aviation Brigade.
- Linda Hoeffner, Deputy Garrison Commander, informed the meeting attendees that due to impending sequestration there would be a \$45B cut in DOD funding. The Continuing Resolution Authorization will expire on March 27, 2013 and temporary budget funding will be passed in lieu of a regular federal budget.
- The debt ceiling limit was reached December 2012 and there was a 40% reduction in the federal budget.
- Some of the impacts on the DOD Civilians will be the following:
  1. Hiring Freeze
  2. 49 Temp/ Term employees will be released
  3. Possible furlough (unless an exception is given to those employees)
  4. Reduction in support personnel
  5. Retirement eligible employees will be offered \$25,000, if taken by March 31, 2013 and they will be off the roles by May 1, 2013
- There will be a focus on life, health and safety to make sure those items are the least affected. Also optimize readiness will include quality services, predictable to customers/ work force and simplicity.

**GOVERNOR'S MILITARY COUNCIL UPDATE:**

- John Armbrust, Governor's Military Council Executive Director, was not in attendance at the meeting.

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT/FRONTIERS UPDATE:**

- Stith gave a brief update on the Executive Director search stating that there were 12 applicants. The Human Resources Departments from the City of Junction City, Geary County and Riley County would be going through the resumes and categorizing the employment applicants (e.g. highly qualified, qualified and not qualified). The target month of hire is May 2013.

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**OTHER BUSINESS & NEXT MEETING:**

- Staff members Jeff Adams, Regional Planner, and Scott Moore, Community Liaison, will be attending the General Administrator's Certification Training in Topeka, KS (March 11-15, 2013).
- The next board meeting will be held on March 22, 2013 in Wabaunsee County. Member Dan Deiter has volunteered usage of the Alma Community Center in Alma, KS for the upcoming board meeting.

**MEETING ADJOURNMENT:**

- Member Honey Grant motioned for the meeting to adjourn. Member Jimmy Thatcher seconded. Meeting was adjourned unanimously at 11:21 a.m.