



Flint Hills Regional Council Board of Directors
Board Meeting Minutes – April 17, 2015
First Baptist Church of Alta Vista
Alta Vista, KS

Present from Board of the Regional Council: **Pam Bales**, Alma City Councilwoman; **Ben Bennett**, Geary County Commissioner; **Scott Briggs**, Lyon County Commissioner; **Vic Enns**, Wamego City Mayor; **Honey Grant**, Grandview Plaza Vice-Mayor; **Stan Hartwich**, Pottawatomie County Commissioner; **Vern Hay**, Morris County Commissioner; **Joe Kormanik**, City of Alta Vista Commissioner; **Karen McCulloh**, Manhattan City Commissioner; **Kelley Paskow** (for Tim Livsey), Fort Riley; **Mike Ryan**, City of Junction City Mayor; **Debi Schwerdtfeger**, Council Grove Councilwoman; **David Shover II**, City of Riley Mayor; **Jimmy Thatcher**, City of Clay Center Mayor; and **Phil Weishaar**, City of Chapman Mayor.

Absent from the Board: **John Armbrust**, Governor's Military Council; **Robert Boyd**, Riley County Commissioner; **Jon Geitz**, City of Emporia Mayor; **Jenifer Hanneman**, City of Reading; **Jackie Hartman**, Kansas State University; **Kristie Ogilvie**, Emporia State University; **MarySue Roller**, City of Woodbine Mayor; and **Brande Studer**, Chase County Clerk.

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

Present from Staff Support: **Jeff Adams**, Regional Planner; **Shelley Carver**, Community Development Manager; **Sondra Clark**, Transit Administrator/Mobility Manager; **Unique Hiram**, Administrative Manager; and **Gary Stith**, Director.

Guests: **Cecil Aska**, Junction City Commissioner; **Shekinah Bailey**, USDA General Field Representative; **Lyle Butler**, City of Manhattan Chamber President; **Cheryl Boyer**, KSU Center Rural Enterprise; **Karen Davis**, City of Manhattan Community Development Director; **Kevin Griffith**, 1420AM KJCK News Reporter; **Kay Hutchinson**, Greater Morris County Development Executive Director; **Bruce McMillan**, Manhattan Business Owner; **Angela Schwerdtfeger**, TCT PR Director; **Monty Wedel**, Riley County Planning & Zoning Director; and **David Yearout**, Junction City/Geary County/Milford Planning & Zoning Director.

WELCOME:

- Vern Hay, FHRC Interim President, called the meeting to order at 9:03 a.m. and invited the board members, staff and meeting guests to introduce themselves.
- Member Joe Kormanik welcomed everyone to the City of Alta Vista. He shared information about the citywide cleanup with the assistance of 17 Fort Riley soldiers, upcoming breakfast and spring tractor crank up.

APPROVAL OF LAST MEETING'S MINUTES:

- Member Pam Bales motioned for the March 20, 2015 meeting minutes to be approved with no corrections. Member Jimmy Thatcher seconded. The motion was carried unanimously.

UPDATES:

➤ **Finance/Budget Review**

- 1) Gary Stith, Director, presented board members the bank and budget slides for the finance/budget review.
- 2) The HUD Grant is currently 97% completed as of 04/15/15.
- 3) The bank account has a balance of \$240,995.38 which includes \$204,691.03 in MPO funding, as of 04/15/15. There are two outstanding HUD Reimbursement Request amounts totaling \$101,086.49.
- 4) An updated 2015 FHRC Annual Budget was presented to the board members (via PowerPoint and Handouts) showing what funding streams were available for the remainder of the year. It also highlighted the operational budgetary needs for 2016 and potential sources of financial support.

➤ **Staff Activity and Updates**

- 1) The Flint Hills Frontiers project continues work on the Fair Housing Study and there will be an update at next month's meeting.
- 2) New Boston Creative Group, LLC is the consultant that was chosen to complete work on the Flint Hills Branding project.
- 3) Proposals are being prepared to conduct work in regards to CDBG Grants for Paxico, Strong City, Olsburg and Marion.
- 4) The 2014 Single Audit is currently underway and being conducted by Reese & Novelty.
- 5) The HUD Sustainable Communities Grant Closeout process will begin as of May 1, 2015 per guidance from the federal funding agency.
- 6) The Flint Hills Metropolitan Long Range Transportation Plan Open Houses will be held on May 13 & 14, 2015 (This has been cancelled and will be rescheduled).

PRESENTATIONS:

➤ **Rural Broadband**

- Shekinah Bailey, USDA, gave a brief overview on rural broadband.
- Broadband Loans are available for those areas outside of areas that are currently serviced.
- Community Connect Grants are available for schools and clinics. There is no other competition in the State of Kansas for this type of funding and matching funds would be needed.
- Outreach is important because there is a desire to be more interactive with the communities as well as participation in partnership clinics. TCT/Blue Valley/Value Net are rural broadband providers.

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- Rural broadband creates value and can allow rural businesses to expand and reach a global market.
- E-Rate Funding for construction can help to get fiber into communities especially for schools. 20-30% can be financed over four years.

DISCUSSION TOPICS:

➤ **Rural Opportunities**

- Cheryl Boyer, KSU Center for Rural Enterprise Engagement, gave a brief overview on what her department has been working on in regards to rural engagement.
- Rural Greenhouses/Garden Centers has been a huge, growing success.
- She stressed that internet is vitally important to rural businesses.
- A website and blogs will be created for the center as they get more organized. This information will be shared with FHRC once that has been implemented.

➤ **Update on Strategic Plan**

- Jeff Adams, Regional Planner, gave a brief overview and update on the progress of the adopted 2014 strategic plan.

CITY/COUNTY/PARTNER UPDATES:

- Fort Riley
 - Kelley Paskow informed that board that several senior level army officials, due to the Listening Sessions feedback, have been visiting Fort Riley.
 - The Access Control process has been implemented, ongoing and is being strictly enforced.
- Governor's Military Council
 - John Armbrust was not in attendance at the meeting.
- Kansas State University
 - Jackie Hartman was not in attendance at the meeting.
- Emporia State University
 - Kristie Ogilvie was not in attendance at the meeting.
- City of Alma
 - Member Pam Bales informed that board that there were no changes with the city council after the elections. There were three candidates and one write-in.
 - The city's sewer project begins next Tuesday, April 21, 2015.
 - Additionally, the city will be applying for funding that is available through CDBG (\$12M).
- City of Alta Vista
 - Member Joe Kormanik informed that board that he missed being reelected by one vote and will serve until July 2015.
- Chase County

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- Member Brande Studer was not in attendance at the meeting.
- City of Council Grove
 - Member Debi Schwerdtfeger informed the board of the two city projects currently underway – River Rock and Hays House.
 - There has also been a new Chamber Director hired and her name is Diane Wolf.
- City of Emporia
 - Member Jon Geitz was not in attendance at the meeting.
- Lyon County
 - Member Scott Briggs informed the board that Dr. Shonrock resigned from Emporia State University.
 - There has been a partnership formed between Flint Hills Technical College and Fort Riley, specifically assisting soldiers with their resumes targeted for civilian employment.
- Morris County
 - Interim President Hay informed the board that there was a 53/47 split with Wabaunsee County in regards to a bridge that falls in the vicinity of both jurisdictions.

ADDITIONAL ITEMS / ADJOURNMENT:

- Member Karen McCulloh motioned for the Advanced Manufacturing Institute letter allowing Jeff Adams to work 50% of his time on a two-year data project beginning after the HUD Frontier Project concludes to be approved and signed by Interim President Vern Hay. Member Mike Ryan seconded. The motion was carried unanimously.
- Member Joe Kormanik motioned for the 2015 Nominating Committee to be officially formed with the following board members: Member Vic Enns (Chair), Member Ben Bennett, Member Mike Ryan and Member Honey Grant. Member Karen McCulloh seconded. The motion was carried unanimously. A slate of officers and elections will take place at June 19, 2015 board meeting. The new officers will begin work in their respective positions July 1, 2015.
- Member Vic Enns motioned for a Bylaws Committee to be formed and start taking a look at the criteria for appointed representatives when the elected officials are unable to attend official meetings. The committee includes the following: Member Pam Bales, Cecil Aska and David Shover. Member Mike Ryan seconded. The motion was carried unanimously.
- The Flint Hills Regional Council will be in existence for five (5) years as of June 2015. Staff member Shelley Carver and Bruce McMillan had a discussion about planning an event to celebrate the establishment as well as accomplishments of the organization. The board is in agreement about this taking place; the details will be worked out by staff.
- Next month's board meeting (May 15, 2015) will be held in Riley County, KS. Location: TBD
- Member Jimmy Thatcher motioned for the meeting to be adjourned at 12:00 p.m. Member Scott Briggs seconded. The motion was carried unanimously.