

**Flint Hills Regional Council Board of Directors  
Minutes of November 12, 2010**

**Flint Hills Regional Council Board of Directors  
Meeting Minutes—November 12, 2010  
Held at the Sunflower Room, Westmoreland, KS**

Present from Board of the Regional Council: **Stan Hartwich**, Pottawatomie County Commissioner; **Vern Hay**, Morris County Commissioner; **Terry Heldstab**, Junction City Commissioner; **David Shover**, Riley City Council; **Karen McCulloh**, Riley County Commissioner; **Sharon Brown**, Clay Center Mayor; **MarySue Roller**, Woodbine City Council; **Ervan Stuewe**, Wabaunsee County Commissioner; **Debi Schwerdtfeger**, Council Grove City Council; **Vic Enns**, Wamego City Commissioner; **Loren Pepper**, Manhattan (alternate for Jim Sherow); **Dan Deiter**, Alma City Council; **Jackie Hartman**, Kansas State University; **John Armbrust**, Governor's Military Council; **Linda Hoeffner**, Fort Riley.

Absent from the Board: **Ben Bennett** Geary County Commissioner; **Robby McGowan**, Onaga City Council.

Present from the greater Regional Council Membership: no additional members present

Present from Staff Support: **Ty Warner**, Executive Director; **Karen Davis**, City of Manhattan; **Kristina Hyland**, Regional Growth Coordinator.

Guests: **Gary Holthaus**, Onaga City Mayor; **Dave Yearout**, Geary County/Junction City Planning; **Monty Wedel**, Riley County; **Miki Bowman**, Council Grove Housing; **Angela Moore**, Dwight/Alta Vista; **Gary Enzer**, Pottawatomie County; **Bruce McMillan**; **Robert Reece**, Pottawatomie County.

**Welcome** – President Brown called the meeting to order at 9:15 a.m after a few minutes of retreat follow-up table activity stationed around the room. (See attached for summary of table activity work.)

**Seat the New Member from the City of Alma** – Ty Warner swore in the new member from Alma, Dan Deiter.

**Approval of Minutes from October 15** – Member McCulloh moved to approve the minutes as presented. Member Shover seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

**Executive Director's Report -**

Office: The office in building 500 is now officially opened, having a conference room, temporary furniture, and having installed Internet service. Staff will be ordering office furniture soon, much of which will be stored until the move into more permanent space in late spring or summer 2011. The notice for hiring an administrative manager will go out next week with the intent to hire by the end of the year. The Regional Planner will be listed nationally with the intent to hire in the first few months of 2011.

T-WORKS: In all the places possible the project fact sheets the Council developed were turned in to the appropriate people at KDOT and distributed

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in as many small groups as possible. KDOT's intent for these meetings was for qualitative discussions, with the overall process being admittedly "making it up as we are going along" according to the KDOT officials. Tier I lists were meant to be those projects where there was obvious broad consensus. Tier II projects were meant to recognize those with mixed support from the region. KDOT used a software program to combine the results from several groups and showing a running tab of how the projects were grouped. The result of the KDOT T-WORKS meetings is not a final list or a ranked list. KDOT maintained that they were aware that some jurisdictions would have more participation and attempted to account for that in their calculations and weighting. However, those groups with more turnout did list higher in the "rankings" at both meetings. Those lists were not final project rankings, however, and the final decision is up to KDOT, but the numbers of participants from certain regions did seem to influence which projects were on the Tier I & Tier II lists. KDOT intends to use these lists as a guideline when they make the decisions next spring.

Member McCulloh relayed that the Riley County engineer remarked that it was nice having the support of other groups at the meeting in Abilene. Member Hay mentioned that the K-18 project rose right up to the top in the 2<sup>nd</sup> district. He appreciated the help on the front end of the meetings. FHRC's initiation of the pre-meetings and putting together the fact sheets on the regional projects was very productive. Member Enns asked about moving Wabaunsee or Pottawatomie Counties to Dist. 2, with an eye toward getting K-99 on KDOT's radar. The Executive Director said this issue of shifting district boundaries came up at the pre-meetings and he raised it with KDOT staff, with the general reaction that "it has always been that way." However, now that the Council is formalized, there may be merit to pushing this with KDOT. Non-voting member Armbrust asked about the top-level KDOT folks present at the meetings; Sec. Deb Miller or her Deputy was at each of the meetings statewide. Dave Yearout remarked that he found the meeting disheartening since the folks with the most people seemed to be successful in having their projects ranked higher. He also felt that there were projects on the Dist 2 list which had no impact on Dist 2 and perhaps this new approach by KDOT was encouraging engineers to do planning work.

Mr. Warner wrapped up by saying the new process did require some trust that it was the qualitative aspects of the conversations that KDOT would reference. Ultimately, it is KDOT's decision. But he was reassured that the FHRC is on KDOT's radar. Member Brown mentioned that the work in the time leading up to the meetings and representation from the Council at the meetings helped make KDOT aware of the cohesiveness in the region.

OEA Grant: The Best approach seems to be to ask for an extension of time on the current grant. This year's current grant had also been extended through January 2010. The mechanics for this request rest on the fact that personnel costs have not been expended at the rate anticipated and there remain funds which could carry operations over into 2011. On the December agenda will be a discussion of the OEA application and budget for 2011. Non-voting member Armbrust stated he'd met with the OEA officials in Oct. and they are interested in seeing an exit plan for the FHRC from OEA funding. Also, with the delay of the defense bill through congress the OEA is likely to be less willing to be creative until they know what their funding levels are, and it

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would probably help if everyone reminded their legislators how important the defense bill is and how important OEA activities are and to encourage fully funding the OEA.

MPO Webinar: Mr. Warner mentioned a webinar on metropolitan planning organizations aimed at elected officials. Only the beginning of the webinar was actually focused on the basic requirements of Metropolitan Planning Organizations – the majority of the webinar looked at one MPO and how they had developed their own programs – but the webinar was still helpful. A link to the recorded webinar will be sent out to Council members.

Salina: Mr. Warner relayed that he and non-voting members Armbrust and Hartman met with five representatives from Salina (two commissioners as well as the Chamber director and the airport director). It was a basic information exchange meeting and it went well. All concerned felt that Salina came away with a better understanding of what the FHRC is. No commitments were made and further discussions were left open for the future.

By-Laws: Mr. Warner distributed for approval the textual revision on alternate representation, based on previous Board discussion. The changes basically designate one alternate at all times and ask for “ASAP” notice if the alternate is to replace the designated member. As previously discussed, the amendment also disallows continued voting ability of the alternate member for more than one consecutive meeting in order to discourage continued absenteeism without official re-designation of the main representative. Member McCulloh moved that the revision be approved as presented. Member Shover seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Member Heldstab asked what would happen in 2011 with Board appointments, since the Board was seated in Jan for a one year term and municipal elections are in April. It was suggested that a date be added to the Bylaws to seat the Board after the election, perhaps swearing in the Board in May. It was suggested that the section of the By-Laws dealing with the seating of the Board be read and adjusted if necessary.

Riley County Groundbreaking: Riley County broke ground on a new DOE grant funded wind turbine installation at the Riley County shops. In conjunction with this grant Riley County will offer training on energy efficiency. Member McCulloh mentioned that the project was a result of some conversations with local leaders and DOE officials at a national meeting. Cloud County Community College will begin offering wind turbine maintenance classes, as this is a new and promising industry. It was once again mentioned, especially with wind turbines, the concerns of Fort Riley need to be considered when working in the region.

**Board Retreat Follow-up** – Mr. Warner lead the Board in a more in-depth exploration of the Communications Themes developed during Board Retreat activities. (A summary of that exercise is attached.) Member Brown charged the Board with returning in Dec with their community’s top 5 needs so those needs can be compared, the members can perhaps determine some connections for mutual aid, and so that Council staff may be better positioned to strategize future technical assistance offerings.

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**Logo and Website Design** – The Board was given an overview of the process undertaken for logo and web design services and the firms submitting proposals. Member Schwerdtfeger moved that the Board authorize the Executive Director to execute an agreement with New Boston Creative Group for no more than \$25,000 for logo and web design services. Member Heldstab seconded. Motion passed unanimously. Member Schwerdtfeger suggested that New Boston be asked to remind the FHRC when it was time to renew the website domain so as not to lose the domain selected and purchased.

**Other Business:**

AUSA: Member Pepperd mentioned that several regional representatives visited legislators during the Association of the United States Army Annual Meeting. He relayed concerns about new real estate regulations which create significant challenges in purchasing rural homesteads due to the viability of appraisals; these new regulations are making a big negative impact in Kansas and in the region. Member Heldstab mentioned that a smaller group meeting with legislators is more focused and productive than a large delegation, and suggested a group representing the FHRC make congressional visits in the future. Member McCulloh agreed and thought this would also create a more unified “ask”. Non-voting member Armbrust reminded everyone that the state legislature starts in January and a similar approach would probably be good at the state level, too -- perhaps organizing a Flint Hills Legislative Day visitation for those issues which can be addressed together. Mr. Warner concurred that the amount of force a unified voice can present can be quite large. This approach would not preclude individual visits by the FHRC membership. Member Deiter suggested that local companies such as Caterpillar could also be of service.

Housing: Fort Riley had asked the Council to create a Task Force to explore the housing database in more detail, considering whether the region is asking the right questions and what data is truly needed to address those questions, and what the best method is of obtaining it. Points of contact for housing issues from each community have been requested.

Economic Development: Mr. Warner reminded the Board that they had also initiated a Task Force on economic development, precipitated by previous Council discussions of on-post commercial development. Mr. Warner relayed that he will be attending a meeting on the application process for the Economic Development Administration’s Economic Development District status, and suggested that following this event; the scope of the Task Force should be widened to form the basis of the Strategy Committee for forming an Economic Development District, within which such matters can be fully considered.

**December Meeting** – The regular Dec. 17 meeting will be held in the Alma Community Center from 9am to noon.

**Motion to adjourn** by Dan Deiter, seconded by Ervan Stuewe. Passed unanimously.

Adjourned at 11:15am

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