



Flint Hills Regional Council Board of Directors

Board Retreat Minutes – September 16, 2011

Board Retreat Location: First Baptist Church of Alta Vista – Alta Vista, KS

Present from Board of the Regional Council: **Ben Bennett**, Geary County Commissioner; **Dan Deiter**, Alma City Council; **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; **Karen McCulloh**, Riley County Commissioner; **MarySue Roller**, Woodbine City Councilwoman; **Debi Schwerdtfeger**, Council Grove Commissioner; **Jim Sherow**, Manhattan Mayor; **David Shover II**, Riley City Mayor; **Jimmy Thatcher**, Clay Center Mayor and **Phil Weishaar**, Chapman Mayor.

Absent from the Board: **John Armbrust**, Governor's Military Council; **Cecil Aska**, Junction City Commissioner; **Jackie Hartman**, Kansas State University; **Galen Johnson**, Dwight City Mayor; **Joe Kormanik**, Alta Vista Commissioner; and **Ervan Stuewe**, Wabaunsee County Commissioner.

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

Present from Staff Support: **Ty Warner**, Executive Director; **Unique Hiram**, Administrative Manger; and **Jeff Adams**, Regional Planner.

Guests: **Cheryl Beatty**, Junction City CFO; **Eric Cattell**, City of Manhattan Asst. Dir. Of Planning; **LTC (Lieutenant Colonel) Sophie Gainey**, Fort Riley Public Affairs Officer; **CG (Commanding General) William Mayville**, 1st Infantry Division; **Bruce McMillian**, ; **Brett Regan**, KJCK News Reporter; **Traci Scott**, Fort Riley Regional Liaison Officer; **Angie Schwerdtfeger**, Tri-County Telephone; and **David Yearout**, Geary County / Junction City Planning Director.

CALL TO ORDER:

- Vern Hay, FHRC President, called the meeting to order at 9:04 a.m.

WELCOME:

- Ben Kormanik welcomed all board members, staff and guests to the host community.

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APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

- Member Jim Sherow motioned for the August 2011 minutes to be approved. Member Karen McCulloh seconded. Motion was carried unanimously.

FORT RILEY & THE CENTRAL FLINT HILLS REGION:

Commanding General William Mayville, 1st Infantry Division, joined the meeting to have a roundtable about regional concerns that involve both the Fort and surrounding communities.

Discussion Highlights:

- At least 11,000 soldiers have been deployed between Afghanistan and Iraq.
- Several thousand soldiers are scheduled to come home in the next few months.
- Areas of concern:
 1. **Schools** – many of them are old and need vastly new improvements
 2. **Housing** – There will be stabilization in troops in the area within the next 2-3 years; therefore, there needs to be **quality, affordable housing** available for these individuals. Mid-level NCOs (Non-Commissioned Officers) and Officers will be the population looking for this type of housing. Only 30% of families can live on post so there is a need in the surrounding communities for housing.
 3. **Branding** – The Flint Hills Region brand needs to be brought more to the forefront due to its beautiful areas in the surrounding communities and the fact that it houses one of the oldest, historic military divisions. The number of retirees is growing because many are deciding to stay in Kansas. There is also a Veteran's Administration system on station at the Fort. According to a K-State study, there are 126,000 people who live between along the K-18/US-24 corridor between Wamego and Junction City.
- Commanding General Mayville will be deploying in the future and taking most of his headquarters staff. There will be a senior officer left to ensure the continuation of running operations, which includes the work being done with the FHRC.
- Member Karen McCulloh brought up the concern of the regional transit service between Pottawatomie County and Junction City and the need for assistance to fund it. KDOT is currently funding the operating prototype for this service, but that funding expires in April 2012, at which point KDOT will only fund a portion of it. Laura Morris, Fort Riley Public Works, has been involved in seeking solutions to funding from Fort Riley for the portion of the service on-post, but there is an issue concerning the use of appropriated funds for this purpose. There are currently over 100 riders and 15 to 17 vans that are utilized in Fort Riley's vanpool program; however, children cannot be transported in these vans. There was an inquiry about the buses that transport the soldiers back and forth to Manhattan Regional Airport and Topeka, and the possibility of showing a cost-benefit to using the regional transit service versus these buses.

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- Commanding General Mayville suggested that a public transportation business model (simple idea & narrative) be presented so that he could communicate the issue regarding appropriation restrictions and need during his congressional visits in DC October 10-11, 2011 during the AUSA conference.
- There was discussion about developing and implementing working groups, who would answer to the FHRC, in order to come up with ways to address many of the regional issues/concerns (e.g. housing & transportation).
- As previously discussed, CG Mayville suggested that the composition of the Community Partnership Conferences, which were originally formed during Base Realignment and Closure, need to change to address the regional concerns now present in this post-BRAC environment, such as the issues discussed regarding transportation and military-community relations.

HUD SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES REGIONAL PLANNING GRANT:

- Warner presented a PowerPoint recap of the HUD Sustainable Communities Regional Planning Grant, which was showcased during the board retreat .
- Grant Awards in the population hit by including the full Flint Hills eco-region range from \$600k to \$5M.
- The FHRC's pre-application targeted a Grant Award of \$2M.
- Following the pre-application process, the FHRC was invited to submit a full application. The application is due no later than October 6, 2011, and the core planning team is working to bring everything together by the tight deadline.
- Warner pointed out three hallmarks of the HUD Grant are:
 1. Regional in scope
 2. Needs to show a wide coalition
 3. Rural-specific set-aside puts our region in good footing
- Warner will email the board members the BNIM pre-planning document that has served as the inspiration for many of the partners in this effort.
- Core Consortium Partners are:
 1. Flint Hills Regional Council
 2. BNIM
 3. LEAM Group
 4. Biomimicry Institute
- The in-kind or cash based match required for a \$2 million grant is \$400,000. The council needs to get creative about getting in-kind matches (e.g. value of staff personnel from other communities working on this project, data resources, contributed meeting and office space, etc). HUD wants to see commitments and the estimates are needed by September 30, 2011 if possible for purposes of determining the overall budget of the project. There will be letter of support available for those wanting to contribute a match.
- There was further discussion of what can constitute local in-kind matches and Warner will send the in-kind contributions definition from the Notice of Funding Availability to the board members.

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LEGISLATIVE UPDATE:

- Member Vern Hay mentioned concerns about the looming shutdown of the federal highway.
- There was a discussion about the Keystone Pipeline that stretches beyond our geographical area. It will be ½ mile west of Chapman and Clay Center; there will be a pump station four miles east of Clay Center. Member Karen McCulloh informed the council that they have been talks with Marion County; she suggested that a subcommittee might need to be formed to keep an eye on this situation. President Vern Hay suggested that the Executive Committee appoint a subcommittee to take such action and all board members are in agreement. Additionally, the State of Kansas waived property taxes; therefore, there is deep concern about revenue generation.
- Website Link for Keystone Pipeline Project:
<http://www.transcanada.com/keystone.html>.

FINANCIAL REPORT:

- Member David Shover made a motion to accept the Statement of Financial Income & Expense, which was provided to all board members. Member Honey Grant seconded. The motion was carried unanimously.

OTHER BUSINESS & NEXT MEETING:

- Member David Shover announced that the City of Riley was awarded a \$300K KAN-STEP Grant, which will be utilized for their library and community food pantry.
- Member MarySue Roller announced that a new restaurant would be opening in Woodbine on October 1, such that the café that was closed at the time of the FHRC retreat is now occupied again.
- The next meeting will be held at Indian Hill Golf Clubhouse, 552 Golf Course Road, Chapman, KS 67431 on October 21, 2011.

MEETING ADJOURNED:

- Member David Shover motioned to adjourn the board meeting at 11:52 a.m. Member Honey Grant seconded. The motion was carried unanimously.