

REAP | Regional Economic Area Partnership

REAP Executive Committee Meeting Minutes

February 13, 2015 ~ Workforce Alliance Administrative Offices
Council Member Carl Koster, Chair

1. Welcome and Introductions

Council member Carl Koster, City of Cheney, called the meeting to order.

2. Consideration of Resolution from Sedgwick County

On Wednesday, February 11, 2015, the Sedgwick County Commission adopted a resolution withdrawing the County's membership from REAP on a 3-2 vote. As part of the motion to withdraw from REAP the Sedgwick County Commission has requested that a pro-rated amount of their 2015 membership dues be returned to them. Sedgwick County's actions may impact the 2015 work plan budget. Staff continues to execute the contracts and items within the plan, as directed by the Executive Committee and Board of Directors. Depending on the financial situation and developments staff can adjust Work Plan activities, projects, and meetings accordingly to coincide with available funding.

The Committee had a lengthy discussion on possible next steps, noting there is no precedent for this action. The interlocal agreement contains the clause for withdrawal, and the requirement of 60 days' notice of intent to withdraw, but there are no policies that speak to the County's request for a refund. The Committee requested a meeting of the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) to provide recommendations to them at their March 5th meeting. The Executive Committee will provide a recommendation to the Board of Directors for action at their April 16th meeting.

The Committee requested a meeting of the TAC be scheduled before the meeting of the Executive Committee on March 5th and provide a recommendation on refunding Sedgwick County's 2015 dues.

3. REAP Outreach and Recruitment

In December 2014 the Executive Committee made assignments from the 2015 work plan items to committees and task forces. Item six on the Work Plan is the initiative to expand membership in 2015. Specific goals include recruiting five new city and county members and 10 associate members by the end of 2015. Following the upcoming spring municipal elections it will be important to touch base with all of the existing members and introduce REAP and the importance of regionalism to newly elected officials.

Leading up to that, several presentations are already on the calendar for current and one new member. These are scheduled for:

- March 10th at 6:30 p.m.- Derby City Council Meeting
- March 11th at 7:00 a.m. – Harvey County Council of Governments Meeting
- March 12th at 6:00 p.m. – Kechi City Council Workshop
- March 16th at 7:00 p.m. – South Hutchinson City Council Meeting

Members of the Executive Committee are asked to consider attending these meetings in support of REAP.

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The Committee noted that reaching out to new and existing member is important in order to ensure understanding and buy-in of the idea of regionalism and cooperating. Water is an excellent topic and opportunity to discuss regionalism, especially in relation to the current 50 year vision planning underway through the Kansas Water Office. REAP has the opportunity to be the regional coordinator and convener and reduce duplication of efforts on projects of a regional nature.

Keith Lawing suggested that a joint letter to the editor be issued under the signature of the REAP Executive Committee discussing the importance of regionalism and cooperation. It could be submitted to multiple papers in the region for publication. Additionally, Lawing suggested that John Waltner and Commissioner Norton consider authoring a joint op-ed piece specifically regarding the positive outcomes and citizen participation during the South Central Kansas prosperity plan. Kelly Bergeron will draft a letter to the editor and circulate it with the Committee for approval before submitting it to local news media outlets.

The Committee directed staff to draft a letter to the editor about the importance of collaboration and regional cooperation and send it to the Committee for review and approval. Additionally, staff is asked to draft an op-ed piece from John Waltner and Commissioner Norton regarding the prosperity plan for review and publication.

4. Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)

In July 2015 new federal legislation will go into effect called the Workforce innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), replacing the current Workforce Investment Act (WIA). This legislation provides funding for workforce development and job training through the Kansas Department of Commerce to Local Area IV, which is operated by the Workforce Alliance and covers much of the REAP region. The northern counties of REAP (Harvey, McPherson, and Reno) are included in Local Area I. WIOA has specifications in the act that direct local elected officials to control how the workforce dollars are invested within the Local Area through Chief Elected Officials (CEO). Currently Wichita City Council Member Jeff Longwell holds the CEO seat on the Local Workforce Investment Board and reports the business of the LWIB back to REAP.

The Chief Elected Officials have three primary duties under the Act: appoint members to the Local Workforce Investment Board (LWIB); Oversee WIA Performance Measures and the provider; and Oversee and backstop the funds provided to the Local Area. In preparation for the upcoming implementation of WIOA in July the Workforce Alliance has scheduled a series of strategic planning sessions that will focus on a variety of topics. It will be important for local government officials in REAP to participate in these meetings to assist in prioritizing workforce development initiatives and training in South Central Kansas. REAP will be notified of these meetings as they are scheduled and encourage anyone who is interested to attend and participate in the planning process.

The Committee received and filed the report.

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Attendance

Members/ Alternates

Council Member Carl Koster, Cheney, Chair
Bob Conger, Kechi
Willis Heck
Mayor Marcey Gregory, Goddard
Council Member Jeff Longwell, Wichita, CEOB Chair
Mayor Terry Somers, Mount Hope, Treasurer
John Waltner, Harvey County
Commissioner Chip Westfall, Harvey County, Legislative Chair
Commissioner Dave Unruh, Sedgwick County

Guests

Misty Bruckner, Wichita State University

Staff

Kelly Bergeron, REAP
Keith Lawing, REAP