

REAP | Regional Economic Area Partnership

REAP Legislative Committee Meeting Minutes

Wichita Workforce Center
2021 N. Amidon, Suite 1100, Wichita
November 16, 2017 ~ 11:30 a.m.

1. Welcome and Introductions: Chair Bob Myers, Newton

Chair Bob Myers called the meeting to order.

2. Approval of minutes

Approval of Minutes from Legislative Committee Meeting from October 26, 2017.

Council Member Tom Jones, Park City (Mayor Terry Somers, Mount Hope) moved to approve the minutes from October 26, 2017 Legislative Committee meeting. Motion adopted.

3. 2018 Legislative Agenda Planning

DRAFT 2018 Priorities:

REAP's purpose is to provide a unified voice for the region at the state and national levels, advance greater economic prosperity from regional cooperation and address issues that cross political boundaries. The following issues have been identified by the members of REAP as policy and Legislative priorities for South Central Kansas. REAP will also work and coordinate with regional partners on mutual priorities and updates as updates occur during the session.

REGIONAL JOB GROWTH & BUSINESS EXPANSION

- REAP supports initiatives that positively influence the quality of the workforce.
- REAP supports policies and investments targeting skills training in high-demand areas that generate high wage career opportunities vital to economic development in South Central Kansas such as manufacturing, healthcare, and information technology.
- REAP supports regional strategies in workforce, innovations, and trade to create jobs and grow business in the region.
 - Blueprint for Regional Economic Growth (BREG)
 - South Central Kansas Regional Export Plan/FDI
 - Cooperative tactics among post-secondary institutions to increase access to education and skills training
- REAP supports expansion of the Medicaid (KanCare) that is revenue neutral for at-risk Kansans providing vital revenues to local hospitals and stimulating the economy by creating thousands of jobs.
- REAP supports the continued availability of tax credits as a tool for economic development.

REGIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE

Funding for Transportation Infrastructure

REAP recognizes the need for dedicated and secure state revenue and emphasize the need for adequate funding to build and preserve the transportation infrastructure in South

Central Kansas, specifically projects / investments with that are vital to business and industry.

- **Rail Service**

REAP supports state funding for existing freight rail service and expansion of passenger rail in Kansas, specifically passenger rail connecting Dallas/Fort Worth and Oklahoma City through Wichita to the Southwest Chief in Newton.

- **Water Protection**

REAP supports policies and strategies to protect water resources critical to the economy of South Central Kansas; including of the protection of the Equus Beds Aquifer that supplies water for 20% of the Kansas population.

- **Energy Resources**

REAP recognizes the importance of energy to the regional economy and supports access to, and production of a variety of energy sources from oil and natural gas to renewable resources, such as wind and solar power.

FEDERAL ISSUES

- REAP supports extending the authorization of the Federal Aviation Administration, and opposes the privatization of the Air Traffic Control System. Private air traffic control could be damaging to economic activity in the region.
- REAP supports efforts to boost investments in infrastructure and monitor implementation of the Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act.
- REAP supports employment and training systems driven by the needs of business and industry by leveraging opportunities under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) to enhance sector-based partnerships that are employer led and advocate for demand-driven workforce and training programs.

REAP historically coordinates with LKM and KAC on current issues important to local governments. Below are the priorities and issues of importance to the regional economy and local governments identified by REAP. LKM and KAC have been requested to report on the activities of the following issues:

- Home Rule. Consistent with the Home Rule Amendment of the Kansas Constitution approved by voters in 1960, that local elected officials making decisions for their communities, particularly local tax and revenue decisions.

FINANCE & TAXATION

- Tax/Spending Lid. Local spending and taxing decisions are best left to the local officials representing the citizens that elected them.
- Tax Lid Modification If repeal of the tax lid does not occur, the cost of elections and timing of the budget approval process, in coordination with such an election, make the tax lid unfeasible.
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- EMS/Hospital Funding. Municipal hospitals and emergency medical services (EMS) are challenged in meeting their communities' needs. Between 2009 and 2014, city and county tax revenue budgeted for hospitals has increased 33.3% to meet these needs.

PUBLIC SAFETY

- Asset Forfeiture. The use of asset forfeiture is an important component in reducing financial gains from criminal acts while providing civil due process. All assets forfeited, or the proceeds of the sale of the same, should remain with the local government that seizes the property.
- Mental Health and Jails –supports limiting incarceration of the mentally ill in county jails. Furthermore, supports greater effort for accessible treatment to address mental illness and substance-use disorders.

INFRASTRUCTURE

- Comprehensive Transportation Program. Supports full funding of the Kansas T-Works comprehensive transportation program. Opposes any use of these funds to balance the state's General Fund budget.
- Transportation Safety. The State should work in cooperation with local governments to continue to provide safe roads and bridges within Kansas.
- Transportation Maintenance. Because transportation infrastructure is critical to state and local development activities, support the continued maintenance of the transportation infrastructure in Kansas.
- Airport Funding. Supports the continued use of state economic development dollars (EDIF funds) to enhance airport facilities and services.

GOVERNMENT POLICIES & PROCEDURES

- Economic Development Partnerships. State and regional partnerships are vital to the sustained growth of the state and should be supported by policy and with adequate funding.
- Tax Increment Financing (TIF). Supports the continued use of TIF to promote economic development. TIF laws should allow maximum flexibility and allow for efficient use by communities.
- STAR Bonds. Supports the ability of cities to utilize STAR bonds to promote economic development in their communities.
- Exports. Supports the Kansas Department of Commerce providing assistance to Kansas businesses who may become Kansas exporters, whether by direct provision of services or through outsourcing.

Discussion about the proposed federal tax bill highlighted some concerns for local governments. The City of Wichita is watching this bill along with several other partners.

4. Local Elected Officials Reception

Reception is November 20, 2017 beginning at 5:30pm at the Boathouse, Wichita.

5. South Central Delegation Meeting

The Delegation will meet on January 4th at WSU. Mayor Hansel reached out to Rep. Whipple and offered REAP assistance in the planning, which he accepted.

Mayor Hansel and Marla Canfield met with Rep. Whipple and presented a draft outline.

There was discussion about instead of REAP hosting the delegation in Topeka, REAP coordinates with partners in the region and host a South Central lunch in Topeka. Staff will start reaching out and coordinating with partners.

6. Regional Transportation Strategic Planning

To date there have been three meetings. The first meeting was held on May 18, 2017 for Butler / Sedgwick Counties in Andover. The second meeting was held on June 29, 2017 for Harvey / Reno Counties in Burrton. The most recent occurred October 24th for Cowley/Sumner/Harper/Kingman Wellington.

The discussions items of the meetings included: ideas on improving infrastructure, discussion of regulatory requirements that making it difficult to move product, what are the transportation related improvements that would help business grow, ideas on improving infrastructure, discussion of road conditions (i.e., bridges), and consequences of new development on the region. Significant discussion included how the region showcases the assets (i.e., IKE Airport, McConnell Airforce base gas pipeline). The region needs to develop a list of assets for new business recruitment and current business expansion.

Wichita Regional Chamber of Commerce

The purpose of the coalition is to provide an effective partnership between the private and public sectors to enhance the Wichita region's ability to attract state and federal funding for area transportation projects. This coalition will coordinate the efforts of several partner groups listed below. Target audiences will include south central Kansas legislators, the Governor's office, the Kansas congressional delegation, KDOT and the Federal Highway Administration. Bob Myers was appointed by the REAP Executive Committee to attend and participate in the coalition with staff. Other REAP members involved in the meeting: Wichita, Maize, Andover, Derby, Goddard, GWP, and K96 Corridor.

There was a request to provide stories/data regarding transportation needs/projects specifically related to the North Junction, but other key projects that may arise through the process. If any REAP member has information they would like to share please send it into staff and they will share with the larger group.

7. Other Business:

KC did a previous study on their economic recovery. It shows they were slow to recover.

<http://www.kansascity.com/news/business/article538688/Kansas-City-Economic-competitiveness-has-slumped.html>

Upcoming events dates:

Kansas Leadership Training for REAP members: November 28th at the Workforce Center from 1:30 to 3:00pm.

Salt storage partnership meeting on December 4th at the Workforce Center from 10:00 to 11:00am.

8. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 12:52p.m.

Attendance

Bob Myers, Chair, Newton
Council Member Carl Koster, Cheney
Randy Frazer, Moundridge
Council Member Pete Meitner, Wichita

Kathy Sexton, Derby
Council Member Tom Jones, Park City
John Waltner

Staff/ Guests

Keith Lawing, REAP
Sean Robinson, Wichita Regional Chamber of
Commerce
Tram Ngo, Wichita Regional Chamber of
Commerce
Kelly McElroy, Newton

Marla Canfield, REAP
Craig Crossette, WSU

Bruce Witt, Via Christi