

REAP Executive Committee Meeting Minutes

July 6, 2023 | 11:30am

Wichita Workforce Center

2021 N. Amidon, #1100

Wichita, KS 67203

1. Welcome and Introductions:

- Kelly McElroy, Vice Chair called the meeting to order at 11:36 am and began introductions.

2. Approval of Minutes from Executive Committee Meeting from June 1, 2023:

ACTION TAKEN: Mayor Tom Brown (McPherson) made a motion to approve the June 1, 2023 REAP Executive Committee Meeting Minutes as presented. Mayor Russ Kessler (Haysville) seconded. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

3. 2023 Kansas Legislature Update:

- Josh Svaty stated the Interim Committees have formed and schedules are being determined.
 - There is a broad ranging committee on energy that should be gathering after Labor Day.
 - A Foreign Ownership of Land Committee is set to meet mid-September.
 - The Water Committee is scheduled to meet late August around the 22nd and 23rd in the Great Bend area.
 - Interim Committees are Special Committees between the House and Senate that run through the fall. They do not write legislation but research particular topics in order to produce a report for when the full legislature returns.
- Legislative Tours starting in the next couple weeks.
 - We are anticipating 5-10 delegates per tour.
 - Topics of the visits will focus on economic drivers and legislative policy.
 - The hope is to provide information to help advance the 2024 Legislative Policy.

ACTION TAKEN: Report was received and filed.

4. Wichita Transit Advisory Board Appointment:

- Mike Tann stated he has been with Wichita Transit for 5-years.
 - When he came into the position he wanted to increase transit services to more people and more places rather than maintaining the status quo.
- It was said we need to start looking at regionalization and multimodal options and “how do we get beyond Wichita?”
 - Wichita is an urban city with urban problems, but it has suburbs that have opportunities available but are not being met due to lack of funding for transportation infrastructure.

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- Discussions need to begin about how we can provide workforce and transportation to outside businesses including Integra, Amazon, and other companies.
 - Industries will not come to the region if there is no way to get workers to the facilities.
 - 2nd and 3rd shifts need to be taken into consideration and how these workers will get home after their shifts when transit is already closed.
- If we look to establish regional transit, where will funds come from?
 - The current operation budget is supported by the city and the state. These funds determine how many staff are needed, where the busses run, and how many busses are needed.
 - When you start talking about sales tax increases people grow nervous.
 - The Transit Advisory Board wants to have a transportation plan ready before they go to vote.
 - We need to determine what we can realistically expect to obtain.
 - We need a plan.
 - We need a dollar amount attached the plan.
 - We need to know how to relay that plan and dollar amount to the community.
- Keith stated the Workforce Alliance offers access to employment and can help with transportation and childcare.
 - Once a person receives employment they struggle to keep the job because they don't often have a way to get there.
 - People are more likely to use public transportation nowadays.
- Mayor Brown stated it is "Wichita Transit," and he supports coming up with a plan and wants to see a transition where the Wichita borders are eliminated. This could possibly become a Regional Transit Authority.
- Chad Parasa explained that WAMPO is working with Wichita Transit and various transit providers in the region to create a "Regional Transit Implementation Plan". The plan should be completed by August 2024.
- Mayor Kessler said Haysville has the Haysville Hustle as their public transportation and would like to connect to Wichita Transit.
- Discussions were had on appointing a REAP members to fill our vacant spot on the Wichita Transit Advisory Board.

ACTION TAKEN: *Commissioner Pete Meitzner (Sedgwick County) made a motion to appoint Councilmember Justin Shore of Clearwater as the new REAP representative to the Transit Advisory Board. Mayor Tom Brown (McPherson) seconded. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.*

5. Broadband Updates and Affordable Connectivity Program Outreach:

- Kimberlyn Jones (Office of Broadband) stated their office established in 2020. They started with two staff members in the office and now have eight.
- Morgan Barnes (Office of Broadband) stated they are currently conducting speed tests across Kansas to determine areas of unserved and underserved areas.

- These tests do three separate speed tests at once.
 - These tests help determine where funding needs to go.
 - Speed tests will help create an accurate and up-to-date broadband map.
- The Broadband Equity and Access and Deployment (BEAD) and Digital Equity Act (DEA) came from the Infrastructure and Investment Act.
 - The bi-partisan infrastructure act set aside \$451.7 million for the state of Kansas to bring universal connectivity.
 - The hope is to get every home and business connected.
 - These funds will not be available until 2024, after a 5-year plan and proposal are submitted. There could be up to 20% of these funds available next year.
 - These new funds require community engagement and creating a broadband strategy plan and to work with strategic funding partners.
- Kimberlyn discussed the Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP) and the \$30 monthly subsidy for those qualifying households and the one-time \$100 credit to purchase a connected device.
 - Office of Broadband has partnered with the Education Super Highway.
 - A simplified enrollment process can be found at GetACP.org/Kansas.
- Katie Dawes (REAP) presented on outreach strategies to increase enrollment in your communities.
 - Currently the National ACP Adoption Rate is 36% and the State of Kansas is at 23%.
 - Adoption rates for each REAP jurisdiction were provided and it was explained that for each unenrolled household, the jurisdiction is missing out on \$360 annually.
 - REAP members are asked to work in two phases.
 - Phase 1 is partnering with you public schools, colleges, and universities to promote the ACP. Flyers, websites, social media, email blasts, and press releases can be sent.
 - Phase 2 is partnering with your community members including libraries, community/recreation centers, non-profits, and volunteer groups to increase awareness.
 - It is encouraged that all the REAP jurisdictions sign a Proclamation for the Digital Inclusion Week which runs from October 2-6.
 - Katie also stated that Kaitlyn Downey, Digital Skills Coordinator, with the Workforce Alliance (WA) would attend the next meeting to discuss schedules and information about an Intern starting with the WA in August. This Intern will focus on ACP outreach and digital skills/literacy.

ACTION TAKEN: Report was received and filed.

6. Community Updates:

- Mayor Chapman (Sedgwick) stated the Moonlight Markets are continuing and typically have around 20 vendors. They are also having a band play monthly.
- Mayor Kessler stated Haysville would be hosting their Vintage Days on Saturday, July 8.

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- Kelly McElroy (Newton) said that Summer Daze is happening this weekend, July 6 – 8. It was also announced that the USGA tournament the Adaptive Open would be occurring at Sand Creek Station in 2024.
- Councilmember Justin Shore (Clearwater) said the city is planning its Fall Festival for October.

7. Adjourn:

- The meeting adjourned at 1:07 pm.

NEXT MEETING: Our next meeting will be Thursday, August 3, 2023, at 11:30 a.m.

Attendees:

Name	City	In Person	Zoom
Kelly McElroy	Newton	X	
Tim Boese	GMD2		X
Mayor Tom Brown	McPherson	X	
Keith Lawing	Workforce Alliance	X	
Mayor Bryan Chapman	Sedgwick	X	
Katie Dawes	REAP	X	
Councilmember Nick Engle	Derby	X	
Commissioner Don Schroeder	Harvey County	X	
Councilmember Homer Henry	Andover		X
Councilmember Mike Hoheisel	Wichita		X
Mike Tann	Wichita	X	
Mayor Russ Kessler	Haysville	X	
Morgan Barnes	Kansas Office of Broadband	X	
Will Black	Haysville		X
Commissioner Pete Meitzner	Sedgwick County	X	
Kristi Northcutt	Lindsborg		X
Chad Parasa	WAMPO		X
Kimberlyn Jones	Kansas Office of Broadband		X
Councilmember Justin Shore	Clearwater/SCAC	X	
Josh Svaty	Gencur Svaty Public Affairs		X
Mayor Ashley Velazquez	Kechi		X
Jade Piros de Cavalho	Kansas Office of Broadband		X
Chip Westfall	Individual Member		X