

REAP Executive Committee Meeting Agenda
Wichita Workforce Center - 2021 N. Amidon, #1100
OR Zoom: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87961157122>
July 6, 2023 ~ 11:30am

1. **Welcome and Introductions:** Commissioner Pete Meitzner, Chair (11:30)
2. **Approval of Minutes from Executive Committee Meeting from June 1, 2023:**
Commissioner Pete Meitzner (pp. 2-6) (11:35)
***Recommended Action:** Approve as presented.*
3. **2023 Kansas Legislature Update:** Kimberly and Josh Svaty (11:40)
Kimberly and Josh Svaty will provide an update on the plan to engage the South Central Kansas Legislative Delegation over the summer and into the fall.
***Recommended Action:** Take appropriate action*
4. **Wichita Transit Advisory Board Appointment:** Mike Tann, Transit Director (12:00)
Mike will discuss the vision of Wichita Transit, the current operational environment, and how REAP can best support it. A representative from REAP serves on the Wichita Transit Advisory Board and the position is now vacant.
***Recommended Action:** Appoint REAP member to the Wichita Transit Advisory Board.*
5. **Broadband Updates and Affordable Connectivity Program Outreach:** Jade Piros de Carvalho and Kimberlyn Jones, Kansas Office of Broadband and Katie Dawes (pp. 7-14) (12:20)
KOBD will share updates on the most recent announcement from the Department of Commerce on the Broadband Equity Access and Development allocation and what that could mean for your communities. Kimberlyn will give a brief update on the ACP and current Kansas adoption rates. REAP staff will present strategies to increase the number of people accessing this program in South Central Kansas.
***Recommended Action:** Receive and File*
6. **Community Updates** (12:40)
REAP members will be asked to share any news of note and happenings of interest in the region.
7. **Adjourn:** (1:00)

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

REAP Executive Committee Meeting Minutes

Wichita Workforce Center

2021 N Amidon Ave, #1100

Wichita, KS 67203

June 1, 2023 ~ 11:30 am

1. Welcome and Introductions: Pete Meitzner, Chair

2. **Approval of Minutes from the Special Executive Committee Meeting from May 9, 2023**

Chip Westfall noted he was listed as representing Harvey County EDC and that he is now an individual member of REAP. This change will be noted on the minutes.

ACTION TAKEN: Mayor Tom Brown (McPherson) made a motion to approve the REAP Executive Committee Special Meeting Minutes with the change referenced above. Mayor Bryan Chapman (Sedgwick) seconded. THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

3. **2023 Kansas Legislature Update:**

- Josh Svaty provided a summary of the 2023 Legislative Session and a plan to engage the South Central Kansas Legislative Delegation over the summer and into the fall.
- Svaty reported on some issues affecting REAP communities:
 - The legislature passed a large tax bill with implications for sales tax revenue particularly for those communities with STAR bond districts that was vetoed by the Governor. The legislature attempted to override the veto twice but failed.
 - Budget ended well for South Central Kansas and while the area did not receive all of the requested funding; however, some of the funding provided was for mental health and child care issues.
 - No action was taken on the Heartland Flyer. There has been some difficulties with gathering support.
 - \$35,000,000 a year for five years was appropriated with the largest amount to go to water plant fund, which may have some substantial implications for REAP communities possibly beginning in year two.
- Chairman Meitzner asked about the possible property tax cap. Svaty responded that this the number one priority of the chair of the senate tax committee. There will be more property tax bills next session, which makes it difficult for local governments to budget.
- Vice Mayor Hoheisel asked if there was information regarding what the state planned to do with opioid settlement funds, whether it would be disbursed amongst individuals or groups. Svaty responded that it would likely be managed in similar fashion as the tobacco settlement in years past, but no information has been announced.
- There was discussion regarding how to engage the South Central Kansas delegation over the summer. Lawing and Kimberly Svaty met with State Representatives KC Ohaebosim and Leah Howell. They have requested a series of tours for legislators to see some of the key things they have been investing in and are related to current and pending legislation. Tours will be planned around the following areas:

- Kansas University – WSU Health Science School, mental health, aviation industry, APEX funding (Integra Technologies), infrastructure and economic development impact (water plant) and transportation (air service, passenger rail, K254 Highway Corridor study).
- REAP members are encouraged to attend and participate as well as to take the time to invite legislators representing their areas to participate in the tours as reinforcement.
- The tours will culminate in an issue forum in the fall possibly as a revamped event of the regular issues forum that occurs during that time. More information will be provided.

Report was received and filed.

4. Heartland Flyer Update

- Cory Davis with the Kansas Department of Transportation (KDOT) provided an update on efforts to expand Amtrak train service from Oklahoma City to Newton.
- Two months ago, KDOT submitted a grant application for funding support in partnership with the Oklahoma and Texas Departments of Transportation.
 - The funding would pay for the planning that needs to go into the project and possibly qualify for other federal funds to pay for environmental clearances, design and infrastructure improvement costs.
 - KDOT feels that the application is in a very favorable position and is working with a consulting team on a service development plan to provide information to the stakeholders and elected officials as to whether project should move forward in Kansas.
 - As part of the public engagement process, two public virtual meetings will be scheduled that will be led by the consultant group. The purpose of the first meeting will be to better describe some specifics about the service development plan to stakeholders and elected officials. The second meeting will discuss the numbers resulting from the plan including ridership estimates, revenue and cost.
 - There is a citizen activism movement to expand service to multiple stops not just to Newton. Officials have determined there is a need to insure the initial connection and then look at others later.
 - Satterthwaite asked if there is mapping available from KDOT that shows how routes and connections are to work. Existing and planned routes can be found at <https://www.amtrakconnectsus.com/>

Report was received and filed.

5. Wichita Transit Advisory Board Appointment

- REAP has a board member appointment to the Wichita Transit Advisory Board (WTAB). Troy Tabor of Andover, served as REAP's representative on the board, but recently vacated this position.

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- In order to obtain some clarity about what the role and responsibilities are for REAP on this board, Chairman Meitzner and staff would like to defer this item until the next meeting.
- There are employment issues related to public transit; there is no service to some major employers in the region. The City of Wichita is limited by federal rules to provide service only within the city's boundaries; changes and expansion of the current model is needed to meet the needs of employers and their employees and benefit the economic development of the entire region.
- There is a current study being done by WAMPO to connect the Wichita transit system to adjacent communities such as Derby and Haysville.
- Further discussion with the City of Wichita is needed to move forward. Michael Tann, Transit Director of the WTA will be invited to attend the July 6th meeting to provide more information on the Transit Advisory Board. REAP members interested in learning more about this position were asked to contact Keith Lawing.

ACTION TAKEN: Council Member Homer Henry (Andover) made a motion to table the appointment of a REAP member to the Wichita Transit Advisory Board until the July meeting. Mayor Ashley Velazquez (Kechi) seconded. THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

6. Small Community Air Service Development Grant Application

- Valerie Wise, Wichita Dwight D. Eisenhower National Airport, provided an update on expanding commercial air service. Every year, the US Dept. of Transportation offers a Small Community Air Service Development program.
 - The airport submitted an application in May for \$1,000,000 to attract non-stop service to an east coast hub with an emphasis on Washington DC. One-third of air traffic from Wichita goes to the east coast. Charlotte, NC is also a possibility; it is the 3rd largest airline hub in the world.
 - The \$1,000,000 would be used as a minimum revenue guarantee, which covers the cost of new service as well as a small profit. The airport raised \$528,000 in matching funds for which REAP pledged \$10,000; they also received \$327,000 in in-kind marketing support and 21 letters of support from cities in the REAP region. American Airlines has provided a letter of support.
 - Awarding of the grants is expected to be in October.
 - Airport officials have been meeting with state legislators regarding adopting a Statewide Air Service program; Wise encouraged REAP members to add to their legislative agenda.
 - This issue requires a deeper conversation regarding strategy and will be discussed at future meetings. Randy Frazer, Arkansas City is REAP's representative to the Airport Advisory Board.

Report was received and filed

7. Affordable Connectivity Program Outreach Strategy

- The Kansas Department of Commerce are working with communities to provide greater awareness and outreach on the Affordable Connectivity Program.

- The program assists eligible households with discounts for broadband services in order to increase access.
- Barnes made a presentation to the Committee at its meeting in April. There are problems with messaging and outreach about the program and a need to address barriers to enrollment. There is a large amount of available funds in this program that are not being utilized; these funds are available until they run out.
- REAP staff are developing outreach plans to increase the number of people accessing this program in South Central Kansas. Staff will be presenting a plan on this issue to members at a future meeting and would like to ramp these efforts up toward the end of the summer.
- Members were asked to provide staff with ideas on how they can assist on this effort in their community, for example putting flyers in water bills, etc. Committee members offered suggestions.

8. Other Business - Wichita Regional Chamber of Commerce City-to-City Trip

- The Wichita Regional Chamber's City-to-City trip is scheduled for July 12th through July 14th to Colorado Springs, Colorado.
- REAP usually sends a few members on these trips each year. Katie Dawes, REAP Executive Director will be attending. Mayor Velazquez and Mayor Brown expressed an interest in attending.
- Lawing will follow up on available funds and schedules to confirm the other attendee(s).

ACTION TAKEN: Council Member Homer Henry (Andover) made a motion to approve sending interested REAP members to the Chamber's City-to-City Trip to depending on availability and funding. Mayor Bryan Chapman (Sedgwick) seconded. THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

9. Community Updates

- The Sedgwick County Election office needs more office and poll workers. Members located in the county were asked to promote opportunities.
- The Clearwater City Council lost Council Member Tex Titterington over the weekend; his funeral will be held tomorrow, June 2nd.
- Senator Kerschen has announced he will not seek reelection for his seat in western Kansas; Senator Blasi will run to replace him.
- The Andover YMCA continues to rebound from last year's tornado and a new water park has opened.

10. Adjourn

NEXT MEETING: The next REAP Executive Committee meeting will be Thursday, July 6, 2023, at 11:30 a.m.

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Attendees:

Name	City	In Person	Zoom
Will Black	Haysville		X
Tim Boese	GMD2		X
Mayor Tom Brown	McPherson	X	
Lauren Clary	Kansas Gas Service	X	
Mayor Bryan Chapman	Sedgwick	X	
Cory Davis	Kansas Department of Transportation		X
Council Member Nick Engel	Derby		X
Randy Frazier	Arkansas City	X	
Council Member Homer Henry	Andover	X	
Council Member Mike Hoheisel	Wichita		X
Council Member Charles Jennings	Arkansas City	X	
Mayor Russ Kessler	Haysville		X
Council Member Don Koci	Colwich/Burns & McDonnell		X
Kelly McElroy	Newton		X
Commissioner Pete Meitzner	Sedgwick County	X	
Kristi Northcutt	Lindsborg		X
Chad Parasa	WAMPO	X	
Rex Satterthwaite	Individual Member	X	
Council Member Justin Shore	Clearwater	X	
Josh Svaty	Gencur Svaty Public Affairs	X	
Mayor Ashley Velazquez	Kechi	X	
James Williams	Black Hills	X	
Valerie Wise	Wichita Airport	X	
Chip Westfall	Individual Member	X	

Affordable Connectivity Program – Adoption Rates by REAP Jurisdictions

City	Adoption Rate	Eligible Households	Enrolled Households
Andover	16%	1,504	237
Arkansas City	35%	2,008	706
Bel Aire	21%	905	187
Bentley	7%	72	5
Cheney	10%	333	34
Clearwater	9%	386	36
Derby	15%	3,533	539
El Dorado	33%	2,054	668
Garden Plain	7%	128	9
Goddard	18%	506	89
Harper	8%	263	20
Haysville	30%	1,641	487
Hesston	15%	467	70
Hutchinson	41%	6,809	2,760
Kechi	26%	256	67
Lindsborg	13%	516	69
Maize	36%	418	152
McPherson	22%	2,176	473
Moundridge	8%	293	24
Mount Hope	8%	113	9
Newton	35%	2,690	936
North Newton	19%	242	47
Park City	49%	1,014	493
Pratt	26%	1,139	294
Sedgwick	21%	209	44
Valley Center	21%	854	184
Wellington	15%	1,330	203
Wichita	33%	67,922	22,686

- National ACP Adoption Rate
36% (July 2023)

- Kansas ACP Adoption Rate
23% (April 2023)

- ACP Enrollment Dashboard

<https://www.educationsuperhighway.org/no-home-left-offline/acp-data/#dashboard>

*Education Superhighway, April 2023

Let's Boost Those Numbers

- Phase 1 – Back to School
 - Public School Districts, Colleges, and Universities
 - Household qualifies for free or reduced-price meals
 - Someone in the household received a Federal Pell Grant in the current award year
 - Marketing
 - Press Release
 - Flyers
 - Websites
 - Social Media
 - Email Blast

Phase 1 – Back to School

- Press Release (attached)
 - Highlight the City is working together with the local school district, college, or university
- Flyers
 - Students who qualify for free or reduced-price lunches
- Websites
 - City and Schools
- Social Media
 - City and Schools
 - Example: “The City of Sedgwick is partnering with USD 439 to provide awareness of the Affordable Connectivity Program. If your household qualifies for the free or reduce-meal program, you are eligible for \$30 monthly assistance for internet service. Visit [GetACP.org](https://www.getacp.org) to apply.”
- Email Blast
 - Parents of students who qualify for free or reduced-price lunches
 - College or University Students receiving Pell Grants

City of _____ Announces Initiative to Bring Affordable Home Internet to Unconnected Households

CITY, STATE – DATE – Today, the (CITY/COUNTY) in partnership with (Educational Institutions) announced a new initiative to close the digital divide. The new initiative aims to build awareness about the \$14 billion Affordable Connectivity Program, a long-term federal benefit that will help to lower the cost of broadband service and help low income families to afford home internet service.

The Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP) is a federal benefit that aims to connect these individuals by providing eligible households with a discount of \$30/month toward their home Internet bill or \$75/month for households on Tribal lands. At this time, only 23% of eligible Kansas households have applied for the benefit.

(INSERT QUOTE FROM LOCAL OFFICIAL)

A recent report from the national nonprofit, EducationSuperHighway, highlighted approximately 28 million of the 123 million households in the United States do not have high-speed broadband. 18 million of these households are offline because they cannot afford internet.

The new initiative will focus on ensuring residents are aware they might be eligible for the benefit and engaging trusted community partners to support outreach. A household is eligible if one member of the household meets at least one of the criteria below:

- Has an income that is at or below 200% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines;
- Participates in certain assistance programs, such as SNAP, Medicaid, Federal Public Housing Assistance, SSI, WIC, or Lifeline;
- Is approved to receive benefits under the free and reduced-price school lunch program or the school breakfast program, including through the USDA Community Eligibility Provision (CEP);
- Received a Federal Pell Grant during the current award year;
- Meets the eligibility criteria for a participating broadband provider's existing low-income program; or
- Participates in one of several Tribal specific programs, such as Bureau of Indian Affairs General Assistance, Tribal Head Start (only households meeting the relevant income qualifying standard), Tribal TANF, or Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations.

To get started, households can visit GetACP.org, EducationSuperHighway's pre-enrollment tool to see if they qualify, what documents they will need at the time of application, and to see a list of "free with ACP" home internet plans.

Phase 1 – Back to School

- Marketing Materials can be found at:

<https://www.educationsuperhighway.org/acpbenefit/resource-hub/>

GET CONNECTED to FREE HOME INTERNET

The Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP) is a federal government program that offers eligible households \$30/month toward home internet services.

Scan the code to get started.

Visit **GetACP.org** to see if you qualify, what you'll need to apply and how to connect to plans that are free with ACP

4 steps To Get Connected

- 1 VISIT GetACP.org**
Get a checklist to simplify the application process
- 2 APPLY**
Use your personalized checklist to apply for ACP
- 3 CONFIRM**
Receive confirmation that you qualify
- 4 ENROLL**
Select Internet Service Provider and enroll in service plan

- Available in:

- English
- Spanish
- Simplified Chinese
- Traditional Chinese
- Vietnamese
- Brazilian Portuguese
- Portugal Portuguese
- Haitian Creole
- Arabic
- Farsi
- Tagalog
- French
- Korean
- Hmong

NEWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

STAY INFORMED

Free Summer Meal Program

Free K-8 Summer Learning Sign-Ups

GET CONNECTED to FREE HOME INTERNET

The Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP) is a federal government program that offers eligible households \$30/month toward home internet services.

Scan the code to get started.

Free Home Internet

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Happening at Wichita State

Latest WSU News → Upcoming Events →

RESEARCH
WSU students present work on NASA neutrinos project at Paris conference >>

DIVERSITY
WSU's student focus earns Emerging Hispanic Serving Institution status >>

STUDENTS
Free home internet for qualifying students >>

RESEARCH
WSU ranks No. 20 in United States for engineering R&D funding >>

News & Announcements

Graber takes oratory students to Washington D.C.

GET CONNECTED to FREE HOME INTERNET

The Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP) is a federal government program that offers eligible households \$30/month toward home internet services.

Scan the code to get started.

Free Home Internet

free summer meals
June 5-July 21
USD373.ORG

Summer Food Service Program

Let's Boost Those Numbers

- Phase 2 – Community Outreach
 - Libraries, Community/Recreation Centers, Non-Profits, and Volunteer Groups
 - Marketing
 - Proclamation
 - Websites
 - Social Media
 - Email Blast/ Newsletters
 - Registration Volunteers

Phase 2 – Community Outreach

- Proclamation (attached)
 - Digital Inclusion Week
 - October 2-6, 2023
- Websites
 - All partners
- Social Media
 - All partners
 - Example: “The _____ Public Library is excited to partner with the City of _____ to promote the Affordable Connectivity Program. Stop by the library to see if you are eligible for the \$30/month assistance for home internet service. Library computers and staff are available to assist you in the enrollment process.”
- Email Blast/Newsletters
 - All partners
- Registration Volunteers
 - Utilize partners in the community to help with registration process

Proclamation

WHEREAS, the (City Council or County Commission of_____) recognizes that broadband services are an essential infrastructure and play an important role in providing access to knowledge and opportunities in our communities; and

WHEREAS, digital equity ensures all individuals and communities have the information technology capacity needed for full participation in our society, democracy, and economy; and is necessary for civic and cultural participation, lifelong learning, and access to essential services; and

WHEREAS, Digital skills are a gateway for career advancement and crucial for economic growth, intergenerational wealth-building and prosperity; and

WHEREAS, too many Kansans lack access to affordable, reliable, high-speed internet; and

WHEREAS, all eligible Kansans are encouraged to register for assistance with the cost of internet services under the Federal Communications Commission's Affordable Connectivity Program at [GetACP.org](https://www.getacp.org); and

WHEREAS, households are eligible for ACP assistance if the household income is below 200% of the federal poverty line, or if a member of the household participates in SNAP, Medicaid, WIC, has received a Federal Pell Grants during the year of the award, or participates in other qualifying federal programs, or if your household has a student eligible for free or reduced-priced meals.