



## NETForce Meeting

January 23, 2015

Nebraska Innovation Campus-Lincoln, NE

9:30 am

## Minutes

Attending: Shawn Kaskie, Harry Hulme, Steph Nichols, Nancy Eberle, Steve Bors, Kevin Hagemoser, Sam Nelson, Craig Schroeder, Megan Manning, Doris Lux, Linda Hartman, Gregg Christensen, Brooke Lenhoff, Jim Rieff, Sara McMillan, Zack Zimmerman, Erin Redemske, Marilyn Schlake, Valerie Bren, Monica Braun, Deb Payne, Jennifer Hoagland, Liliana Petersen, Susan Pallas and John Haverkamp.

Welcome: Gregg welcomed the attendees and invited everyone to introduce themselves with their name, place of work and one exciting thing that happened over the holidays and/or one major entrepreneurship event they want to share with the group. He indicated we would leave the individual reports until later if time permitted.

Sam Nelson, Associate Director of the Center for Entrepreneurship with UNL, who had to leave early reported that they had created the "Institute of Growth and Innovation" with six founding members. Their hope is to reach out to potentially large firms outside of the Lincoln and Omaha areas to help them grow even bigger than what they are presently. He also reported the Center would possibly be initiating an MBA course in the fall to students who would then serve as consultants to these firms. On April 8, 2015 they will hold "entrepreneurday@unl" with special activities planned and speakers coming in that are recognized nationally. All are invited to attend.

Agenda Review: Gregg reviewed the agenda; there were no changes or additions.

Minutes: The Minutes of the September 19, 2015 minutes were approved as emailed.

Election of Chair Elect: Gregg informed the group that Judy Amoo, who had been chosen as Chair Elect pending her agreement, has indicated that she cannot take that position at the current time. He opened up the floor for nominations for the position of Chair Elect. Brooke moved, seconded by Nancy Eberle to nominate Craig Schroeder to that position. With no further nominations from the floor, Craig was unanimously elected as our new Chair Elect. Congratulations Craig!

Entrepreneurship Best Practices Forum: Erin addressed the group stating that the Federal Reserve wanted to put on a summit covering "best practices" focusing on education for entrepreneurship economic development. Gregg and Erin reviewed the minutes with the group from the Entrepreneurship Summit Meeting held in Omaha at the Federal Reserve on November 21, 2014. (Notes attached and made a part of these minutes.) The desire of the committee that met was to

change the paradigm for "measured risks". Many educators shy away from entrepreneurship education because they believe it is too risky to help young people move in that direction.

Craig noted that the talent in the community should also include mentoring to help educators understand the need for entrepreneurship education. Jennifer stated that there is also a need to support "intrapreneurial" talents. Doris stated that the same issues exist in the community college system, not just high school, for instance the welding program. Students learn the skills of welding, but not how to run their business if they decide to start out on their own.

Sam stated that the date being tossed out is October 9 at Nebraska Innovation Campus (NIC). The estimated cost for the facility is \$15 per person plus the cost of food. He questioned whether we thought there would be a critical mass that would attend this type of offering. Erin stated that the Federal Reserve could cover the cost of food for the day and Sam felt UNL would contribute towards the costs of the day as well. We will need to build the right agenda to encourage attendance. Maybe bring in some "big name" draw. Gregg stated we should charge a registration fee to help offset the cost as well. When something is offered at no cost, there is sometimes a perceived lack of value or "buy in" from the registrant.

Shawn mentioned that Kearney's "New Venture Adventure Day" is scheduled for October 15, 2015. He feels that event and the one being planned will bring in some of the same target audience. Perhaps we shouldn't schedule these two events so close together?

Comments from the Economic Development reps in the room: Most ED offices are on board with entrepreneurship education already. Will need to reach out to elected officials as well. Maybe attend the NEDA legislative conference in February to ask for help in getting the word out. The three key players are Economic Developers, Chambers and Foundations. Start up education is very important for new entrepreneurs. Even a packet of information that could be given out to new entrepreneurs would be helpful because they don't know what resources they need, nor where to access them.

Liliana - may need to look at a global program track at some point as well.

Gregg - right now they are looking at three tracks, Education, Economic Development and Policy Makers. We want to make sure these folks are at the table. Others we would want there would be entities like the Department of Labor, Department of Agriculture and other service providers (profit and non-profit).

Marilyn recently went to a conference in Kansas City called "Shift Innovation". The Federal Reserve hosted that conference. Is there a way we could get some of those speakers to come to Nebraska for this event? She also mentioned that she is working with a northeast Nebraska regional group who are asking for help and would probably like to attend a function of this type.

Craig mentioned that networking and listening to each other is key. We need to give them "how to" stuff to go home with. Gregg mentioned "deep think" conversations and more interaction among attendees. Craig suggested we start with a regional conversation to lead people into their next steps.

At this point, the group broke into small groups to work on potential session ideas. Gregg stated that the information received from these small group discussions will be collected and sent out to the membership.

Rural Futures Institute Forums overview: Chuck Schroeder, Executive Director for RFI addressed the group. He stated he was just finishing his first 12 months during which time he made 64 presentations to groups like ours, community and regional groups. The regional forums were a great opportunity to gather information. The overall philosophy of RFI is "Why - How - What - Identifying and working with the willing." This past fall they held three forums: Scottsbluff, Broken Bow and Nebraska City in which they tried to engage local leaders. They are already thinking of communities for the next round of forums. The main objective of these forums is to engage rural communities in the mission of the RFI and to listen, share and listen again to what was being said. Pre-forum information was gathered from local leaders to see what should be included in the forum itself. They were looking for the following: Identify key issues, demonstrate success stories to inspire, engage youth in the conversation, engage leaders to help identify RFI priorities. Identified from those forums were these issues: Economic Growth, Housing, Population decline, Job creation and Skills, Youth involvement, Leadership Transition, Entrepreneurship Focus, and Overcoming Negative Attitudes.

Chuck reported that they have funded 24 grants for projects that are currently going on. At the forums they heard information about the RFI grants. Information shared covered best practices, energizing communities, growing economies and leadership.

What they learned was:

1. Presence Matters
2. Rural youth **do** care and want to be involved
3. There is a critical mass of bright, aggressive young professionals making a difference and asking for engagement
4. There is a broad, complex range of issues that cannot be addressed by any single organization or entity.

Going forward they will repeat the process every other year and will be doing an RFP for prospective community hosts. They hope to involve the hosts in more of the planning process and will focus on young professionals and youth. Chuck also mentioned that the national RFI Conference will be held October 21-23, 2015.

Lunch Conversation: The lunch today was catered by "Bread and Cup" located in the Haymarket area in Lincoln. Kevin, the co-owner of Bread and Cup, talked about the process it took to get him to where he is today. His business was showcased in an article in INC Magazine last May.

Engler Agri-Business Program: Tom Field, Director of the program stated it was established in 2010. In its three years of existence they have tried to create a unique, definable culture - not a formal curriculum. There are six basic rules: Build, Grit, Partner, Courage, Passion and Aspire. This program is not embedded in only white collar work, but embraces various lifestyle enterprises as well as high growth projects. They offer a "minor" with this program and are not affiliated with any other department. He believes that entrepreneurship is not a discipline - rather an intersection. This program

is not a typical 3-4 year program. Their long-term hope is that students will be so engaged they will come back as peers for the community of "Engler". The intent of the program is to have 50 new ventures by 2020. Students who come to the program have two paths to choose from: pursue the minor or be an Engler Entrepreneur and declare the business they are pursuing.

Two students accompanied Tom, Larissa Wach and Amber Burenheide, as well as his assistant, Michelle Bassford. The students mentioned they have opportunities in the program such as: to pitch their ideas to new investors, great networking with professionals, business plan competitions, tours and they gain real world experience. They have an Executive Committee which consists of 4 students who help build goals and vision for the program.

Tom mentioned there are currently 140 students in their course work - about 80 of whom have declared themselves entrepreneurs and about 60 of those being "true entrepreneurs". Field is encouraging others to participate in the "How to Pitch Investors" experience to be held February 20-21, 2015 from 9 am Friday to mid-afternoon on Saturday. The keynote speaker is Michele Weigand, a well known business development consultant. They will scholarship in an additional 30 into this session. Field mentioned he works with the "Lean Start Up" model, but may expand to other models such as Six Sigma.

New development on East Campus will be happening that will allow the Engler Center and RFI to be housed on campus next to each other. Collaboration between the two entities is critically important. Tom mentioned if anyone wants to see the videos his students have created, go to <http://engler.unl.edu/> to access them.

Nebraska Innovation Campus (NIC) tour - Dan Duncan, Director of Nebraska Innovation Campus, conducted the tour for the group. He mentioned that NIC is a 501c3 not-for-profit entity. They currently have a 99 year lease on the property. Currently there is 380,000 square feet of space under construction or already occupied with an additional 80,000 being developed in the first phase of development. The building is environmentally sound using materials and the energy system that meets the "green" building designation. The group toured the campus and then returned to our meeting room. The Maker Space was also visited and plans for this space were discussed.

Activity Reports: Gregg mentioned that individual reports would be gathered and added to the minutes. In interest of time, no activity reports will be given at this time.

NETForce awards: There are two awards available as they have been in the past. Jim Reiff with the Nebraska Enterprise Fund will be sponsoring those awards again this year. These could be awarded either at [entrepreneurindays@unl](mailto:entrepreneurindays@unl) or at the Market Tech Conference.

Entrepreneur StrengthsFinder Update - Deb Payne reported that they are planning a new name for ESF. They are thinking of Entrepreneurial Profile 10 (or EP10). The next book to come out will be titled "Born then Made", but they still testing that title. Training is being offered called "Coaching Entrepreneurship Talents". The dates are March 24 and 25 and the cost is \$1,995.00. Shawn mentioned he had used his training to coach a group of students recently. It really went well. Linda mentioned they are doing EP10 with their Intro to Entrepreneurship students and will follow up with StrengthsFinder later with the students.

Entrepreneurship Consortium: Doris reported that the consortium is renaming and rebranding the organization. They are reworking the strategic plan currently. The next forum is set for October 9-12, 2015 in Oklahoma City. Doris is currently the president of the group.

Next Meeting: A date and place for the next meeting was not established. Gregg will ask Shawn if UNK would be willing to host our group this summer.

Submitted by . . . Nancy Eberle, Secretary

Attachments:

Western Community College Report - Judy Amoo  
Southeast Community College Report - Brooke Lenhoff  
Dawson Area Development/ABLE Report - Stephanie Nichols  
Mid-Plains Center for Enterprise Report - Angela Raby  
REAP WBC Report - Monica Braun  
Nebraska Career Education/NE Dept. of Education Report - Gregg Christensen  
Center for Rural Research and Development UNK - Shawn Kaskie  
University of Nebraska Extension - Nancy Eberle  
Nebraska Enterprise Fund - Jim Reiff  
Central Community College - Doris Lux  
Nebraska Business Development Center - Sara McMillan