



NETForce Meeting

**Holthus Center-York, NE
September 23, 2016**

The meeting convened at 10:00 a.m.

Present: Craig Schroeder, Nancy Eberle, Gregg Christensen, Jim Reiff, Kyle Gibson, Kathy Eitzmann, Steve Bors, Marilyn Schlake, Brooke Lenhoff, Linda Hartman, Bobbi Pettit, Peggy Garvin, Jim Reiff, Lisa Hurley, Kevin Hagemoser, Samantha Fairchlough, Don Hulme, Jennifer Hoagland, Lisa Tschauner, Aliese Hoffman, Monica Braun, Heidi Garvin.

Participating by conference call: Heather Nelson

Craig Schroeder, NETForce, welcomed the participants.

Craig asked everyone to introduce themselves, tell a little about themselves/their organization and one great thing that happened to them this week.

Nancy moved, Marilyn seconded to accept the minutes. Motion passed.

When we get to item #8 we will discuss more how to engage economic developers more engaged. Craig reviewed the Mission and Goals briefly. More discussion later in the meeting.

Nancy shared a review of discussions relative to the mission, goals and focus of NETForce. Discussion related to whether NETForce should apply for 501(c) 3 status was conducted. Also discussed was whether we could have a donations account. Nancy indicated the UNL Foundation will not work for us. The Nebraska Community Foundation may be a possibility. Nebraska Extension is currently a possibility for events we host because Extension is a NETForce partner. Nebraska Career Education and Innovation Fund (NCEIF) will be investigated as an option by Gregg Christensen. Jim Reiff offered the option of the Nebraska Enterprise Fund if we ever need it.

Jim noted that there is a lot of bureaucracy behind the scenes in establishing 501(c) 3 status. No action was taken on pursuing 501(c) 3 status.

Entrepreneurship Best Practices Summit

Nancy Eberle referenced the schedule handout provided to the participants.

The committee members on the planning team were noted.

Registration for the Summit went "live" this week.

Registrations are beginning to come in.

Almost all the speaker information has been received.

An amazing array of organizations are sponsors this year. This will allow us to do even more during the Summit.

More refreshments will be part of the Summit this year.

Nancy thanked the committee for their hard work.

Without the effort of every member of NETForce, the Summit will not be a success.

Lisa Tschauner is hoping to have a group of UNK faculty attend as a team.

It was suggested that a student rate might be offered.

We are going away from having so many print materials and the conference program will be done on Sched.

Currently 23 are registered.

It was suggested that information be sent to a targeted list of last year's participants. Nancy has access to this list.

The budget was set based on a participation of 125 registrants.

Next week, the Tri-City Economic Forum will be held in Kearney. This is another opportunity to promote. Gregg will have copies of the flyer printed and take to the Forum.

The MakerSpace event was described.

Partner Update

Monica Braun

See her activity report for details.

- REAP has had great results.
- A Small Business Needs Assessment has been conducted for entrepreneurs and small businesses. Its purpose is to identify needs in general and training needs.

Lisa Tschauner-UNK CRRD

An overview of major activities was provided:

- Lemonade Stand had 50 participants.
- A full camp of 25 participated in BizKids Camp (all made about \$48 profit)
- Their latest newsletter captures this information.
- Janita Pavelka will be getting an award and a \$10,000 grant at the Chamber After Hours.
- Support for a new entrepreneur group in Kearney is being provided.
- The Investment Club did an Export 101 program.
- The Tri-City Economic Forum will be held September 30 at the Holiday Inn-Kearney.
- New Venture Adventure will be held October 13, 2016.
- Big Idea Kearney, their business idea competition will be held November 16. They are hoping to have events in other cities and then have a statewide event bringing top winners together to present at the State Fair.
- It was noted they need to coordinate this event with Extension's proposed Shark Tank event.

- BigIdeaNebraska.com will be the central location for these events.
- Having an educational organization behind you is key to this type of event.
- 3 Day Startup will be held January 27-29 at the Nebraskan Student Union.

Lisa Hartman-SCC Entrepreneurship Center

Linda shared information about the Entrepreneurship Curriculum Dacum process they conducted (see handout) including:

- The process brought together small business owners.
- The participants did advance homework that informs the full day process.
- The participants meet for a full day during which they share what small business owners do as a part of their responsibilities (industry practices).
- A caveat is that what Entrepreneurship courses do is idea conception, not small business ownership per se.
- The Dacum process informs what is being taught.

A question was asked about how we can share the information with economic developers. Kathy Eitzmann will find out how it might be shared via website, etc.

Steve Bors

Information shared included:

- Dr. Dennis Headrick sent his greetings to the group and regrets that he could not attend as planned.
- Dennis is chair of the Nebraska Community Colleges Chief Academic Officers.
- The CAOs are interested in how their group can best engage with NETForce. Gregg Christensen suggested we ask for their assistance in getting information out about the Summit.
- Learning Centers are being created by Southeast Community College.
- The Small Business Coffees in Lincoln have been so popular that Beatrice, Nebraska City and York will be conducting them too.
- The Coffees have been beneficial because of the connections that are made and they have spawned partnerships and sharing of useful information.
- Everyone is invited to participate on November 10 in honor of Women Entrepreneurship Day; United Nation's Women's Entrepreneurship Day.
- Renee Corbett and her husband will be speaking that day. They own Prairie Plate Restaurant and grow a lot of their own food.
- Jim Reiff indicated Nebraska Enterprise Fund would be happy to pick up the cost of recognizing a woman entrepreneur in the future at the Summit.

Lisa Hurley-York

Highlighted items and activities included:

- Technology USA opening its first production facility in York on November 1st.
- In August a ribbon cutting for Perks, the new café in Henderson, was held. The owner is the third person they have worked with as part of their succession program.

- A web site developer has offered to develop a checklist of what needs to be done so that as entrepreneurs go through the process of working with resource providers, he/she can “check off” when they have completed a step.
- She encouraged anyone who has a checklist as a model to share it with her.
- The #2 challenge is workforce development and talent development.
- October 11 they are doing a lunch and learn for local businesses (employee retention
- October 7, National Manufacturing day, they are hosting tours of local businesses starting at 9:30 a.m. In the evening, they are doing a Salute to Local Manufacturers. They are meeting at York Public Schools headquarters, CVA, Monroe, fertilizer plant, and C Tech A.
- York is doing some youth apprenticeships and working with the high school students. They have several career academies offered through the school. Seed corn companies have partnered together to fund an Ag Academy for 2 years.

Jennifer Hoagland-CCC Hastings

Key information shared included:

- They have a new dean for the Business Division (Jennifer will add her to our contact list).
- In Open for Business magazine and article on HEDC is on page18. Dave Rippe was hired for the Director position and is accomplishing great things.
- Maggie Vaughan has been hired as Director of Talent Solutions.
- Dave is adding social media connections.

Don Hulme-Central Community College-Hastings Small Business Incubator

Major activities shared included:

- Starting Tuesday, they will be hosting a Build Hastings Startup and Innovation Challenge (see activity report).
- Participants will take the Gallup EP 10 and support will be provided based on their needs.
- He will meet with them to help them continue their business idea.
- The desired outcome is to generate some new businesses.
- Go to Hastingsprojects.com for more information.
- Most of his time is spent on small business assistance.
- The Incubator has two tenants and has finished two loans.

Marilyn Schlake-Nebraska Extension

Major activities and initiatives highlighted included:

- A new all day immersion program to be held on October 20th in York.
- They are looking for partners for this event.
- A new faculty member in Fashion Design has been hired-Sirhan Kim.
- David Valentine is specializing in innovation and wearable technology.
- Philip Onwiler is the 4H College and Career Readiness Preparation Extension Educator.
- New faculty positions have been opened on ag leadership with a focus on entrepreneurship.
- Extension is focusing on how they can support an entrepreneurial culture.
- Marilyn is working in the Southeast Nebraska area, focusing on the wealth of heritage in that region, and how to create supportive businesses to move those efforts together.

- Extension is also working with non-profits on strategic planning.

UNL Center for Entrepreneurship

Information on the following events and activities was shared:

- EntrepreneurDays@UNL has been moved to April 25-26, 2017.
- 3-2-1 Quick Pitch will be held November 3 in the Memorial Stadium East Stadium Skybox Suites.
- Sam Nelson is now officially Director of the Center.
- A minor in entrepreneurship is now offered at CBA.
- They are planning a 3 Day Startup activity in the spring.
- An Entrepreneur in Residence program, including lunch presentation and networking is being planned.
- Courses offered are in a CBA Track and a non-CBA track (more of basics) and includes a Creativity and Innovation course.

Kevin Hagemoser

Kevin shared that:

- He has been speaking with Nebraska Angels on venture funding.
- He finished a 40 hour mediation course in Lincoln and is hoping to do mediation for small business transitions.
- His aim is to put himself in place to help the succession process and that he wants to speak to anyone on setting expectations for angel funding and business succession.
- He noted that the state is very interested in sustainable agriculture

Nancy Eberle-Nebraska Extension

- Referenced the Summary Report
- She shared that Tom Field is hosting their 3 Day Startup

Jim Reiff-Nebraska Enterprise Fund

Highlighted activities included:

- Working on training again related to credit scores and funding opportunities.
- November 26 a course on selling acceleration and growing the top line will be offered.
- NEF is starting sessions in Grand Island for Spanish speakers on October 15
- Another session will be held in South Omaha
- A Startup for Success seminar is planned for October 19th in Omaha

Peggy Galloway-Grow Nebraska

- Third Thursday trainings to present over the lunch hour
- Seen rising success with these
- Almost everyone has had at least 20 participants
- All are recorded for accessing later.
- October 20th training will bring in Christopher Fields talking about e-commerce and shipping
- Search engine optimization, marketing topics, etc. will be coming in the future
- Encourage people to be Third Thursday presenters, she will share RFP with the group

- Save the date for the MarkeTech conference, March 16, 2018 in Kearney, NE
- Working with UNL Extension & Lakota Help to assist native Americans

Bobbi Pettit-Nebraska Enterprise Fund

Her report included:

- She started March 1 and has done 12 loans for \$575,000.
 - 4 were startup, 3 were growth and others
 - 7 female
 - 3 from other countries
- Those involved need more accounting knowledge.
- They Have been frustrated with banking community being open to entrepreneurship

Discussion about how to broaden the membership & outreach of NET-Force

Ideas offered included:

- Promoting at meetings members belong to or to which they are connected.
- The Big Idea Nebraska piece is crucial.
- Translating content and research and converting it into something that economic developers can use.
- Creating a summary of information would be helpful for the economic development professionals at the local and state levels.
- Becoming more open to economic developers and for us to go to economic development meetings and invite them to participate and better integrate our work for the benefit of their communities and regions (Craig Schroeder).
 - Marilyn Schlake mentioned how SCC is attending their regional economic development meetings.
- NEDA and NETForce having a joint meeting.
- Putting out an “ask” for an online clearinghouse of information of value to economic developers.
- The timing for Nicole Sedlacek (NPPD) to be involved is great.
- Using Zoom for “in-between” conversations and dialogue was suggested and follow-up discussion included:
 - Zoom meetings could focus on a few topics and have conversations about what’s going on and where assistance might be needed to promote the events, being involved in the planning, etc.
 - Is there something that would allow us to be at a meeting in Zoom that is non-time centered?
 - Kyle Gibson mentioned using OneNote as a way to do this.
 - Slack was mentioned as a possible messaging tool and archiving tool
 - The group watched a video tour of what Slack offers that might serve our communication needs.
 - Kevin Hagemoser had a suggestion that someone help set up a Slack account in advance for us to explore Slack and then we have training, Heidi will set up the account. Our conversation could be centered on upcoming events. A Zoom meeting could then be hosted to do the training and then follow-up conversation could be done at the next in-person meeting.

- Let's try Slack first and then see if it works.
- Could we use this as a tool to promote the Summit?
- We could create a Slack conversation for our Summit speakers

We are going to commit to interact with regional economic development groups.

Craig will reach out more to NEDA for more collaboration and Nicole Sedlacek.

The possibility of having NETForce involved with February NEDA meeting was mentioned.

The Legislative group for Innovation and Entrepreneurship will be unveiling their report

We need to invite Nicole Sedlacek to our meetings

Next Meeting:

Next meeting site will be at UNK on January 13th. UNK CRRD will host.

Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted

Gregg Christensen, Secretary

Approved with corrections, 1/13/17.