



South Central Assembly
Minutes of the Board of Directors Meeting
January 21, 2009 at 2:00 p.m.
Penn State University - Harrisburg

Officers:

[p] Jo Ellen Litz
[p] Steven Peterson
[] Glenn Snyder
[p] Raymond Klein
[p] Nancy Besch

Members

[] Robert Anspach
[p] Mark Berg
[p] Jeffrey Bergsten
[] Daniel Betancourt
[p] Harrison Bink
[e] John Brenner
[p] Gail D'Angelo
[] Michael Fesen
[p] Mike Folmer*
[p] Mauree Gingrich
[] Richard Gray
[p] Barbara Groce
[] Francis B Haas
[] Irving Hand
[p] Deborah Himes
[e] Roger T. Karsnitz
[p] George Klaus¹
[p] Julie Lalo^{2**}
[e] Russ Montgomery
[p] Penny Myers
[e] Susan Parry³
[] Stephen Powell

[p] Stephen Reed ***
[] George Rettew
[] Christopher Reiley
[p] Rusty Shunk
[p] Ann Simonetti
[p] Steve Snell
[] Ted Streeter
[] Michael Sturla
[e] Rose Marie Swanger
[] Ken Taylor
[] William Troxell
[p] Boyd Wolff
[e] Lori Yeich ***
[] Merrill Yohe
[] Bob Ziobrowski
[e] Craig Zumbrun

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Others Attending:

*Fred Sembach
**Josh Karns
***Ed Nielsen
Judy Chambers
Sherri Zimmerman (Executive Director)
Stephen Scanlon (Staff)

Attendance Key:

e - excused absence (prior contact)
p - present
t - telephone (not an option)

1 Ex Officio USDA

2 Ex Officio 10,000 Friends of PA

3 Ex Officio RC&D

Review of November 11, 2008 minutes

A brief discussion recalled discussion at the November meeting about creating sun setting working groups in place of committee structures
The minutes were approved by consensus.

Introductions around the table in the new Olmstead building conference room were made.

Strategic Planning

The board meeting was held in two parts. It began with a continuation of the December 5 strategic planning exercise led by Judy Chambers. It concluded with the normal business of the board.

Board Business Meeting Continued

County and City Reports

Ms. Litz submitted a written Lebanon County report. In her summary she noted that Lebanon County is moderately isolated from the economic downturn. Economic development is progressing but slowed. In an unrelated manner the county has received a court order to reassess property values.

Mr. Memmi concurred with Ms. Litz' assessment. Dauphin County is somewhat isolated. Economic development has slowed. Tourism is a large part of economy and hotels continue to be built. The manufacturing base continues to decline. But the service sector shows some job growth.

Mr. Berg reports that there have been business closures in Adams County and that the commissioners are being careful with their budget. Home building saw its slowest year in a long time contrasting with what was anticipated. County reassessment is scheduled for 2009.

Mr. Snell noted that home sales in York/Adams are way down but that the median price has not declined as much as in the rest of the country. Factory jobs have been lost. He noted that proximity to Maryland plays a significant role on the local economy.

Executive Director's report

Ms. Zimmerman distributed copies of her report, attached. She introduced Debra Kravitz and Kim Winters. Ms. Kravitz is on her IUP staff and has been instrumental in much of the background work of the Assembly over the past year. Ms. Winters has been redeveloping the Assembly website.

Ms. Zimmerman and Ms. Winters gave a demonstration of where the website was heading. They are expanding the digital library of Assembly publications and requested digital images of Assembly events. A resources page with links to other regional organizations that fit Assembly mission will be added. The site will include business card profiles of members that will link to agency websites.

Mr. Klein noted that while the site appeared to be educational, it needs to draw new members as well. A page on the energy consortium would be a place to begin. Members were asked to send information and ideas to Ms. Winters at kimwinters611@comcast.net.

Committee Reports

Agriculture Committee

Mr. Wolff had an initial meeting with Mr. Montgomery and Mrs. Simonetti. Mr. Berg asked to be included in future meetings.

Housing, Predatory Lending and Community Development

The December meeting drew nearly 30 people. Ed Geiger (DCED) gave a presentation on the Federal Mortgage foreclosure program and Chris Houston (CCHRA) presented on Community Development projects in Cumberland County. Next Feb 10 Liz Hersh (Housing Alliance of PA) will offer her thoughts on the state of housing in PA. A second speaker has yet to be confirmed. These meetings are held on second Tuesdays of odd months at 9:30.

Special Task Force on the Chesapeake Bay

Mr. Wolff reported that the last meeting was October 2006 at which time a letter was prepared. He is willing to move if there is a direction.

Nominating Committee

Ms. D'Angelo asked about the response to the letters of resignation mailing. Ms. Zimmerman indicated that many required individual follow up because many were not aware that they could appoint a representative. Ms. D'Angelo suggested that once the list is finally established it might be a good time to have a mixer.

Ms. Besch announced her intention to resign as Nominating chair. After a brief discussion Mr. Berg nominated Ms. D'Angelo to fill the role. Ms. D'Angelo noted that she would have to get back to Ms. Litz about it.

Transportation Committee

Mr. Karns reported that 10,000 Friends of Pennsylvania is involved as a regional transportation advocate currently focusing on transportation infrastructure stimulus spending. A collaborative group is hoping to follow funding to ensure that it is spent strategically and that there is transparency. Ms. Zimmerman is involved with the group. The next step is to host a regional PA meeting. 10,000 Friends is taking the lead role but seeks Assembly support.

After discussion Misters Karns and Bergsten were asked to consider chairing or co-chairing the transportation committee.

Summit follow up

Proceedings finalization is still pending. Ms. Simonetti reported that Fred Reddig said he had an interest in seeing the report. Ms. Litz stressed the importance of finishing it.

Old Business

Energy Consortium

Board members need to be able to talk about the consortium in order to promote it. The York Housing Authority is the first member. Hampton Township is a potential member.

Health Insurance Consortium

Mr. Klaus and Ms. Kline met with Jill Rumburger and the Delaware Valley Health Insurance Trust (DVHIT). DVHIT's clients are forms of government. It is a potential revenue generating model that also provides a service. DVHIT presented three scenarios for Assembly involvement:

- 1) The Assembly can begin its own trust,
- 2) The Assembly can develop its own trust managed by DVHIT, or
- 3) The Assembly can join the DVHIT and market it in the region.

Mr. Klaus reported that there are 57 members in Philadelphia region. DVHIT would consider 12 members a success in our region.

Mr. Petersen noted that an advantage of the program is that annual cost increase to members is more stable than in the open market.

New Business

Keystone Opportunity Zone (KOZ) report

Mr. Scanlon gave a 2008 KOZ activity report. Ninety-one applications for local approval were processed. 87 of those were approved at the local level. The remainder of them was not in KOZ approved parcels. Approximately 20 other inquiries were made prior to application. None were eligible. When calls of that nature were made he has referred the caller to the appropriate county or city economic development department(s) if it appeared there was an investment interest.

This year the KOZ program developed a new reporting system to gauge the effectiveness of the program. Mr. Scanlon did the needed research to fulfill the requirement.

The legislature decided to permit an expansion of the KOZ program in 2009. Ms. Zimmerman and Mr. Scanlon participated in a KOZ training and followed up by outreach to current municipal KOZ coordinators and city and county economic development departments.

Membership mailing

Last year's mailing drew a limited return. It is now time for 2009 memberships. Ms. Litz called for a basic email appeal to board members indicating that memberships are due. This should be done soon. An appeal to others and municipalities and counties can follow.

Ms. D'Angelo advised a solicitation of all banks. Financial institutions have forms on their websites called sponsorships. It is preferable to ask for something specific, such as sponsoring an event or study.

Ms. Litz concurred, indicating that there is also great value in having a champion in a bank to support a request.

Mr. Nielsen expressed that there should be a presentable website first because the applicant gets only one shot at making an impression.

Mr. Klaus noted that the website should have at least a generic action plan.

Ms. Myers noted that any membership application should let people know that membership will help the member get the company name out through web links.

Adjournment

At 5:05 p.m. Ms. Litz made a motion to adjourn; seconded by Mr. Snell. Unanimous approval

The next meeting of the board will take place on March 18 from 3:00 – 5:00 at PSU-Harrisburg. Location to be determined.