

South Platte Meeting Minutes 5/12/15

South Platte United Chambers of Commerce met Tuesday, May 12, 2015 at Central Nebraska Public Power and Irrigation District, 415 Lincoln Street in Holdrege for reorganizational planning. CNNPID provided a pizza lunch.

Co-President Tim Anderson called the meeting to order shortly past noon. Members in attendance introduced themselves:

Tim Anderson of CNNPID, Holdrege
Dena Beck of REAP (Rural Enterprise Assistance Project), Minden
Stan Clouse of Nebraska Public Power District and Mayor of Kearney
Mary Crawford of Central Nebraska College of Technical Agriculture, Curtis
Kelly Gewecke of Department of Economic Development, Kearney
Tom Hastings of Hastings Chamber of Commerce
Paul Hamelink of Good Samaritan Village, Hastings
Nancy Herhahn of Nebraska Rural Living, Holdrege
Jean Issler of Office Genie, Holdrege
Rex Nelson of McCook Economic Development Corp.
Ken Rahjes of Ag View, Elwood
Charlene Reiman of SourceGas
Betty Sayers of Nebraska Rural Living, Holdrege

No financial report was available.

Tim started the discussion about reorganizing South Platte. He said meeting quarterly might be a good alternative to monthly meetings. He also said we need to maintain communications with the legislature since we continue to lose population in this area of the state.

Discussion included the following:

Possible projects/events:

- Take a survey asking what people want South Platte to do, then use the results as a guide for South Platte activities. Will a survey help? How do we penetrate into the groups we want to reach? Dena said a survey of younger groups can be done
- Do tours of the region this summer, as were done a few years ago
- Quarterly meetings could start in September
- South Platte could issue letters of support for various projects and issues; people will need to know that they can ask for letters of support
- South Platte could promote projects in the area, e.g. the Veteran's Medical Clinic
- Take up the cause of bringing high speed Internet to small towns
- Reach the "millennial" generation to bring them to meetings
- Consider a name change, tagline update, mission statement update; few chamber of commerce are involved in South Platte anymore

- Lobbying

Ideas expressed:

- Millennials cannot relate to a Baby Boomer South Platte organization
- Smaller towns in the region need to be reached
- Paper magazines and newsletters are of little use; electronic communication is needed
- We have to have jobs in the region to attract new residents
- Engaging members using lobbying/legislation can be problematic
- State Chamber does a good job with the legislature
- South Platte should not be a "rubber stamp" for the state chamber

Summation

Areas of interest for the group should be:

- Tourism
- Community promotion
- Lobbying

Immediate organizational projects should be:

- Mission statement/tagline/organization name
- New web site; review two sites for examples of sites: <http://agview.net/> and <http://nebraskaprairie.org/>; a committee was formed to write a request for proposal
- Tours of the region
- Start a quarterly meeting schedule in September

Committees formed:

Summer Tours

Dena Beck, Kelly Geweke

Web Site

Ken Rahjes, Jean Issler, Jay Hall (not present but suggested)

Name/Tagline/Mission Statement

?? - plan to set these at the next meeting

Next meeting will be Tuesday, June 9 at noon. Location will again be at the CNPPID office with lunch provided

Current Mission Statement at <http://www.spuccne.com> "The purpose of this organization is to further the economic and social welfare of the state of Nebraska with particular reference to the welfare of the territory from which it draws its membership. The name of the association shall be the South Platte United Chambers of Commerce (SPUCC)."

Statement of R. O. Canaday at the formation of SPUCC:

"Nebraska is the finest state in the Union. This is the finest region in the state and here are the finest people on earth. But the region has not been given the consideration in many matters it should have.

Our organization can make possible a more efficient representation of the region's needs to the legislative bodies and public officials."

Minutes submitted by Jean Issler