



A Grander Vision for the Heartland

Grow Grand Island Committee Meeting

Please complete and email to Nicki Stoltenberg (nickis@grand-island.com) within one week of the meeting.

May 4, 2015, 3 p.m.

Existing Business 1.1 – Business Retention and Expansion Program

Attending:

Dr. Chad Hudnall, Chair
Cindy Johnson, Chamber of Commerce
Freida Jemison, Chamber of Commerce
Michala Soundy, Chamber of Commerce
Dave Taylor, EDC
Marlan Ferguson, City of Grand Island
Mitch Nickerson, City Councilmember
Jane Thorngren, TShirt Engineers
Tonja Broadwell, Kelly Supply
Tyler Doane, JEO Consulting Group

TOPIC	DISCUSSION	ACTION / WHO	WHEN
What is BRE?	An overview of the importance of having a robust BRE program in place was given. It was noted that these conversations with businesses could be beneficial in addressing concerns or opportunities businesses have.		
Discussion on Current BRE Program	Freida explained the current Chamber BRE Program which had been expanded in response to an expectation from the State Department of Economic Development. She noted that the questionnaire was a guideline and that the visit should be more conversational than academic in nature. It was explained that the data obtained from each visit was entered into a software program provided by the State and allowed aggregate data to	Review potential confidentiality agreements. Listing of businesses visited for last 12 months.	July meeting June meeting

	<p>be extracted, indicating trends, etc. for outstate Nebraska. It was explained that the State expected primary businesses (manufacturers/wealth producing) to be visited yearly and a team of DED employees had joined with the Chamber and EDC to visit primary businesses in June 2014. Cindy noted that the Chamber Connectors conducted member visits on behalf of the Chamber but these visits were not of the depth and caliber that a BRE visit was. Tonja suggested perhaps splitting the questionnaire so it was less daunting and having the basic company information populated on the report prior to the BRE visit.</p>	<p>Discuss "Business First" branding and differentiation from Chamber visits.</p>	<p>June meeting</p>
<p>Discussion on Databases</p>	<p>Cindy noted that the Chamber member software was Chamberware and that information from member visits was captured on each business record. The State's software system, Synchronist, was geared toward business prospects and included financial information. Johnson noted that the Chamber and EDC both updated information in the Synchronist system and it took approximately 30 minutes to enter data from a BRE visit. Cindy added that the new DED Director, Brenda Hicks Sorensen, was not a fan of Synchronist and preferred Sales Force so a change might be forthcoming.</p>	<p>Reports from Synchronist to be provided at next meeting for Committee information.</p>	<p>June meeting</p>
<p>Discussion on Teams and Training</p>	<p>It was suggested that the group compile a list of all companies/organizations that might conduct business visits as part of their outreach (CCC, Northwestern Public Service, GIPS, Northwest, etc.) and ensure they are part of these discussions and considered BRE team members. This way, visits are coordinated and CEOs are not meeting with several people asking the same information.</p>	<p>Determine other groups/organizations that conduct BRE visits.</p> <p>Add CCC to Committee.</p>	<p>June meeting</p> <p>ASAP</p>

Next meeting, web site info., other notes, etc.: Next meeting date is June 29 at 4 p.m. in the Chamber office

Volunteer Hours: 5