



South Platte United Chambers of Commerce
Business Meeting
November 13, 2014
Bieroc Café, McCook, NE

Rex Nelson called the meeting to order at 4:30 p.m. He invited all participants to introduce themselves, and he welcomed them to the South Platte organization. Thirty-four people participated in the meeting, enjoyed a delicious dinner served by the Bieroc, and listened to Aaron Thompson, Area Manager of Bureau of Reclamation Nebraska/Kansas District speak on relevant water issues.

Financial Report

Jay Hall, treasurer reported on the savings and checks from new members.

Old Business

Betty Sayers presented a letter to the South Platte membership to remind members to step up and volunteer for leadership opportunities in the organization. See the letter published in this document.

New Business

President pro tempore Rex Nelson asked the group to speak about the legislative issues important in the 2015 Legislative session. Members suggested the following issues:

Water sustainability in the entire state

A member said, "Texas and parts of Kansas are developing a 50 year plan for water use, and at the end of 50 years, the water will be gone. He said, "I hope we would never do that."

"We don't need to sacrifice economic activity to use less water. We can deal with limited water but can't deal with no water.

Conservation and sustainability in mind for the whole state

Sustainable applies to the Republican River Basin. The basin was declared fully appropriated. I would like scientists to study the basin and evaluate it for future water use and water supply.

Tim Anderson said, "Senator Schilz doesn't believe water legislation will be happening in the session because so many of the Senators are recently elected. Our Governor is newly elected as are 17 Senators."

Tim added, "Our work will be to educate them about the issues that are important to the South Platte region. The probable topics they Senate will take up are property tax relief, economic development, health and human services reform, prison reform.

Jay Hall spoke briefly about Scenic Highway 136. He said, "This Scenic By-way is the only one south of the Platte River. It is called the Heritage Highway. I would like to see it extended west so that it would meet Highways 6&34 and run to the border with Colorado."

A brief discussion on the need for labor force, housing and child care in rural communities drew many comments including population loss in bottom tier counties, downtown housing opportunities and leadership of Randy Chick, Hastings downtown redevelopment office.



Ideas for future speakers at the South Platte meetings

- Randy Chick, downtown housing
- Chuck Schroeder, Rural Futures

December 2014 meeting

Date: Dec. 9

Place: Minden Opera House

Speakers: Senators speaking on legislative issues relevant in the January 2015 Legislative Session

Meeting adjourned

Aaron Thompson, Area Manager of Bureau of Reclamation Nebraska/Kansas District offered a brief history of the Bureau of Reclamation, the work currently under way in Nebraska including Red Willow dam, future projects, partnerships, and many other topics of great interest to the audience.