



South Platte United Chambers of Commerce Meeting Minutes

February 10, 2015

Taste of Texas, Holdrege, NE

22 members present:

Anderson	Tim
Beck	Dena
Brocheryck	MacKenzie
Brooker	Julie
Crawford	Mary
Ellis	Keith
Beardsley	Bob
Farmer	Jim
Hamelink	Paul
Hastings	Tom
Hendee	David
High	Michelle
High	Scott
Issler	Jean
Issler	Randy
King	Bob
Knauss	Ron
Loschen	Dale
Nutt	Tom
Rahjes	Ken
Reynolds	Don
Sayers	Betty
Thomas	Tom

Tim Anderson opened the meeting with the question: Do we want to reorganize or disband the South Platte Chambers of Commerce organization?

Responses:

“Keep the organization in response to important legislative actions. Ask senators to join us for a yearly luncheon to report so that they know the South Platte is watching what they do. Keep the candidate forum, invite the governor to speak to the South Platte members every year, and in the fall invite economic development director to speak.”

“Participate in luncheon meetings with area Senators.”



"Don't forget agriculture. Ag is paramount industry. Reinstigate the President's Tour to get young people involved. Meet with local chambers and 6-7 businesses per location. Publishing *The Voyageur* tourism magazine is a huge benefit."

"A South Platte member from Axtell said, 'We look at South Platte like a backbone. I feel it and know it is there and holds me up. Remember the Housing Workshop. We filled the room. We need to survey the members again and ask them about the information and the speakers that interest them.'"

"I see gray hair and few Chamber representatives attending this meeting. How do we appeal to younger business men and women? Shall we video the speakers and invite the people who didn't attend to acquire the information over the internet?"

"The organization needs to be specific about the types of programs, speakers, and advertise the meetings in order to achieve a turnout of members. Better speakers result in a larger audience."

"In 1997, the South Platte United Chambers of Commerce received the Connect Nebraska award for the communities' desire to work together for the benefit of the whole region."

"We in Elwood don't want to see the South Platte organization go away. To appeal to a new generation of potential South Platte members, we need high speed internet, good reliable technology. Highlight the communities. If success is determined by the number of people who attend meetings, you will lose me. Attendance may be secondary."

"The South Platte region's population is 6% of the state's population. The South Platte organization is a tool to make our voices heard. Are you willing to step up and take a leadership position?"

"An example of a meeting format that appeals to younger community members in Holdrege is a group founded by the Phelps County Foundation. They meet only 4 times/year although they donate \$10/month. At their meetings, they all bring food and drinks and after 1 ½ years they have attracted 300 members and growing."

Tom Hastings asked for a vote. Continue the South Platte United Chambers of Commerce or disband. The members voted to continue the organization.

Jim Farmer suggested that each community commit to participate in the management of the organization.

Dena volunteered to arrange a tour of the towns in the South Platte region. Tim Anderson volunteered to drive the van.

Keith Ellis of CNPPID volunteered to step up efforts to recruit leadership and members

Dr. Tom Tomas will work towards bringing Orleans leaders to participate in a leadership capacity. The group effort has proved vital to the region in the past, and is valuable today.



Randy Issler suggested using the media, getting messages out and adding Twitter and Facebook, asking to present South Platte invitation to future meetings on NTV.

Tom suggested the South Platte members meet again on the 2nd Tuesday of the month, March 10, to hear about legislative issues and take a stance on the issues most important to our region.

Jean suggested we E-mail a weekly newsletter and clean up the e-mail address list.

Dena said, "We need to explore the issues important to the small communities represented in the South Platte region."

Meeting adjourned.

Next meeting: March 10 at noon at Central Nebraska Public Power & Irrigation District, Holdrege

Submitted by Betty Sayers