



GOVERNOR'S
EMPOWER RURAL IOWA
INITIATIVE

Governor's Empower Rural Iowa Initiative
Growing Rural Iowa Task Force Meeting Minutes
Conference Call
Wednesday, November 6, 2019
1:30 p.m.

1) Roll Call:

Present:	Lt. Governor Gregg	Sandy Ehrig	Maison Bleam (for Sec. Naig)
	Senator Sweeney	Jennifer Crall	Mickey Shields
	Ron Reischl	Emily Schmitt	Linc Kroeger
	Phillip Jones	Sharon Stroh	Tina Bakehouse
	James Hoelscher	Rob Denson	

2) Approval of Minutes: Draft minutes from the October 16 meeting had been previously distributed for review. Rob Denson made a motion to approve and Ron Reischl seconded. Passed unanimously.

3) Welcoming Remarks from Lt. Governor: Lt. Governor Gregg thanked all for attending the call. Today we will run through the draft recommendations that were distributed and provide final input prior to the joint meeting in December. There, the Executive Committee will present the final recommendations to the Governor, and they will be acted on.

4) Remarks by Co-Chair Sandy Ehrig: Sandy echoed the Lt. Governor's thanks and informed members she is now in leadership as an elected city council member for Nevada. She is on her way to Kansas City to the National Rural Economic Developer's Association Conference and will join some colleagues with from the IRDC and rural electric partners. Also, she, Liesl and Bill met in Perry recently to review the facility for the joint meeting and discuss itinerary.

5) Recommendations Discussion:

The Lt. Governor provided an overview of the drafted recommendations. Several components: Broadly, create a matching grant for community visioning. They received feedback from communities that have taken part and it is a good method for generational planning; Provide a more formal leadership process for those needing that, and providing resources for them;

Create a rural set-aside for some of the quality of life programs that currently exist; Continue to support for the Rural Innovation Grant Program.

Matching grant – Discussion:

- Ron R.: Thinks it accurately covers what we've discussed.
- James: Ditto Ron, nice compliment to focus on leadership.
- Emily: Likes incorporating the Iowa Tool and the online sharing

Rural Set-asides for quality of life – Discussion:

- No discussion

Supporting existing leadership programs – Discussion:

- Phil: Does this provide for the resource information on the website? LG – that and having an annual event that is like what ABI did. Phil - likes this as it pulls leadership into the other two areas and moves us forward.
- Tina: We are supporting what exists, but also brings in new rural programs. LG - Likes that we have some of both – empowering communities and individuals. More leaders can step forward, but through supporting leadership programs we are supporting individuals as well. Both valid priorities.
- Linc: What about financing, are we asking for a budget? LG – we could, but also based on conversations we could do without requesting resources.
- Linc: In looking at the asks to the Executive Committee, not sure specifically what we are saying – what is the ask? Is there any money tied to it? LG – rather than looking at specific dollar amounts, it is implied that funding will be needed, but at the discretion of the Governor based on our discussion.
- Ron R: Couple of questions on set-aside. On the survey, was there any consensus? Will anything be included in the recommendations from that? James – If talking about the population issue, no. Respondents were all over. There were only 17, all them task force members, but there is still opportunity to take the survey. About half indicated a population of 10,000 but the others varied. With more participation in the survey we might see different results. LG – one of the other task forces is looking at a scaled-set aside, like that done with the Catalyst program. Looking at adding another layer from 1,501 to 5,000, which might not be large enough to capture some rural, but in alignment with the DNR rehab program.
- Sandy: IRDC uses 15,000 for the Summit, but we are trying to get some of the larger rural communities to attend. You kind of need a few when showcasing best practices.

Continuing support for existing grant programs – Discussion:

- No Discussion

Lt. Gov: Any further discussion on the recommendations?

- Sandy: Remember when we are talking about population it doesn't come into play for leadership workshops.

- Jennifer: The rural innovation grants are important to communities so would like to see that continue.
- Sandy: That goes back to what concrete results with will come out of this. We will know more in the future.
- Lt. Gov: Yes, looking at a year or two down the road we hope to have results to point to that are a result of the initiative.

6) Public Comment:

None

7) Wrap-up and Next Steps:

Liesl will work with IEDA staff to polish the recommendation for a final copy for presentation and distribution.

Lt. Gov: Last year for the joint meeting we sought volunteers from the task forces to report out to the Executive Committed on the recommendations. We would again like to have the members engaged in that. Liesl will be reaching out to members to request volunteers, so please watch for that email and consider.

Please hold the calendar for the December 18th meeting in Perry. Members are welcome to attend for the day. IRDC will meet at 10:00, followed by lunch then a presentation on Perry projects. The formal ERI meeting will be held from 2:00 – 3:00 with the Governor in attendance, so if you cannot make the full meeting, please try to attend this.

8) Adjourn: