



Governor's Empower Rural Iowa Initiative
Growing Rural Iowa Task Force Meeting Agenda
Friday, November 13, 2020
12:30 – 1:30 PM

1. Roll Call:

Lt. Governor Gregg	Sandy Ehrig	Senator Sweeney	Stacy Besch
Whitney Baethke	Mickey Shields	Ron Reischl	Emily Schmitt
Janae Jenison	Linc Koreger	Rick Young	Phillip Jones
Jenna Ramsey	Jason Neises	Chad Huyser	Tina Bakehouse
Caleb Knutson	Sharon Stroh	James Hoelscher	Rob Denson
Barb Baker	Gary Taylor		

2. Approval of Minutes from October 26 Meeting:

Minutes from the October 26 meeting had been sent previously for review. Emily motioned to approve, and Ron seconded. Approved unanimously.

3. Welcoming Remarks from Lt. Governor Gregg:

Sandy, Liesl, James and he have incorporated the discussion from previous meetings into draft recommendations provided. There will be no formal task force vote, as the Executive Committee will review and approve at their meeting on the 19th. Recommendations will be provided to the governor for review, with a formal presentation at the IRDC meeting to be held on December 16. He would like to have a couple of task force members discuss recommendations at that meeting.

4. Remarks by Co-Chair Sandy Ehrig:

Commented on the work that goes on behind the scenes of the task force meetings related to the compiling and drafting of recommendations

5. Discussion on Final Recommendations Draft:

A recommendations draft document had been provided for review and the Lt. Governor provided a brief overview prior to discussion and asked for feedback from members.

Rural Recruitment Program:

James: Had visited with other states also looking at this so for us to make available to rural we can get a jump. Having ERI can lead rural communities to be more aggressive.

Tina: Having a clear narrative/story is key to all of this – call to action. Tool is the narrative. This is where to work remote, looking at Dakota Roots as a model but tweak.

Rob: Need to identify communities can be highlighted as remote ready.

Ron R. Likes the Dakota Roots model. We might have a budget limitation for the reach so let's leverage what we have like economic development organizations and regional organizations. Let calls go to those organizations and not a staffed state office position.

LG: We have similar with Home Base Iowa, providing personalized calls to prospects. We might be able to use platform for this.

Jennifer: Using the term broadband might be too limiting, maybe just generalize connectivity. LG: Would be fine to take out the term broadband. Iowa should set a goal to be #1 for remote workers and have a designation for communities that can demonstrate standards.

Rural Return Incentive Discussion:

Jason: Good snapshot of potential. Likes the focus on rural return instead of reverse scholarship. Customize based on workforce needs, housing, etc. so that communities can build their own. And agrees on the pilot perspective. They have started pulling together a group in his region to research how much money it would take to incentivize people to come back.

Ron: Likes the recommendation. It's going to take some time to put in place and to see outcomes. Thinks a cultural change can be started by the Governor's office, maybe a slogan to get some verbiage in front of legislature now. Guidance that plants seed for a different direction.

James: Suggests that in the last sentence by Homebase Iowa, add remote ready as well to tie to previous recommendation.

Beginning Farmer Tax Credit:

Jake Swanson from the governor's office provided an overview of the current tax credit program. Discussion was held on building versus leasing and the incentives involved.

Future Ready Iowa:

Agree to continue to support.

Sharon: They recently got their laborshed data which shows their area is already past the 70% threshold of beyond high school education. What happens when a community reaches that level? Does that community receive some type of designation as a Future Ready Iowa community? Liesl will research and get back to her.

Sandy: Seeking to have more connections – maybe that’s part of this recommendation – to discover next steps.

Rob: If we could identify all the areas that have reached the Future Ready Iowa threshold, it should be celebrated. Beth Townsend can probably identify those regions.

Medical Professionals:

Agree to continue to support.

Continue Rural Leadership Exchange:

All agreed with recommendation.

Foster community ambassador programs:

All agreed with recommendation

Provide diversity and inclusivity resources:

All agreed with recommendation

6. Public Comment:

None

7. Wrap up and Next Steps:

Liesl will be in touch with everyone on next meetings.

8. Adjourn: