



GOVERNOR'S
EMPOWER RURAL IOWA
INITIATIVE

Growing Rural Iowa Task Force Meeting
Hausbarn-Heritage Park
Manning, Iowa
Wednesday, September 18, 2019 1:30 PM

1. Roll Call:

Members Present:	Lt. Governor Gregg	Sandy Ehrig	Rep. Kaufmann
	Jennifer Crall	Stacy Besch	Ron Reischl
	Jason Neises	Ashley Moyer	Sharon Stroh
	James Hoelscher	Bethany Wilcoxon	Kathy Anderson

2. Approval of Minutes:

Draft minutes from the August 12 meeting had been distributed for review. James made a motion to approve, seconded by Sharon. Carried unanimously.

3. Welcoming remarks from Lt. Governor:

Thanked the community for hosting and Ron for his planning efforts. Manning is representative of one of the many communities in Iowa where you can have quality of life and jobs. Community special due to the positive outlook from citizens and organically grown culture. You have a 'why can't we' mindset. Represents a challenge for this task force to figure out how we can help other communities get that mindset. How do we encourage local leadership and make something intangible, tangible?

Also provided an update on what other task forces are working on and reminded members they are invited to all meetings. The Investing task force met in Vinton on September 9th and reviewed state programs for dilapidated and deteriorating housing and how to improve usability and awareness, as well as toured the former Iowa Braille & Sight Saving School. The Connecting task force met at the National Advanced Driving Simulator in Coralville on September 13th. Discussed the importance of broadband in manufacturing and automation and received a demonstration.

4. Remarks by Co-Chair Sandy Ehrig

Manning exemplifies what we are talking about and appreciated the tour and stories from local businesses. Pointed out ERI highlights since the launch of the Initiative. The partnership

between ERI and the IRDC has helped expand opportunities to provide information on both groups through several recent and upcoming events. Updated members on several upcoming rural opportunities. Presented along with Liesl at the Iowa Finance Authority Housing Conference earlier this month and will be at the Idea Summit in October. Also informed that the 2020 Rural Summit will be held at the Kirkwood Hotel at Kirkwood Community College on April 29-May 1. Looking to have at least 80 communities represented

5. Rural Innovation Grants Update:

Liesl updated members on progress. The policies and procedures have been drafted and a draft was shared with members. Will go before the IEDA Board for approval at the October meeting. No major changes from what was discussed at the August meeting. There is still a 1:1/2 match and a minimum request amount but removed the maximum. There will be three separate review committees consisting of task force and IEDA staff, but one application. Rural population is under 20,000 to qualify. Please read and provide input. Excited to look for projects that can be replicated.

6. Discussion on local leadership programs in Iowa:

James facilitated the discussion. Task force is charged with looking at leadership and collectively researching leadership programs in Iowa. Sent a community survey and distributed current responses. We've done work, but there are assumptions. Provided members with a proposed two-part concept:

Part 1 - Rural Leadership Incubator: Targets communities without a leadership program. Format would be one day of training, then back to the community for a few months to work on implementation, then would meet again. Has shared concept with several individuals for input. Focused on individual leadership, not community. Not sure if it would need to be an annual program. Need to start and then re-evaluate.

Part 2 - Rural Leadership Exchange: A daylong networking event for existing programs. ABI has a program that is a proven model, just not being used. We could consider resurrecting it. ABI is happy to support but lack capacity so would like someone else to facilitate. Also need to incorporate a repository of best practices that people can access.

Question today – Is this something that we want to undertake? Does it meet our charge?

We need to determine best practices to share with all. Do we really need to do a new program – can't we scale for other communities? Do we have enough programs today, and if so, do we propagate, or do we need to build another? Towns less than 5,000 probably don't have the capacity for their own program.

Programs seem to separate by community size, and small communities can get left behind.

Is there an alternative? Statewide network, building on what is there. Utilize resources and expertise in the areas and provide parameters that fit the town.

Breaks down silos – sports competition, etc. They must all work together. Regionalizing is key, makes them work together.

James: For example, how can we connect Manning to another community to mentor.

Leadership programs may want to be within a 45 mile/minute radius.

How geographically dispersed are the existing programs. Leadership Ames (LA) isn't on the list and very successful.

Leadership ISU had its beginning stages of the YP movement, now a statewide group. Still have local identity but bigger than the whole. Also losing leaders with retirement, and struggle with young people coming in. LA developed Youth Leadership Ames, and 4-H is already across the state, how do we engage them to be leaders in the community? After LA, then ABI. They haven't been able to capitalize on alumni. ABI's event was good to attend to share what did and what we learned.

James – good example of why the Exchange part is important.

Carroll brought youth to a roundtable to learn about community issues. James - sounds like an agenda of an Exchange.

Thinks the Exchange is great, powerful. Incubator – not fully convinced this is the solution. Ok to reflect on a new leadership program.

Consider a certified leadership program for quality. Hit check points – unified brand and expectations. Raise the bar.

Lt. Governor: What if you don't have a program, like Webster City. Won't there be community self-selection? If they feel like the incubator would be good, choose and pick, etc. If a community wants to do something why not empower through what we have. We shouldn't assume that since there is a nearby program doesn't mean it will be a good fit for another community. For incubator – topic might be how do we get to regionalization?

Who would be around the table for the incubator? Chamber member, economic development professionals, the city council? James – Could be like the Rural Summit with 3-person teams.

Hearing that we need programs and leaders. Hamilton county has nothing. They might take pieces and parts of different programs but will implement themselves. Incubator would help.

Likes the incubator. Their program is very Fairfield specific. If they were going to regionalize, it would look different from that. Community programs are specific. Concepts translate though. On the Exchange – we are lacking youth leadership programs, if we look at something new, an exchange would help with what we have, but need to build in youth specific to let them know why it is good to stay in the community.

Lt. Gov: The Incubator is creating a forum for a community to find information and best practices on how to do that and where they can get the expertise.

Need to look at what our goal is. Is it increasing leaders or programs? In Algona, ours is a 9-month program: Learn-See-Do. Serves Algona and surrounding communities. Classes must do something to better the community. You want it to be exclusive. They have two junior students and twelve adults. Principals chooses one from each school. Maybe look at the Exchange first. Is the mission to give leadership skills or growing community? Their program focuses on community. People must take ownership. What is our mission?

James – likes Exchange first, after that can recruit talent and could use Incubator to do it. Asked members if that is the right direction. Yes. He sees the Exchange as an annual one-day event.

Might this be something that could be incorporated into an extra day at the Rural Summit?

White Board Thoughts:

Exchange: will help recruit talent.

Legacy Foundation might allow us to borrow staff and resources.

ABI Foundation has some templates, flavor, formula and have agreed to help.

Select Foods – they can provide food.

Volunteers: Stacy, Shelly, Laurie, Bethany,

Sandy – Could provide auditorium, food. Thinks Exchange should stand alone this first time instead of Rural Summit. Lt. Governor agrees.

James – what is Liesl's commitment – helping but not running? Lt. Governor - she will be heavily engaged. The Governor's office can help raise awareness through bully pulpit.

Shelly – when doing Leadership Iowa, there is always an optional add-on in the community. If we have a way to see an outcome of a leadership program it will be valuable.

James – when do we want Exchange done by? Lt. Governor – this time next year, mid-September. Sandy – Thinks we can be quicker, maybe early summer? Might be able to launch program along with school year. ABI is early June.

Incubator:

Jennifer - Would like to define goals and metrics so we can see what is going on long term

Stacy – that data helps to build buy-in.

Sandy – maybe a menu of outcomes and expectations

Lt. Governor – By doing the Exchange first, we will have a better idea on metrics. Think about who we are inviting to the Exchange and the incubator too. Topics won't be that much different, will include best practices, what works and what doesn't.

Shelly – Consider calling it a mastermind group. Brings together influential leaders to make change happen.

Stacy – Selling points of a video on mastermind – video on outcomes of leadership.

Ashley, Jason, Sandy and Jennifer volunteered to help James think through the incubator.

Jennifer – Maybe the incubator could take a Shark Tank approach, perhaps with some private rural companies that could be interested in piloting in their area. The 30-60-90-day action plan.

Ron - Are we going to try and identify best practices before or after the Exchange or at the Exchange? He'd like to see it done before. James – can feature some best practices, but some of attendees may have strong programs and some not.

Ashley – can't we just add that to the application?

Sandy – 30 ideas in 30 minutes?

James – it will be on us to function as mentors in Incubator to help guide, you can get overwhelmed with best practices.

Jennifer – need to be purposeful on mentoring. Making a resource available when they get back to community. Need to have a group selected and then the community member can choose.

James – as part of the recruitment in Exchange to serve as mentors.

Stacy – Organic stealing of ideas.

Lt Governor - In year two will there be a big difference between Incubator and Exchange? Is the focus that different? Liesl – possible, she envisions the Incubator to consist of much smaller groups, more like a workshop. Mary Foley with Farm Bureau provided input and she said the same thing, you will eventually grow out of the Incubator.

Iowa Trees Forever hand-holds communities for a while then lets them go figure it out. Could be similar.

In business world we call it an accelerator.

Liesl and James will get together and start building this into an agenda for next steps.

7. Facilitated Work Groups:

Content was covered under Agenda Item #6.

8. Public Comment

None

9. Wrap up and next steps

Next meeting will be held October 16th in Belleview, times TBD but thinking noon-3:30 with a working lunch. Potentially transitioning topic to placemaking in community development. Will get an overview of their Heart and Soul program and Hometown Pride.

The next Invest meeting will be October 4th in Hawarden from 11:00 – 2:30, which will include a city tour. The next Connect meeting is October 9th in Clarion or Belmond at the Iowa Specialty Hospital with the topic of telehealth.

10. Adjourn:

Meeting adjourned at 3:30.