



**Visioneering Wichita
Entrepreneurs & Small Business Strategic Alliance
Agenda Meeting
July 20, 2005
Meeting Notes**

Attendees: John Beehler, Treatha Brown-Foster, Ray Denton, Roger Douthett, Laurene Gast, Joe Goetz, Jim Graham, Maureen Hofrenning, Jim Holt, Jerred, Hostetler, Margarita LaFarelle Hunt, Jorge Montoya-Blas, Karyn Page, Erik Pedersen, Abel Perez, John Stevens, Marcia Stevens, James Timoteo, Marilyn Toellner, Dana Walters, Steve White, Ed Wolverton, Jo Zakas

Leadership Team: Elizabeth Auer, John Beehler, Jael Van Boening, Jim Graham, Margarita LaFarelle Hunt

Next Entrepreneurs & Small Business Strategic Alliance Meeting: August 17, 9:00 a.m., Metroplex

Minutes from the June 15th, 2005 Entrepreneurs & Small Business Strategic Alliance meeting were accepted and approved.

I. Purposes of the Meeting

- Summarize accomplishments of June 15th Strategic Alliance meeting
- Report of goal coordination meeting with GWEDC
- KS Center for Entrepreneurship presentation
- Review of proposed action steps areas
- Prioritization of action steps areas based on current gaps

II. Action Report from June 15 Meeting

John Beehler reviewed the meeting of the Entrepreneurs & Small Business Leadership Team with Dave Wood, Vice President of Greater Wichita Economic Development Coalition (GWEDC) as a follow-up action item from the June 15th Strategic Alliance meeting in order to clarify GWEDC's service role and coordinate goals. GWEDC provides for recruitment, retention and expansion direct services and supports to mezzanine level and above businesses looking to grow/develop new ideas. The Strategic Alliance's role is not as a direct service provider, but rather to create an optimal environment for business opportunity that enables achievement of the Alliance's benchmarks as well as the key job growth benchmark. The GWEDC's annual goal is 1600 direct, value-added jobs amongst all businesses GWEDC provides its services to (any size business). By contrast, the benchmarks of the Strategic Alliance are net, such that they are impacted by the larger economic environment.

III. Entrepreneurial & Small Business Landscape

Erik Pedersen, Operations Manager for the Kansas Center for Entrepreneurship (KCE) provided a presentation on the KCE. The KCE was created as a result of the Kansas Economic Growth Act of 2004. The Act's purposes are to further establish "Entrepreneurship" and "Small Business" as priority, as well as to educate and promote the availability of "Public Sector" services. The KCE's services, which are designed to be indirect in that information and referrals are provided to those served, include NetWork Kansas, StartUp Kansas, and Educational Outreach Services. Next, the services offered under NetWork Kansas were

reviewed. NetWork Kansas serves as a centralized source of information and provides a conduit where entrepreneurs can be referred to the right organization at the right time. NetWork Kansas is not designed to provide direct consultation services and thus does not compete with area service providers. The anticipated outcomes of NetWork Kansas include: 1) more qualified leads; 2) increased community awareness of services; 3) client tracking information via a centralized database; and 4) increased collaborative opportunities. An initial launch of NetWork Kansas is anticipated for Fall 2005. In the meantime, staff of the newly-formed KCE are meeting with prospective service provider partners across the state in order to fully develop NetWork Kansas' information and referral resources.

IV. Proposed Strategy Action Steps Areas Review

The Economic Development Foundation Vision, key job growth benchmark, Entrepreneurs & Small Business Strategic Alliance benchmarks and Entrepreneurs & Small Business strategy were reviewed. Due to the overlap among many of the strategy's action steps, the Leadership Team proposed the following consolidated action steps areas:

- Providing education, training, and mentoring opportunities for entrepreneurs
- Providing technical assistance for entrepreneurs
- Providing an information clearinghouse accessible by entrepreneurs
- Improving the entrepreneurial and business environment in the Wichita MSA
- Increasing the availability of venture capital and other financing to entrepreneurs
- Supporting entrepreneurs through government with a positive business creation environment

The Self-Help Network facilitated full group and table discussions regarding: 1) Whether or not the proposed consolidated action steps areas still connected to the achievement of the benchmarks; and 2) Of the action steps areas, which the Strategic Alliance should focus its efforts on first based on current gaps (i.e., "Where do we need to invest our efforts first in order to get the biggest payoff?"). The full group discussion of the first question yielded the following action steps areas approved by Strategic Alliance members:

- Facilitating education and training opportunities for entrepreneurs
- Facilitating technical assistance and mentoring for entrepreneurs
- Supporting an information clearinghouse accessible by entrepreneurs
- Improving the entrepreneurial and business environment in the Wichita MSA
- Increasing the availability of venture capital and other financing to entrepreneurs
- Supporting entrepreneurs through government with a positive business creation environment

The second question was first discussed at table groups. The table groups then called-out their priorities to the full group. This process identified the following priority action step areas:

- Supporting an information clearinghouse accessible by entrepreneurs (5 out of 5 tables identified this action step area as a priority)
- Facilitating education and training opportunities for entrepreneurs (5 out of 5 tables identified this action step area as a priority)
- Facilitating technical assistance and mentoring for entrepreneurs (3 out of 5 tables identified this action step area as a priority)
- Increasing the availability of venture capital and other financing to entrepreneurs (2 out of 5 tables identified this action step area as a priority)

It was further discussed that technical assistance and mentoring and venture capital be collapsed under a general area of "capital," in which technical assistance and mentoring be considered "intellectual capital." These prioritized action steps areas will more fully develop by members at the next Strategic Alliance meeting in August.

V. What Other Stakeholders Need to be Involved?

Strategic Alliance members reviewed the list of groups identified at the June 15th Strategic Alliance meeting who are either already working to address the Strategic Alliance's strategy in the Wichita MSA and/or should be invited to participate in future Entrepreneurs & Small Business Strategic Alliance meetings. Participants were asked to provide contact information for those on the list with incomplete contact information so that they can receive invitations to future Strategic Alliance meetings. Participants were also asked to make personal follow-up contact with groups they provided contact information for in order to extend personal invitations.

V. Next Steps

The next Entrepreneurs & Small Business Strategic Alliance meeting will be held on August 17, 2005 from 9:00 a.m. to noon at the WSU Metroplex (29th and Oliver). The next steps of the Strategic Alliance will be to focus on developing plans to begin addressing the prioritized action steps areas.