

Business & Economic Development Planning Team
Meeting Notes
January 31, 2019, 3:30-5:00 p.m.
Fifth Street Post, Peru

Present: Brianna Gentert, Rob Walker, Marty Peregoy, Dan Hanson, Ruth Heywood, Christopher Nwafor, Amy Mincer

1. Welcome & Introductions - Official welcome to all from Dan Hanson
2. Overview of ImPERUing as oNE process to date – Dan Hanson reported that last June, a group of individuals gathered from the City, the College, and the PSC Foundation to begin working together on improvements for Peru and the College. He reviewed the list of members on that committee:

Darrin Reeves – Mayor, City Resident, College Employee
Jason Jones – City Council Member , City Resident
Bill Hunter – City Council Member , City resident
Justin Douglas - Business owner
Vanessa Sherman - Peru Community Impact Group, City Resident
Becca Jewell – PSC Foundation
Bob Engles – Area Realtor
Cindy and Tim Hoffman – PSC Alumni, PSC Foundation Board Members, Landlords
Dan Hanson – College Employee, City Resident
Christopher Nwafor – Student, Off-Campus
Sara Granfors – Student, Off-Campus

This group has worked together with two facilitators from UNL Extension to develop and administer a community survey, lead focus group conversations, and host a town hall meeting. Through these information-gathering efforts, the committee identified five areas of focus. The five planning teams and their conveners are listed here:

- ✓ Infrastructure – Darrin Reeves & Jason Jones
- ✓ Housing – Tim & Cindy Hoffman
- ✓ Relationships & Communication – Vanessa Sherman & Jason Jones
- ✓ Business/Economic Development – Dan Hanson, Christopher Nwafor, Justin Douglas
- ✓ Attraction & Retention – Becca Jewell & Sara Granfors

3. Purpose of the meeting – to begin planning for the team. Dan Hanson reviewed the ImPERUing as oNE Committee’s mission (purpose) and vision (what we hope to be) statements as listed on the agenda:
 - Mission Statement – To work together to promote a unified and vibrant community by connecting people, ideas and resources to achieve the best future for the City of Peru and Peru State College.

- Vision Statement – Peru will be a welcoming, thriving and engaged community with exceptional amenities that attract people to live, work, visit and learn.
4. Determine a name for the planning team – there was brief discussion, with the decision to keep *Business & Economic Development* as the name unless someone comes up with a more creative idea.
 5. Outcome for the team – Members were asked to consider the handouts displaying community feedback from the survey and town hall meeting. With the goal being “Current businesses are prosperous and meeting the needs of the community”, members discussed which priorities would be most important to address and offered the following feedback:
 - Support businesses that are already here -
 - meet with business owners to listen and see what they need
 - find and write grants for funding assistance (good resources on grants: Bill Hunter, Becca Jewell, Max Kathol, UNO Small Business Loans & Grants)
 - SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats) analysis
 - use other successful small town business as models – tour
 - offer coupons and “chamber bucks” to students as enticements to shop local
 - Help current businesses work together –
 - Meet with business owners to help bring them together
 - Meet privately – City Hall would be better than a public location
 6. Next steps –
 - Invite Miranda Decker (Ruth), Zach Reeves (Dan), and Bill Hunter (Brianna) to attend the next meeting on Feb. 12 at 4:30. The purpose of this meeting is to hear the needs of local business owners.
 - Amy will reserve City Hall and send a calendar invite to all.
 7. Next meeting – Feb. 12 at 4:30 at City Hall