

Business and Economic Development Planning Team

Meeting – March 13, 2019

5:30-7:00 p.m.

In attendance: Christopher Nwafor, Ruth Heywood, Bill Hunter, Rob Walker, Dan Hanson

1. The minutes from the February 26 meeting were reviewed and updates given.
2. Bill Hunter provided the following:

City Council Update

At the March 18 City Council meeting two agenda items relate directly to ImPERUing as oNE initiatives:

Housing Study – The council will consider a proposal for a comprehensive plan and housing study for the City of Peru. Most of the costs will be covered by two grants. This study will serve as the foundation for developing strategies and looking for funding.

Street Study – The council will consider a street study conducted by JEO and funded by the city. The study will focus on the 5th Street/Park Avenue corridor and develop a plan to address streets, sidewalks, curbs and trails. It will look for ways to move people downtown.

Short-Term Economic Development

Need to address how we put money in the bank today.

- Projects that are developed in the short term are more difficult to fund.
- We need to determine how to market to our students
- Students use Instagram
- Businesses need to let students know what they can do for them.
- Since there is no chamber, business owners need a way to communicate their needs and represent themselves.
- Business owners should be on the agenda of every City Council Meeting
- The business owners need to take action to reach out to their potential customers.

The group discussed ways to communicate. The Bobcat App was shown and it was suggested that the App would be a good way for business owners to see what is happening on campus and possibly to communicate with students. **Dan Hanson will invite Campus Activities Director, Crystal Hutson to the next meeting to discuss ways to interact with students.**

It will be important for us to conduct a market study targeting both city residents and college students.

Long-range Economic Development

- A plan is needed to give long-term direction.
- We need to dream.
- Improving housing is extremely important:
 - Start with a housing study.
 - We have many open lots and need to grow housing.
 - Medium to low income houses are needed.

Next Meeting – Thursday, March 28 at 7:30 p.m.

1. Review the March 13 meeting
2. Communication opportunities with PSC students - Guest – Crystal Hutson
3. Market study
 - a. Students
 - b. City Residents
4. Prepare for a meeting with students