

ImPERUving as oNE
Meeting Notes
June 21, 2019
City Hall @ 9:15 a.m.

Present: Darrin Reeves, Jason Jones, Dan Hanson, Becca Jewell, Tim Hoffman, Cindy Hoffman, Vanessa Sherman

Also Present: Amy Mincer

1) Review Mission and Vision statements – Reminder to review these as guidance for the Committee.

2) Review on May 17 meeting notes – A few follow-up conversations from these notes:

- City Ordinances - Vanessa has researched City Ordinances and discovered that the County should have those on file. The City attorney informed her that they might need updating. Becca and Dr. Hanson also discovered that SENDD has standard city ordinances that can be obtained and adapted.
- Ways in which ImPERUving as oNE can be a resource for the City Council – Darrin suggested the Housing Team contact Dave Pease who is on the City Housing Committee. For example, there have been complaints about tenants not having enough off-street parking spaces. Our committee could research and make recommendations to the City Council concerning remedies for the parking issues. Darrin affirmed this would be helpful assistance.

3) Flood Response Discussion – Updates on the following:

- A) Peru Levee** – Dr. Hanson reported that it is possible the levee may not be repaired, which would be very damaging to the community. The Peru levee is protecting more than just farm ground, and Dr. Hanson would like to assemble a group that would support efforts to ensure its repair. He met with Senator Slama recently and she informed him that the Levee Board has applied for FEMA funds, which would help the City. If these funds are not approved, she recommends contacting Congressman Adrian Smith for assistance. Dr. Hanson will continue to work with Senator Slama concerning this funding.
- B) Peru Water Supply** – Jason reported that, in addition to the drinking water issues for Peru, the flood is also eroding the sewer lagoons. They will need either repairing or moving – which could cost \$9 million. Darrin added that the portable water station is not quite ready to be up and running. It still needs improved filtering and will hopefully be operational in the next few weeks. Darrin and Jason remarked about people watering lawns and filling swimming pools, which indicates they need reminding again about water conservation, until the portable unit is running. Vanessa will include a reminder in communications to the City.

Note: On June 27 at 6:00 p.m., there will be a public input meeting on the final decision for Peru's permanent water solution. This meeting will be on campus at TJ Majors 114.

4) SENDD Resource Report – Dr. Hanson and Becca met with PSC graduate Alec Gorynski from Omaha. He is interested in our efforts, and has knowledge of valuable resources for economic development. One such resource is Tom Bliss (SENDD), who recently brought his team from Lincoln to meet with Dr. Hanson and Becca. This group can help with getting funding through many avenues including the following:

- FEMA flood buyouts

- Nebraska Affordable Housing Trust Fund – Darrin has completed this application for the City. This funding could assist those who have lost their homes to the flood. It could also help the City to buy homes, rehab them, and sell them to single families.
- New housing development – SENDD is in contact with developers who are interested in bringing new housing to communities like Peru.
- USDA – has funds available and is aware of flooding at Peru.
- Federal Home Loan Bank – Rob Walker with Mainstreet Bank is working on this funding source to help area homeowners.
- CDBG funds – can help with home renovations
- Down Payment Assistance & Rehabilitation Grant – these funds can be used for both down payment (up to \$17,000) and renovations (up to \$10,000).
- Downtown Revitalization Grants

Other SENDD services:

- Nuisance abatement – they charge a fee (for example, \$6,800 would cover nuisance abatement – start to finish – for 25 properties in town)
- Supporting local businesses through the Nebraska Business Development Center
- Groundwater
- Community Foundation

Nebraska Children & Families Foundation – Becca reported that they met by phone with Jennifer Skala of this foundation. There is a program called Bring Up Nebraska, which has connections to groups that want to help families recovering from disasters. Their organization already sent a check to the PSC Foundation for help with flood recovery. Becca is planning to gather stories from the Peru flood to share with this group to help obtain additional disaster recovery funds. Dr. Hanson suggested this could be used to help with the levee repair funds.

5) Planning Team Reports – Each team reported updates:

- A) Infrastructure** – Darrin reported that the City is focused on water concerns. Therefore, street repairs will be limited to patching, due to funding constraints.
- B) Housing** – Tim Hoffman reported that they have talked with a few Peru landlords to recruit them to the team. Those they approached were not interested in forming an association, but would like to have an educational resource for landlords and tenants.

Yesterday, they listened to a Housing webinar (48 participants) presented by RDG Planning and Design (presenter contact info: Amy Haase, ahaase@rdgusa.com, (402)449-0840). The presentation included housing statistics that are helpful in planning. It also suggested renovating a whole city block at once, not just one house at a time. Ideas were shared to help promote lots in town for building upon. It was emphasized that multiple groups must work together so they are sharing the risk.

NOTE: JEO has been hired to complete a comprehensive housing study, which will yield information helpful to obtaining grant funding.

This discussion included concerns about an abundance of rental housing in Peru. Strategies are needed to encourage more single-family dwellings. Dr. Hanson noted there may be

investors/alumni who are willing to buy, rehab, and sell homes in Peru for single-family use. The emphasis would be on ImPERUing the community, not on profit-making.

- C) Attraction, Retention & Communication (ARC)** – Becca reported that this committee is making progress on developing welcome packets for new residents of Peru. The packets will be distributed at City Hall and to new students on campus. They are also focusing efforts on having campus spaces more easily accessible for community use.

- D) Economic/Business Development (B.E.D.)** – Dr. Hanson reported that this team has developed a list (“Getting the Word Out”) for local businesses with ideas on how they can connect with students and grow their businesses. The document includes campus contact information to help them accomplish these connections. Dr. Hanson also mentioned the need to bring in developers who will rehab the buildings downtown.

Regarding the student-run coffee shop proposal, space has been offered by a couple of business owners in town. Purchasing the museum would be ideal as well, if it were affordable.

- 6) Next Meeting:** July 19, 2019 – 9:15 a.m. at City Hall. The meeting will begin at 9:15 to allow for the Orientation welcome on the PSC campus. Future meetings will be the third Friday of every month.