

ImPERUving as oNE  
Meeting Notes  
Sept. 20, 2019  
City Hall @ 9:00 a.m.

Present: Dan Hanson, Becca Jewell, Tim Hoffman, Cindy Hoffman, Sara Granfors, Vanessa Sherman, Jason Jones

Also Present: Amy Mincer, David Pease (City Council), Senator Julie Slama, Jade Fowler & Kylan Pinkelman (Nebraska Strong)

- 1) **Review Mission and Vision statements (see agenda)** – Dr. Hanson reviewed these as guidance for the Committee.
- 2) **Review on Aug. 16 meeting notes** – Dr. Hanson asked all to report progress on the red highlights from the August notes.
- 3) **DED Disaster Recovery Housing Funds** – Dr. Hanson was happy to report that the City of Peru was recently approved for \$500,000 in DED funding. Becca Jewell was able to get the \$50,000 matching that was required (half from the PSC Foundation and half from the Nebraska Children & Families Foundation). Dr. Hanson attended a portion of the informational meeting yesterday to learn about this award and how it will be managed through SENDD (Ashley Larson). These funds will be used to purchase and upgrade homes in Peru. The City will need to determine which houses/areas will be targeted for improvement. When the homes are resold, the monies from those sales will be returned to the fund so the program can continue. After meeting the program requirements, funds can also be used for other purposes.

Becca noted that planning will take place over the next few months and the program should begin in January. She added that the funding could also be used for tearing down flood-damaged homes.

- 4) **Flood Response Discussion** – Dr. Hanson led discussion on the following:
  - A) **Role of ImPERUving as oNE** –
    - Flood Response Reports – Amy Mincer gave the update. These weekly reports are being posted on the City’s Facebook page and on the perunebraska.org website. Amy is also sending the report to College personnel and distributing paper copies at several locations downtown, at Casey’s, and in the Peru State Student Center.
  - B) **Peru Levee** – Senator Slama was present to report that she has spoken with the Governor and he is trying to help get levee repair assistance. She noted that the funding exists, but ultimately we need Congress to make an exception to a bureaucratic technicality so the Corps of Engineers can repair the Peru levee.

Dr. Hanson announced that he is in touch with levee attorneys who may be able to help with the situation. They are helping with communication to the Corps of Engineers. **Dr. Hanson will continue to pursue this avenue for assistance if it is affordable and beneficial.**

**C) Peru Water Supply** – Of the four long-term solutions being considered, the City Council has eliminated one – Rural Water will no longer be a possibility due to its inability to meet the supply needs of the community. Dr. Hanson affirmed that the City Council is doing good work as they explore the other three options:

- Rebuild the current water plant
- Build a new water plant
- Connect to Auburn water

**D) Long-Term Disaster Recovery** – Dr. Hanson has spoken with Congressman Smith about the need for ongoing coordination of recovery efforts. He noted the need to develop a Long-Term Disaster Recovery Group, which is also a FEMA requirement. Dr. Hanson shared a document for use as a guide when assembling a disaster recovery group. He asked the ImPERUing as ONE members for recommendations of subcommittee participants. After discussion, it was determined that **Dr. Hanson will call the first meeting and the following should be asked to serve:**

- Senator Slama
- City Council member – Bill Hunter
- Levee Board – Brett Adams
- NRD – Bob Hilske
- County Commissioner – Mike Hall
- College – Dan Hanson
- Foundation – Becca Jewell (for the startup)
- Business – Rob Walker
- City Resident – Marty Peregoy or Teresa Westfall

Projects for a disaster recovery group to address include housing, water supply, wastewater, levee, north end of town, and roads.

**5) SENDD Resource Follow-Up** – Becca Jewell was recently asked (and accepted) to represent the College on the SENDD Board of Directors. Dr. Hanson reminded all that, in her position with the SENDD Board, Becca will keep the group updated. Becca reported that there are other potential disaster recover resources for Peru through SENDD, which has recommended contacting USDA for additional assistance. There may also be funds to help with a water pipeline. Councilman Dave Pease pointed out that the highway 136 project needs assistance, and Dan Hanson added that some Peru roads and the road north of town need to be addressed. Councilman Pease commented that Bill Hunter may already be working with SENDD on getting grant money. **Becca will follow up on that.**

**6) Planning Team Reports** – Each team reported updates:

**A) Infrastructure** – See “Peru Water Supply” and “Peru Levee” above.

**B) Housing** – Tim Hoffman reported that Vanessa has asked the City Office for an updated list of landlords, but they do not have it yet. Cindy added that there is no interest from the local landlords in forming an association. The committee discussed developing a list of standards for rental property owners in order to be “recommended” housing, which would help motivate landlords to make necessary improvements to their rentals. Jason Jones suggested a “model” Foundation home would be helpful for landlords to see the expected housing standard in Peru.

The Housing Team has discovered there is not an existing city code regarding parking requirements for rental owners. Councilman Dave Pease noted that even if a code was established, it is difficult to enforce. Dr. Hanson added that it might be possible to have Ashley at SENDD help with this concern, as part of their nuisance abatement program.

There was continued discussion about home improvements in Peru. Perhaps students could be employed or volunteer to paint houses for fundraisers, community service projects. Student Sara Granfors pointed out that student groups want to volunteer and are looking for projects. Senator Slama shared a link to the paint-a-thon organization in Omaha called Brush Up Nebraska ([www.brushupnebraska.org/paintathon](http://www.brushupnebraska.org/paintathon)).

The following is a list of projects for the Housing Team to pursue:

- Certification standards for landlords (“recommended list”)
- Parking (Certified officer for the City of Peru to help enforce)
- Paint-a-thon, yard clean-up, etc. and list of student groups to volunteer

**C) Attraction, Retention & Communication (ARC)** – Becca Jewell announced that the ARC planning team is working to develop additional resources for community members. Amy Mincer assembled the “Bobcat Bonus” flyer, which was shared with the group. The College Marketing Department is working on a layout for this document and then it will be printed and distributed to the community.

**D) Business/Economic Development (B.E.D.)** – Dr. Hanson reported that the student-led Peru Brew coffee shop idea is proceeding. The group has evaluated three possible venues offered by local business owners. They will select a space and move forward with trying to secure grant funding for necessary renovations. Sara Granfors noted that the student group is very excited about this project.

**7) Nebraska Strong Recovery Project** – Jade Fowler and Kylan Pinkelman attended the meeting to share information on the Nebraska Strong Recovery Project. Their goal is to support communities as they work through flood recovery. They asked the group to help them connect with community members who would benefit from their mental & emotional support resources. Suggestions offered to them included the community meals (2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Sundays at City Hall at 5:00 p.m.), churches, the City Office, and Zach’s.

**8) Next Meeting:** Oct. 18 at 9:00 a.m. at Peru City Hall (third Friday of month)