

DAWSON COUNTY ELECTED OFFICIALS RETREAT

Minutes of March 26, 2011

Dawson County Opportunity Center

9:00 a.m.

The following individuals were present representing Dawson Area Development Board, Lexington City Council, Gothenburg City Council, Cozad City Council, and Dawson County Commissioners: Mike Bacon, Butch Hagan, Joe Peplitsch, P.J. Jacobsen, Susan Kloepping, Joni Bennett, John Fagot, Dennis Rickertsen, Brian Montgomery, Doug Swan, Dave Stenberg, Nancy Meyer, Sam McCain, Deb Leahy, John Salem, Bill Stewart, Jeff Kennedy, Jeff Whiting, Joyce Hudson, Gary Fritch, Bruce Clymer, Linda Miller, and Steve Tomasek

Others Present: Jen Wolf, DAD Executive Director, Deb Jensen, DAD Community Development Coordinator, Kelly Ninas, Tri-City Trib, Will Weinhold, Lexington City Attorney, Roberta Pinkerton, OPPD.

1. **Welcome by Mike Bacon, DAD Board Chairman.**
2. **Self-Introductions.** All in attendance introduced themselves, discussed their tenure in their current office, and gave one example of why they are proud of their community.
3. **Presentation about the Lexington Area Solid Waste Agency.** Bruce Clymer gave an overview of how the LASWA was formed, the makeup of the organization, and current issues. Brief Discussion was held after the presentation.
4. **Presentation about Dawson Area Development.** Jen Wolf gave an overview of the organization, past accomplishments, and current undertakings.
5. **Team Building Activity:** Attendees were divided into small groups and charged with building a five-foot tower out of paper and tape. All groups were successful.
6. **Roundtable Discussions:**
 - a. **Coping with Legislative Changes:** Small groups brainstormed ideas to increase revenues or cut costs to compensate for budget reductions. The following list was discussed:

Cost Savings:
 1. Work Smarter-Employees become more efficient
 2. Use Equipment Longer/Replace less often
 3. County Wide Purchasing Agent for Schools, County, Cities, etc.
 4. Consolidation of Services
 5. Cut Back on Non-essential Services
 6. Zero Based Budgeting, Re-Evaluate Services
 7. Use More Volunteer Labor

8. Share Services between police, electric, utility departments, city managers
9. Install more LED lighting, heat pumps, etc.
10. Outsource activities like summer rec, pools, etc.
11. County Consolidation (state-wide)

Additional Revenue Sources:

1. Occupation Taxes
2. Economic Development fuels increases in revenues
3. County wide Sales Tax
4. Consolidation of services
5. Seek more private funding for public facilities
6. Charge for Emergency Services
7. Expand the tax base through tourism and housing development
8. Pursue Grants
9. Update or Add Meters for Utilities

b. Regional Collaborations:

1. Consolidation of Police Forces
2. Hiring of a County Manager –Coordinate Collaborations
3. Consolidate Departments within the County Courthouse
4. Consolidate Emergency Services
5. Get other government entities such as hospitals, schools to work together
6. Eliminate Local Competition
7. Hire a county engineer for all communities and county (RC as well)
8. Have a Purchasing Agent for all communities and county (Ex. fuel, graders, office supplies, equipment)
9. Utility Departments could share equipment or labor
10. Grant Writing put with one entity
11. Consolidate operations and maintenance of electric utilities
12. Three Cities share equipment
13. Consolidate parks departments-Services, operations, and maintenance
14. Share personnel, such as building inspector
15. Market County for Tourism Purposes
16. Consolidate Financial Billing by using same software, network, technologies
17. Share Maintainers

7. **General Discussion Items:** It was discussed having the elected official retreat become an annual event and coordinated through the DAD office.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.