



**Meeting:** GO Topeka Board of Directors

**Date:** April 6, 2021

**Time:** 3:00 pm – 4:30 pm

**Location:** Zoom

Attendees: Linda Briden, Katy Nelson, Mayor De La Isla, Scott Anderson, Roger Wilson, Martha Piland, Brent Trout, Abbey Frye, Del-Metrius Herron, Treena Mason, Shane Hillmer, Scott Hunsicker, Manny Herron, Kevin Hahn, Shane Sommars, Doug Bassett, Kurt Kuta, Calla Haggard, Brittany Crabtree, Dan Foltz, Jeff Russell, Dr. Kenagy, Cassandra Taylor, Jacob Wamego, Johnathan Sublet, Marsha Pope, Mike Padilla, Marvin Spees, Sara Girard, Jerry Farley, Daina Williams, Eric Johnson, Jim Klausman  
Staff: Rhiannon Friedman, Trina Goss, Glenda Washington, Curtis Sneden, Barbara Stapleton, Matt Pivarnik, Kelli Maydew, Josh Patterson, Katrin Bridges, Molly Howey, Natalie Zeller, Michelle Cuevas-Stubblefield

Rob Kenagy called the meeting to order at 3:00 pm.

### **Consent Agenda**

A motion was made to approve the February 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2021 board minutes and the financial statements as of February 28, 2021 and was seconded. Motion carries unanimously.

### **MWBD Special Projects**

Glenda Washington introduced Johnathan Sublet, who shared information about what SENT is doing in the community. SENT stands for 'Strengthening and Equipping Neighborhoods Together.' SENT focuses on three strategies: Education/Cradle to Career, Business Development & Housing, and Community Wellness. The current focus is in the Hi-Crest neighborhood, which is located between 29<sup>th</sup> & 37<sup>th</sup> street, from California Ave. to Kansas Ave. For the Community Wellness strategy, SENT has set up the Hi-Crest Market, offered the 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday of each month. For mental health, there is a full-time mental health specialist on site, and they offer COVID safe telehealth spaces as well. For the Education strategy, SENT has launched the STREAM program (Science, Technology, Reading, Engineering, Art & Math), the Bullseye Class, helping with emotional resilience, and SENT prep for early childcare.

Business Development is the focus of the sponsorship request brought to the board. The efforts of business development are to help launch entrepreneurs and improve housing through curb appeal, rehab, and new construction. SENT closed on 30 acres, where they plan to build a mixed-income subdivision to include duplexes, single family homes and premium homes, and a community center and food co-op. The ask from SENT is \$50,000, with \$20k going towards rehab supplies and materials, and \$30k going towards new build supplies and materials. Kurt Kuta, Manny Herron and Del-Metrius Herron abstained from the vote due to a conflict of interest. A motion was made to approve the request as stated above and seconded. Motion carried unanimously. The request will move for JEDO approval in May.

### **Project Pipeline**

Aerospace and aviation are new target industries in our pro-active marketing for new business, and we have two active projects in this area. One barrier we have is that we don't have an existing hangar available for use, so we will be strategizing on how to overcome this barrier. We've had four new projects in the past month. On the BRE side, the agreements are in process for Project Central, which is a partnership with a business in California and an existing business in Kansas working on a new

production plant. Incentives were approved earlier in the year and announcements will be made in May.

### **Innovation Center**

Plug and Play has hired Lindsay Lebahn as their first Topeka hire, and 2 additional staff members will be announced on April 12th. Selection Day was March 24<sup>th</sup>, where 15 start-ups pitched to 3 corporate partners and prospects and 10 start-ups were selected for Cohort 1.

Innovation Campus Update –After a year of focused efforts to evaluate the different options to establish an innovation campus in Topeka, the IAB supports a partnership with BioRealty as a developer for Phase 1 of the campus project. As a reminder, BioRealty has focused on the Wolfe’s Camera on 7<sup>th</sup> and Kansas Avenue. There will be anchor tenants in the innovation campus, which will include Plug & Play, Go Topeka, and a clinical research tenant. The space will also include a wet lab space and co-working space. GO Topeka will use the innovation campus as a new economic development tool, and will help launch the campus, offer incubation space, and make space available to attract startups and innovation high growth potential businesses. Over the period of 10 years, the conservative economic impact estimate is \$1.34 billion. This is shown through estimates in construction, operations, the cohorts, market entry (one out of 20 businesses to stay in Topeka and result in expansion), expansion projects and attraction projects. The recommendation provided by the Innovation Advisory Board is that the innovation campus is to be built in partnership with BioRealty as the developer for Phase 1 with the location at 7<sup>th</sup> and Kansas Ave., (Wolfe’s Camera building). A motion was made to approve the recommendation as stated above and was seconded. Dan Foltz and Dr. Kenagy abstained from the vote. Motion carried unanimously.

### **Housing Status Report**

Linda Briden presented on the benefits of homeownership to the individual, the community and economy, and the comparison in available properties in Topeka and Shawnee County, the number of new listings, and the median days on the market. Over the last five years the number of active listings and the months’ supply of houses on the market has decreased significantly. In 2017 there were 442 active listing available in January and 3.5 months supply available. In January 2021, there were 112 listings available and ½ a month supply available. The ideal standard would be to have a 6 months’ supply of inventory. Because the supply is going down, home appreciation is rising. People aren’t selling because they don’t have options of a new home to move into. Constructions costs are extremely high as well. When a house is available on the market, multiple offers come through and all over asking price, and it is not unusual to see a home go for \$15k - \$20k over asking price. Doug Bassett stated that we have low interest rates, but also low inventory, which is a national program, not a local problem. A positive of the higher appraisal rates is that it is bringing our community up to where it should be. We are committed to continuing the conversation around housing within GO Topeka as well as with JEDO in May.

### **Choose Topeka Metrics**

Choose Topeka has seen 40 candidates with an average salary of \$80k, which is an 11.8X return on investment and \$3.2 million in economic impact in year one. This is much higher than the initial analysis at the beginning of the program.

### **Management Report**

There is a link to the GTP annual report on the agenda. We are in the middle of our financial audit and are submitting for reaccreditation with the IEDC. The GTP is in the middle of conversations regarding the KDHE lab.

Rob Kenagy adjourned the meeting.  
Minutes taken by Trina Goss