

Executive Board

February 8, 2007

Location: Bellevue University-Lincoln Campus, 1001 South 70<sup>th</sup> Street, Suite 219

In Attendance: Dennis Baack, KC Belitz, Seth Derner, Dean Folkers, Mary Hawkins, Marshall Hill, Rich Katt, Jim Linderholm, Joan Modrell, Joe Rowson, Greg Smith, Arlene Sorensen, Trish Souliere, Randy Vlasin

1. Call to Order - Chairperson Rich Katt called the meeting to order at approximately 1:30 p.m.
2. Introductions - Because a number of the Board members are new, the request was made for introductions. Randy Vlasin was introduced as the new Executive Director of FutureForce.

Rich then explained that FutureForce is the intersection of education, business, and government, all working together to maximize efficiency. FutureForce Nebraska is being recognized nationally as a model of collaboration.

3. Coordinator Report - Seth reported the top priority at this time is still revising the website. FutureForce is growing and we need to have information available online.

Leaders from business, education and government were invited to a brainstorming session on December 13 and 14 facilitated by Innovation Labs. The final report is almost complete. The future activities were discussed as was the new Perkins legislation, which centers all around curriculum alignment and a statewide perspective.

Nebraska Scholars Program Review - Seth provided a brief background on the Nebraska Scholars Program, a grant funded initiative focused on encouraging middle achieving high school students to take more rigorous courses. The program is designed around having business people come into the classroom to make a presentation to eighth grade students to encourage them to think about their high school career. Nebraska is in the middle of the grant period, with four pilot schools participating.

All four schools have held kick off events of various types. They have provided good feedback on the program and all appear to be approaching Nebraska Scholars as one piece of their total program rather than a stand-alone initiative.

Focus groups in Nebraska have revealed that students see two career paths out of high school, professional, i.e. doctor, lawyer, teacher etc., or working fast food and living in the basement. Focus groups also indicate that students are most heavily influenced by friends.

There was discussion about engaging kids in career education early and how that should happen.

There have been several challenges in implementing this program.

- The program was not well designed.
- Implementation was compressed from two years to one.
- There is no funding available to continue the program

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Action Item: Establish a separate Nebraska Scholars Program Steering Committee to direct post September sustainability.

The Steering Committee should consist of approximately six individuals and should include a mix of business and education.

4. FutureForce Nebraska Organization - Seth reported on his meeting with the lawyers to discuss the possibilities of creating a FutureForce 501C3. There are two steps involved and a lot of paperwork. The first step is to incorporate, the second step is to file for tax-exempt status. The filing fees are \$1,000 and the lawyers fees are \$2,500-\$5,000.

There was discussion about the need to create a 501C3. The main benefit would be the ability to receive a wider variety of grants. The main disadvantage would be ongoing costs.

The suggestion was made to investigate becoming a non-profit organization affiliated with an existing 501C3 such as the Nebraska Community Foundation.

Action Item: Should FutureForce continue as a loose group or incorporate and become a 501C3?

Marshall Hill moved to form a committee to investigate the two options and move forward with the best option. Mary Hawkins seconded. The committee will consist of Marshall Hill, Randy Vlasin, Seth Derner, and Jim Linderholm.

5. Other Business - Marshall reported that the Coordinating Commission has requested money to support FutureForce and the Nebraska Scholars Program. The Coordinating Commission will argue for those funds before the Appropriations Committee but it would be useful to have a letter of support from the FutureForce Executive Board for the budget request. There was general agreement. The Coordinating Commission will draft a letter of support and circulate it among the Board.

6. Next Meeting - The next meeting will be March 15 at 9:30 a.m. at the Bellevue Campus in Lincoln.