

**Joint Economic Development Organization Board Minutes
February 28, 2018**

City of Topeka Council Chambers, 214 SE 7th Street, Topeka, Kansas, Wednesday, February 28, 2018.

The Joint Economic Development Organization (JEDO) Board members met at 6:00 p.m. with the following voting Board members present: Shawnee County Commissioners Shelly Buhler, Kevin Cook and Bob Archer, City of Topeka Mayor Michelle De La Isla, City Councilmember Michael Padilla, and City Councilmember Michael Lesser. City Councilmember Tony Emerson held proxy for Deputy City Mayor Brendan Jensen who was out of town. Shawnee County Commissioner Kevin Cook presided as JEDO Chair.

The following nonvoting JEDO Board members were present: City Councilmembers Tony Emerson (served as proxy for Deputy City Mayor Brendan Jensen), Aaron Mays, and Jeff Coen.

The following nonvoting JEDO Board members were absent: City Councilmembers Karen Hiller, Sandra Clear, Sylvia Ortiz.

Others present who presented and/or spoke before the Board:

Betty Greiner, JEDO Finance Committee Treasurer & Shawnee County Audit Finance Director; Molly Howey, Senior VP of Economic Development for GO Topeka; Glenn “Skip” Smallwood, CEcD, CEM, Chair of the Accredited Economic Development Organizations Committee for the International Economic Development Council; Glenda Washington, VP of Entrepreneurial and Minority Business Development for GO Topeka; Karen Lane Christilles, 712 Innovations; Barbara Stapleton, Director of Workforce and Education for GO Topeka; Gabriel O’Shea, Forge Young Professionals; Kayla Bitler, Strategic Coordinator for Momentum 2022; Marcus Clark, East Topeka Learning Center Project Taskforce Co-Chair; Ryan Cavanaugh, Top Tank Topeka Winner “The Brew Bank”; Cain Davis, Board Member, Strategic Leadership Academy; Patrick Woods, Director of Talent Management and Diversity, Westar Energy; Angel Romero, VP of Resource Development, United Way of Greater Topeka; Kurt Kuta, GO Topeka Board Secretary; President & CEO, CoreFirst Bank & Trust; Cody Foster, Advisors Excel; Carol Marple;

ITEM NO. 3: ACTION ITEM: Approval of December 13, 2017 JEDO Board meeting minutes.

Mayor De La Isla moved to approve the December 13, 2017 meeting minutes as presented. Commissioner Buhler seconded. Following a roll call vote, motion carried unanimously (7-0).

ITEM NO. 4: Presentation: JEDO Finance Committee 4th Quarter Cash Statement (2017): Betty Greiner, JEDO Finance Committee Treasurer (Shawnee County Audit Finance Director).

Betty Greiner, JEDO Finance Committee Treasurer & Shawnee County Audit Finance Director presented the JEDO 4th Quarter Cash Statement (2017) to the Board.

**Joint Economic Development Organization
Cash Statement
As of December 31, 2017**

Receipts:		
Sales Tax - City of Topeka	\$	9,047,779.40
Sales Tax - Shawnee County		8,493,358.21
Interest Income		27,756.16
Total Receipts		<u>17,568,893.77</u>
Disbursements:		
<u>City of Topeka:</u>		
SW 21st Street - Urish Road to Indian Hills	\$	446,769.29
Excess Monies from 2004 Sales Tax		9,844,171.42
Distributions of 2017 Sales Tax		4,089,149.73
		<u>14,380,090.44</u>
<u>Shawnee County :</u>		
Excess Monies from 2004 Sales Tax		8,372,168.41
Distributions of 2017 Sales Tax		4,429,912.19
		<u>12,802,080.60</u>
GO Topeka		4,999,999.92
Audit Fee		4,775.00
Bank Charges		406.81
Total Disbursements		<u>32,187,352.77</u>
Net Receipts (Disbursements)		<u>(14,618,459.00)</u>
Cash Balance - January 1, 2017		<u>15,973,336.87</u>
Cash Balance - December 31, 2017	\$	<u><u>1,354,877.87</u></u>

Note: This is a cash basis report

Prepared by Betty Greiner

ITEM NO. 5: ACTION ITEM: Approval of Funding for Project Jingle.

Molly Howey, Senior VP of Economic Development for GO Topeka presented the request to the Board.

Project Jingle is an existing business expansion project and it is before the Board tonight just for funding approval. The company is not ready to announce their name yet but the hope is that they will be at the May JEDO meeting to do that.

- \$20M Investment to Construct Additional Facility
- 12 New Full-Time Jobs
- \$45,000 Average Salary Professional Positions

Proposed Incentives

- Maximum Incentive of \$212,800
 - \$160,000 capital investment
 - \$52,800 job creation
- Performance based
- Economic Impact
 - \$30.7M one-time economic impact
 - \$4M recurring annual economic impact
 - \$70.7M 10 year economic impact

Mayor De La Isla made a motion to approve the funding. Councilmember Padilla seconded. Following a roll call vote, motion carried unanimously (7-0)

ITEM NO. 6: PRESENTATION: Organizational Announcement

Molly Howey, Senior VP of Economic Development for GO Topeka and Glenn “Skip” Smallwood, CEcD, CEM, Chair of the Accredited Economic Development Organizations Committee of the International Economic Development Council presented to the Board.

Molly Howey - GO Topeka has been trying to obtain accreditation with the International Economic Development Council through their Accredited Economic Development Organizations (“AEDO”) Committee. GO Topeka hosted a site visit with the folks from that group earlier this year and that group interviewed quite a few public members and elected officials and looked over all of GO Topeka’s policies and paperwork they submitted.

Skip Smallwood – Some of them are very familiar because they were involved in the stakeholder meetings. They really appreciate all of them taking the time to answer questions. He is not sure how familiar they are with the process or what is involved in becoming accredited. It is a two phase process. The first part is they ask for a lot of documentation ranging from Strategic Plans, marketing plans, budgeting, financials. They want to look at the organization itself, how it is structured, even down to how they communicate successes and information to the public and their investors. Once all that information has been gathered, their review team made a recommendation to the AEDO Advisory Committee. There are 30 members of professional economic developers from all around the United States and Canada. The report was presented with a recommendation and the committee recommended that they do a site visit. And that is what they did last month. The purpose of the site visit was to learn a little bit more about the documentation. They were very intrigued with the Strategic Plan because of how comprehensive it was but what he was interested in was how holistic it was as well and especially how we are integrating all of the different groups to work as one and have one focus. That really intrigued them. But also while they

were here they also wanted to meet with the stakeholders because they are very interested in learning about the interaction with GO Topeka and JEDO and the investors, with businesses. These were very productive meetings, they tell a lot about how effective the organization is. Once they complete the site visit, they produce another report to the AEDO Advisory Committee. Then at that point the Committee votes whether or not to grant the accreditation or not.

Before he announces the results, he again wants to thank all of them for participating in the stakeholder interviews and also thank the GO Topeka staff. They are a very professional group; it was a very seamless process. They probably go more information than they had requested but it really helped them compile the report and make appropriate recommendations. So based on their report and the recommendation made by the AEDO Advisory Committee, the Committee has voted to grant the accreditation to GO Topeka. He would like to congratulate all of them and JEDO for this accomplishment. And he would like to present to GO Topeka the AEDO plaque and they are the first in the State of Kansas to become AEDO certified. They are setting the bar now for the other economic development organizations in the State of Kansas.

- Accredited Economic Development Organization (AEDO)
- One of 62 Globally
- First and Only in Kansas

Councilman Emerson moved for the JEDO Board to recess for a few minutes for a photo opportunity. Mayor De La Isla seconded. Following a vote, motion carried unanimously (7-0).

Commissioner Cook asked Mr. Smallwood, it has been stated that this is setting the bar for other organizations and we are now the first in the State of Kansas, does this give us other opportunities in Shawnee County and Topeka and access to the AEDO as an accredited organization and maybe access to other things that we didn't have before? How does this benefit us?

Mr. Smallwood responded the main thing is it is demonstrating, investors are going to want to know what kind of organization they are putting money into. Because the question is always I want a return on my investment. On the investor side they are always wanting to know if you have a professional organization or not, especially dedicated to being professional. There is a certification for individuals, this is actually a certification for the organization so it is demonstrating that you do have a professional organization. But it also he thinks speaks very loudly to the prospects that are looking here, it adds to your credibility. Because they know when they are dealing with an AEDO, they are dealing with a very competent organization, one that is ready to provide whatever the resources. So there is some value and you are providing more value to prospective companies and also to the investors because they really do ask what are we getting out of this and what is it you are trying to accomplish. About less than 1% of all economic development organizations in the United States become accredited and the reason why a lot of them don't is because it is very intensive. There is a lot of information that is being asked for and also it is a peer review, because you are asking an outside group to come in and look at you and make recommendations on what you are doing right and what are some improvement opportunities.

Commissioner Cook stated so by being an accredited program this speaks highly of the Greater Topeka partnership and the work that has been done with the holistic plan.

Mr. Smallwood replied yes definitely.

ITEM NO. 7: PRESENTATION: GO Topeka Quarterly Report

Molly Howey, Senior VP of Economic Development for GO Topeka;

- Renewed marketing plan with assistance of GTP team
- Relationships and Data are key
- Coordination with BAAF Tech Initiative
- Lead generation is key
- Business Analytics tool
- Reviewing Incentive Offerings per Momentum 2022

Jackie Steele, Director of Business Retention and Expansion for GO Topeka;

- 16 Projects in Pipeline, 2 opened in 2018
- Businesses Reaching Out
- 10 On-site business visits
- Financial Services Summit – September 26th at Security Benefit

Councilmember Coen entered the meeting at 6:24pm

Glenda Washington, VP of Entrepreneurial and Minority Business Development for GO Topeka;

- Small Business Incentives YTD
 - Issued \$64,094 in incentives to 13 clients
 - 30 in the pipeline
- Mid-America Angels
 - Growing Steadily
 - 170 Angel Investors
 - \$4.7M invested in 14 different companies (first and second round funding)
- PTAC 2017 Goals
 - New Clients
 - Goal: 5
 - Actual: 77
 - Counseling
 - Goal: 85
 - Actual: 285
 - Events
 - Goal: 1
 - Actual: 3
 - FY17, KS PTAC clients in Topeka Subcenter area achieved \$15.4M in Federal contracts
- PTAC 2018 Goals
 - New Clients: 55
 - Counseling: 375 hours one-on-one sessions with clients
 - Workshops
 - Competing for Government Contracts
 - Proposal Writing
 - GSA

Commissioner Cook asked out of the 44 new businesses, where do we find those businesses located in the community?

Ms. Washington replied they are all over. Some in NOTO, Fairlawn, all over the community, no one place. Downtown, some on 21st Street.

Councilmember Padilla stated he knows they are trying to make some of the training program materials available in a second different language. In addition to that effort of the written materials, what else is being done to have outreach to the Hispanic community?

Ms. Washington responded she has been working with Lalo (Munoz) and his team (El Centro of Topeka) looking at how we can get training programs, she has been given a contract from Kansas City to come down to do some training. She has looked at how we can do some after hour's events so we can give some education and information. There is an effort and also if Councilman Padilla would like to help her it would be welcomed.

Councilman Padilla responded he appreciates that, it is kind of a nontraditional entrepreneurial group. You have to look at a lot of different things. Often the training we assume is attractive to everybody isn't in the right time zones and those sorts of things, so he appreciates the efforts being taken.

Ms. Washington replied we took the initiative to co-host the Black Business after hours and that is going really well. And we knew we had to reach out beyond where we set so we are looking at how we touch everyone in the community so everyone will rise together.

Karen Lane Christilles, 712 Innovations

- Entrepreneurial Task Force
 - 59 leaders came together for meeting.
 - Six months – had 11 one hour meetings
 - 31 presentations
 - 35 Organizations covered
 - Principles
 - Entrepreneur-led
 - 100% inclusive everyone is welcome

- Entrepreneurial Ecosystem
 - Education - 10 middle school and high school programs; 4 post secondary and university programs.
 - Location & Events – 65+ events annually
 - Mentorship – 3 organizations match mentors
 - Incubation & Acceleration – 712 Incubator in partnership with Washburn University. First cohort – Summer 2018
 - Funding – 4 gap funding programs; 3 Venture Capital Firms
 - Talent – 35 organizations serving entrepreneurs

Barbara Stapleton, Director of Workforce and Education for GO Topeka;

Topeka/Shawnee County Statistics

- Quarterly Snapshot
 - Labor Force Participation Rate
 - Unemployment Rate
 - Average Wage
 - Employment Population Ratio
- Annually
 - Educational Attainment
 - Graduation Rate
 - Median Household Income
- TopCity Teachers
- HR Breakout – Military Relations Council
- Cradle Through Career – selected candidate

Gabriel O’Shea, Forge Young Professionals

- Engagement is up
 - 500+ people at December and January events
- Membership is record high
 - 1,700+members
- Goals
 - 2,500 members target

ITEM NO. 8: PRESENTATION: Momentum 2022

Kayla Bitler, Strategic Coordinator for Momentum 2022 provided an update on Momentum 2022 to the Board.

- Metrics – taskforce has worked really hard to solidify a set of metric we are going to use to measure our progress. Metrics were approved by Implementation Committee on February 26th, so right now staff is working to refine data and compile in a way that is most easily explained. So stand by and that will be coming soon.
- Work Group Actions
 - Downtown & NOTO – working on a Downtown & NOTO master plan.
 - Marketing – working on a Speaker’s Bureau to talk about the positive accomplishments and things going on in our community.
 - Entrepreneurialship – working on taking a look at the entrepreneurial ecosystem and starting to look at programming at 712 and work through some opportunities that we have
 - Economic Development – beginning to work with the Quality of Place work group to identify how they feel economic development and quality of place sort of relate to one another and how they can work together.

- Community Engagement – they have several community engagement projects in the works. They are developing an I “Heart” TopCity t-shirt campaign. They are also working with Shawnee County Parks & Recreation about opportunities to work with neighborhoods to artfully repaint some basketball courts in the community.
- Quality of Place – starting an educational marketing campaign that is two-fold. On one hand it will help explain what some incentives that we have in our community actually are and then it will talk about how those incentives promote quality of place and how they enhance our community.
- Talent Development – working to identify what kindergarten readiness programs we have in our community and what gaps there might be as well which can then be addressed through our Cradle Through Career programming.
- East Topeka Council – will meet next week. They will hear a presentation regarding the East Topeka Learning Center market study and have the opportunity to provide feedback as well.
- Capital Campaign
 - Goal: \$6.3M
 - Current committed dollar amount: \$6.18M
 - 98% goal reached.
 - Another \$1.7M pending and in the process of adding another 100+ names to call

Commissioner Cook asked when did we kick off the Capital Campaign.

Ms. Bitler replied it was maybe around late August.

Commissioner Cook replied this is a really outstanding fundraising event and a real commitment from the community in such a short period of time.

ITEM NO. 9: ACTION ITEM: Broadband Task Force request for extension of project time line (Phase 2)

Commissioner Cook stated this was an item that was brought to us and as we embark on the Broadband Project, we have received some correspondence about that and needing to move to Phase 2 and needing an extension.

Commissioner Buhler stated she can shed a little more light on this. This is a request to extend the project timeline. The committee had anticipated doing the presentation at this meeting but we really need just a little more time to bring the full Broadband Project management team together and that will happen in the next couple of weeks. And then they would give a full presentation at the May JEDO meeting. There are no fees associated with this extension.

Commissioner Archer made a motion to approve the Broadband Task Force’s request for extension of time for Phase 2. Mayor De Las Isla seconded. Following a vote, motion carried unanimously. (7-0)

ITEM NO. 10: DISCUSSION: East Topeka Learning Center Project Update.

Marcus Clark, East Topeka Learning Center Project Taskforce Co-Chair provided an update to the Board.

- Design and Construction Process – the bid for general contractors, the bid was let on February 8th and the low bid was from Champion Builders and they would request an award and execution of a contract in the amount of \$3,183,235.

Barbara Stapleton, Director of Workforce and Education for GO Topeka provide an update to the Board regarding the New Markets Tax Credit development.

Yesterday evening at 5:23 p.m. she received an email that RAZA Development Fund is pleased to present a reservation agreement letter for up to \$6.5M of New Markets Tax Credit allocations for the ETLC project. They are very excited about the impact this project will have for low income community members in East Topeka and are happy that GO Topeka's consultant (Jeff White) shared the project with them. They plan a visit in the near future to hear in person about the wonderful work that GO Topeka and Washburn University and Washburn Tech will be doing.

Now what that means, she has some notes from Jeff White with Columbia Capital, \$6.5M is the total project amount. So they have taken into consideration the \$4.5M that JEDO has already committed to the project, the \$1M in gap funding that would get us to our total project costs that we have indicated of \$5.5M, and then they take into consideration the roughly \$1M beyond that, that will be the various fees, attorneys' fees, those types of costs that are involved with getting New Markets Tax Credit.

So at \$6.5M there is approximately \$.39 cents on the dollar for the nominal future value of those tax credits, which equals \$2.535M (that is an estimate), investors are willing to pay approximately \$.83 cents on the dollar for that. So that means, that after all is said and done, the New Markets Tax Credit award is approximately \$2.1M gross. From that \$2.1M gross then you have things that are those various New Markets Tax Credit fees, the specific attorneys that are needed, those fees are approximately \$1M, so then we would have left \$1M to fund the \$1M gap we have.

She lays that foundation for them and certainly there can be discussion tonight, but she will let them know we do need to get that reservation letter back to RAZA Development Fund within seven days. There is in essence earnest money of \$32,500 that we will need to provide. They will get it back to us when we complete this whole project. We will be presenting that to the GO Topeka Executive Committee on Friday so they can authorize that. But in essence the JEDO Board has charged them with pursuing New Markets Tax Credit and moving forward through this, so this is literally fresh off the press. That is why it is not in the packet for tonight.

Commissioner Cook stated so at this point we really have two items that are going to have to come before JEDO very quickly. One is the award of the contract with the general contractor and the other is action on the New Markets Tax Credit.

Ms. Stapleton said yes, GO Topeka will be responding to the reservation letter and yes as things move forward. There are a lot of different things they would want to have Jeff White explain a little bit more.

Commissioner Cook asked these are probably items that cannot wait until the May JEDO meeting.

Ms. Stapleton responded that we definitely cannot wait until May to award the contract for construction because we can't begin demolition or remediation or begin the remodel of the site until we have a contract with the contractor.

Commissioner Cook asked Jim Crowl, Shawnee County Counselor, if the best course of action would be to call a special meeting for those two items.

Mr. Crowl responded yes that is what he would recommend and Commissioner Cook as JEDO Chair has the authority under the JEDO Operational Rules to set a special meeting if that is necessary.

Commissioner Cook asked what about timeline and notice that needs to be given.

Mr. Crowl replied it would be best if they would give the same amount of notice that you would for any regular meeting of JEDO.

Commissioner Cook stated with tonight being February 28th, giving a two week notice; that would put us out to March 14th.

Mr. Crowl stated he thinks that would be appropriate.

Commissioner Archer stated he is still trying to figure out the numbers. There was one number he heard of \$1M in attorneys' fees?

Ms. Stapleton responded that is not just for attorneys' fees. It is approximately \$1M for all the various fees related and she doesn't have the full breakdown at the moment.

Commissioner Archer replied still \$1M in fees? We are getting \$2M?

Ms. Stapleton responded we are getting \$2.1M, and of that \$2.1M, our net we would receive is right at \$1M. We don't ever pay that money or lose that money, this is just the process.

Commissioner Archer questioned why aren't we getting that money. It makes no sense to him. Is there anyway JEDO can get a real simple explanation with the numbers and where they are going and what we are going to benefit from because that just sounds outrageous to him.

Ms. Stapleton responded we did have a presentation from Jeff White on New Markets Tax Credit 101 from last year. She can pull that presentation again. We are not spending that money at all. It is a moving game in terms of how they allocate and award.

Commissioner Archer stated he doesn't think anyone in this group understands that. He doesn't. A simple explanation of where the money is going and what we are doing he thinks would be helpful.

Commissioner Cook stated he thinks an explanation, we have new members of JEDO here, what are the benefits of applying for the New Markets Tax Credit. How does that benefit the ETLC, how does that benefit Shawnee County and Topeka.

Ms. Stapleton stated that the benefits, when we approved everything in terms of the project early last year, we had what was considered a funding gap of \$1M for the total project expense. We were advised that there were New Markets Tax Credit dollars that would fund gaps, if you had a funding gap. We have the project developed, but we didn't necessarily have all the funds that were approved. This has been a long time coming with putting your project out there, see if people are interested and does it appeal to them.

We are in essence receiving \$1M to be able to meet the balance of JEDO's commitment and the agreement you have with Washburn University to conduct the ETLC. Receiving those funds which they would not have to pull as the JEDO organization, from sales tax dollars.

Commissioner Cook asked this is what is going to be presented to the GO Topeka Board of Directors?

Ms. Stapleton replied it will be presented to the Executive Committee, the reservation letter will be presented to them and Jeff White will answer questions they might have. And Jeff would be available by phone for the March 14th Special JEDO meeting.

Commissioner Cook stated he believes it would be beneficial for everyone on the JEDO Board, voting and nonvoting, to have that breakdown, the financial breakdown. What are the administrative fees, what are the costs and how does this benefit the ETLC.

Ms. Stapleton stated all those administrative fees and costs are all rolled up into that projection. We don't have to actually pay those, it is part of what is allocated to us. But we still get a net of \$1M.

Commissioner Archer stated as he understands it she is saying there is \$2.1M out there and we are getting less than half of that. We have to negotiate a better deal than that.

Commissioner Cook asked if we came back to a special JEDO meeting on March 14th, it would be the action item of the JEDO Board as to whether or not to issue the New Markets Tax Credit or not.

Ms. Stapleton replied the decision would be whether or not to proceed forward with it, yes.

Commissioner Cook stated looking at our timeframe with ground breaking and moving forward with the ETLC, is there any objection with having a special JEDO meeting on March 14th for those items?

Councilman Emerson asked if we could also find out, is this company presenting us this offer, are they the only ones we can get this from, is this a normal offer? He knows this is good news but we have to be good stewards, these tax credits are Federal dollars which we all pay.

Ms. Stapleton responded it is very confusing and she gets that. Jeff White is our consultant and he is with us through the long haul throughout the entire process. In this case, this is a very good option. RAZA Development Fund they like to focus on Hispanic serving institutions, and look at projects that impact low income communities. They don't have a lot of requirements in this, we are able to have some pretty decent flexibility. There was another company Jeff was talking to at the same time and they had union requirements related to the construction. So there can be some pretty heavy requirements from some companies with these and in this instance Jeff indicates there really aren't a lot. Jeff did indicate that their fees are a little bit higher but they are not as high as some others you could see. There are some with fees where we would be looking at receiving \$700,000 instead of \$1M. It is really one of the better ones and it is the best offer that we have received.

Councilman Emerson stated before we get to the March 14th meeting, will we know prior to that what are the options we will have?

Ms. Stapleton responded that she doesn't think there are a whole bunch of options necessarily. In the agreement it outlines all of the various things that there are. She will request for Jeff to get us a snapshot of those that will be part of the agenda packet.

Councilman Lesser stated he also would like a copy of the bid results as well as the proposed construction contract.

Commissioner Archer asked if everyone could be sent that.

Mayor De La Isla stated on the same date we are proposing to have the special meeting, March 14th, the City of Topeka is having their open house for the budget. And we wanted to ensure if we have the meeting, it is an event that the Councilmembers are invited to come and go and interact with the constituents. So if we schedule this special JEDO meeting the thought would be to at least provide an hour to 90 minutes to have their time with their constituents.

Commissioner Cook asked what time would be a good time to start the JEDO meeting that night?

Mayor De La Isla replied she thinks 6:30 p.m.

Ms. Stapleton stated one other thing she would like to mention, we did have another CDE in January indicate that they had decided if they received New Markets Tax Credit from the federal government to award that they would select this project, but they did not receive the funding.

Commissioner Archer stated he just doesn't like these "trust me" deals.

Commissioner Cook stated with that we will schedule a special JEDO meeting on March 14th starting at 6:30 p.m. for those two items.

ITEM NO. 11: DISCUSSION: Quality of Place & Economic Development

Commissioner Cook stated as they may recall at the last JEDO meeting, there was a discussion about the 2018 Cash Carry Forward Agreement and in that there was a discussion of setting aside funds for quality of place. And we had just touched briefly on that. In preparation of this JEDO meeting he has had an opportunity to meet with many of them, Mayor De La Isla and he sat down over a series of meetings to talk about what is this "quality of place." This is a discussion item and an opportunity for all of us to talk about this, what is quality of place, does it have a place in economic development or does it not have a place in our plan. So that we can engage in that discussion before we adopt any policy. It would be his hope that after tonight's discussion we are able to take these comments and craft them into a policy that we would review in the May meeting and at that time we would take official action. He has invited a number of people to step forward and give us a comment about how quality of place factors into economic development.

Ryan Cavanaugh, (Brew Bank) – He with his partners Dusty Snethen and Melissa Snethen were honored to be named the winners of the TOP TANK competition. Brew Bank is an upscale pub who is committed to community. So instead of many small tables we will have large tables to promote people to gather and create memories and friendships and create community in the downtown area. We are in a really exciting time in Topeka because we are on the verge of a Renaissance in downtown. They chose Topeka for their project because they were talking about how there is no place in Topeka like Brew Bank. So they waited for someone else to create and no one did, so they thought why don't we do it. So they came up with the business plan, they are all native Topekans and we didn't want to have to go to a place like Lawrence or Kansas City. They want to stay in their hometown and be here. Brew Bank will have a stage with local and regional acts with music, stand up comedy, trivia nights, Saturday mornings will be kids only karaoke. We really want to make it a place, a destination for people to come here. They wanted to open their business in Topeka but what they didn't know was how Topeka was going to be so amazing to them and their business, with GO Topeka, 712, Forge, Washburn University Small Business Center. They

have been blown away with the amount of things available to people who want to bring a small business to Topeka. Who want to drive other businesses in this area to downtown. This idea of theirs started on a napkin and has come to fruition and they hope to be one of the first and only places in the State that offers digital self serve taps, where you can go and pour your own beer per ounce and create a community environment where we not only have a community within the walls of their establishment but create a community throughout the downtown area and make it a destination, so people are leaving Lawrence and Kansas City to come to Topeka. This is the future of Topeka and they are excited to be a part of it.

Commissioner Cook congratulated them on their accomplishment. He asked how quality of place affects a business such as theirs and starting up a new business.

Mr. Cavanaugh responded that for them the downtown is starting to grow and there are already businesses coming in and they want to be a unique place in an area like a third space where people go after work and they find community, they come from miles around because there are not places like that in their towns and they knew Topeka was ready for them and they knew they were ready to be a part of what Topeka has to offer especially in downtown after all the renovations that have been put in, it is just waiting for someone to flip the switch and they hope they can help do that.

Councilman Padilla also wanted to congratulate them on winning TOP TANK, he thinks their enthusiasm is great. When he said the word Renaissance; that is one of the reasons he ran for City Council because he thinks they are right, the City is right at the brink of really taking off and he appreciates them bringing their business to Topeka.

Cain Davis, Board Member, Strategic Leadership Academy – he was asked to speak to quality of place and its relationship to economic development. And when he thinks of that he thinks of an acronym called “DAWN” which stands for Diversity, Attraction, Weekends & After Hours, and Network. For diversity, if you have good economic development you get people from all over the world. His wife is from India, and he is in Topeka because of her. Looking at attraction, you attract people with every level of skill set, and that skill set actually attracts businesses and investors who look at this community. As it relates to Weekends & After Hours, he works very hard, but he does enough his weekends and after hours, and he would love to go to places that he can enjoy, he would love to be able to contribute more to nonprofit organizations and if we have businesses coming here we have more resources to support nonprofit organizations and more people interested in supporting nonprofit organizations. And lastly, the network aspect of it, you have so many people locally and regionally who look at a community, but he is in the business where metrics drive so much. Nationally and internationally you have people who can get on the internet and look at see what is happening in Topeka. Something he looks at is the community feel. For investors, if it feels like it, they are going to inquire more and they may eventually end up being here.

They asked the last speaker how quality of place affects them personally. He started a leadership program here called Strategic Leadership here in Topeka a few months ago. And it is really designed to assist minorities with understanding leadership and executive things so they can contribute more in their work environment but also so they can understand how and why they need to invest in their community by being more active and serving on boards. Also he and his wife own a small property management firm. The examples he has, in his property management firm he has young man, about 25, who called him this Monday and told him he was leaving Topeka. And he knows with previous conversations with him, this man has spent a lot of his time going to Wichita and Kansas City for weekends and evenings. And last night when he met with him, it was the same sentiments. He loves Topeka; he graduated two years ago from K-State as an engineering student. He looked at that and said here is a guy who is going to make a lot of money, a decent salary in his community, he is going to have a family and that family can roll out and do a lot of things in this community. And in his leadership program, he has a young attorney

who came to this community, went to our local law school, graduated, and in conversation with her, her big question and concern, because he asks everyone what is their plan. And in this class a majority of the people are not lifelong Topekans. A majority of them came here to go to school, he thinks they want to stay here but they are concerned about having a social life. They are not 60 years old like him. They want to do some other things. But this young attorney voiced to him that she hopes she can stay in Topeka and she talked about the last community she lived in and about how much was downtown for young people. So for him those two examples really shows him how economic development really does make a difference in quality of place.

Patrick Woods, Director of Talent Management and Diversity, Westar Energy and Board Member, USD 501, Topeka Public Schools. He was asked to talk about workforce development specifically and how it relates to quality of life and quality of place. He gets a chance in his job to do some pretty interesting things and have some interesting conversations with a lot of really talented young people. He gets to go to our local institutions of higher education and he gets to go to a few that are in different places and then try to attract and recruit students from nontraditional backgrounds from all kinds of places. We want all the talent we can possibly get. He is always surprised by the sophistication of these students when he talks to them. One of things that they really want to know and what really appeals to them, and they have a lot of times done some research if it is something where they have connected to our industry because of their academic discipline; they will ask him quality of life types of questions. They want to go to a community where there is a rich, vibrant urban core, so everybody is really excited about the “city feel” and all the things you can do to invest in your urban core. The suburban life for most of these young professionals hasn’t really grown that appeal just yet. So definitely an “attaboy” to all of them for their investment in downtown redevelopment, that is really an attractive thing. He will never forget being on the campus of Langston University, Oklahoma and having a student talk to him about downtown redevelopment in Topeka. Now he just happened to be studying urban planning or something like that so it was important to him academically but the fact that he knew what was going on in Topeka, KS and suddenly that appeal and people want that. They especially want to see development, when you are talking about your nontraditional or underrepresented candidates; they want to see some development in the areas of the community where maybe it’s been lacking historically. So the East Topeka Learning Center which they just heard about, for both hats he wears he is thrilled about that and he thinks it is a wonderful investment, they are to be commended for their wisdom because he thinks what they are going to see is a community that is ready to take hold of that and there can be nothing bad that comes from that.

Also from the other side, for their workers to be, it is incredibly important that we recognize that there is a tremendous role in economic development and quality of life for our K12 institutions to play. So while the majority of the responsibility for that falls to our state and to our local districts, he thinks it is really important to recognize that they really have an opportunity often to partner with their local districts in doing things that are going to prepare students for the 21st century workforce and be competitive with their new competition which is no longer like it was when he was a kid where you compete with locals, it is global now. So a couple of things that come to mind where he knows where there have been very fruitful partnerships, and this is with the business community as well, you have seen the Topeka Center for Advance Learning and Careers, which is slated to open later this academic year and their initial classes will start being taught the next academic year, which is an exciting thing. Basically it is an advanced studies center where students from all kinds of different disciplines will be able to come, do some projects that are kind of like project based learning integrating all kinds of different disciplines and actually work in partnership with different businesses to try to solve some of the issues that they are facing. That is a pretty exciting thing that gives students real world experience, he thinks it also helps them understand that there are a whole lot that they can do and that they can be when they grow up, right here in Topeka and they don’t have to go to any other communities to do that. While we know their investments are definitely important, they are critically important if we want

to attract the kind of talent that is going to help us win the future. We also know other things that businesses do in partnerships and any kind of influence they can have with them is very important. The business community has a lot they can do. And he is a little bias but he just happens to think that some of the great things that they do at Westar Energy can be replicated by many other businesses who would like to remake themselves.

Commissioner Cook asked with him working for Westar and serving on the school board, where does quality of place enter into attracting a family to come to Topeka or stay in Topeka?

Mr. Woods responded when he is recruiting employees, that is a big deal. People nowadays, and it is not just millennials, they will recruit people who are mid-career folks who are established, who will actually find a place they think they want to live and then look at that zip code and start looking for the kinds of employers that are going to have the jobs they can actually work in and earn a living. It starts typically with the place that they feel like they can see themselves. They want some of the things that you heard, with the economic development you are going to be able to attract the people with all kinds of skills, they are going to want to come to your community when there is growth and development. Most people nowadays, especially with millennials, they want it to be equitably shared growth. They don't want a dead side of the community and a dead side of the community. Obviously education, if you have a young family that is kind of your core issue, that is the big thing that you want for your kids to have it better than you did.

Angel Romero, VP of Resource Development, United Way of Greater Topeka, Chair Elect Forge Young Professionals. He was asked to talk about what quality of place and quality of life means for himself as a young professional. He started thinking back on himself and how he got to Topeka and what made him want to stick around. He came here from Junction City for college to attend Washburn and he drank the Kool-Aid after that and got hooked on this place and wanted to stick around. He had a great experience at Washburn, loved his time there but it was through his experiences that after he started getting involved in the community that he really started to get hooked on what this place was all about. What were the things that really piqued his interest and curiosity? There were four things that came to mind; the things he thought were really important when it came to quality of life.

The first is community pride. He and his peers want to be part of a community that is proud of itself and takes pride in what it is doing and what is happening. And you see that all around the United States and even in the state, when you look at other cities that surround us. People are really proud of what is happening in their community. And it doesn't mean those communities aren't perfect or don't have their own problems or challenges, but people can still take pride in their community. And that was something that was huge for him to live in a place where people are proud to call home. He gets to sit on the Community Engagement and Pride subgroup for Momentum 2022 and one of the things that they have talked about is the issues that we have with our own self-pride. Our biggest challenge to community pride is ourselves, but if our biggest problem is ourselves that means our greatest solution is ourselves. So while we have a challenge there we also have a solution and he thinks we are seeing it by steps that governing bodies are taking and businesses and that people are taking to say that there are really exciting things happening in this community and we need to be proud and vocal about them. That kind of success begets more success and as we see that start happening we are going to see more people do that. But he thinks having a strong message about the great things that are going and not being afraid to acknowledge that we still have challenges that we want to address.

Of course, as one of the "40 something's" he wants to live in a place that is fun, where he can have a good time and enjoy himself, and people who come to visit can enjoy but what that really means to him is he wants a place that is unique and different. With no disrespect to chain

restaurants, he can go to a Chili's or an Applebee's in any community, he can go to a shopping mall in any community and they are great places. But he wants to go to a place that only Topeka has, those places that are cool and unique and that he can brag about to people from out of town and where he knows he won't find any other place. And that is one of the most exciting things that has happened in the last 5-6 years is this explosion and growth downtown and even around the community with things like The Brewbank and other breweries that have sprung up around town. There is lots of exciting momentum with new businesses and new projects that are really going to enhance that quality of life. And as people see those things begin to happen it will spur more growth. But the more things we can call our own and that don't look like any other place is where he wants to be and that he wants to be a part of.

Diversity is another thing that is really important to him. We have four pillars in the Forge organization and one of those is Diversity & Inclusion. He wants to be part of a community that not only has diversity but also values that in lots of ways. So that means through policies from government bodies, through organizations, through the way our community acts and operates. He values and wants to see diversity and being exposed to people from different cultures, religions, different walks of life, being able to experience that is one of those things that he thinks Topeka has an abundance of that we don't really talk about. But we have such a diverse community and he thinks that is where a lot of our strength is, is being able to bring out that diversity and you have people from so many different parts of our community that can come together. That takes both policies and investments from our businesses and organizations that are willing to invest in that work, but it also takes work outside of that too.

We as young people, especially millennials, there is a lot of research into what we are thinking about and what we care about and one of the things that they have likely heard is that we care about issues affecting other people. That we want to live in a community that cares about our neighbors and people in the community. We value equality and inclusion. This is something that is near and dear to his heart not only as a young professional, as someone who works for a non-profit organization, and knowing that this is our one community that we all inhabit together. So how can we grow stronger as a community together and that is reflected through how we invest in our community. Making sure there is fair and equitable funding for all parts of our community. It looks at business investment from the private sector, how are we supporting all sides of our community growing together. There is lots of work that needs to be done in that area.

He has said it before he doesn't think Topeka is a perfect city and he doesn't think any city is but we shouldn't let that stop us from investing in things that are going to move our city forward and taking pride in those things. He is really excited personally for the next 10-20 years to see what happens. When you look within Forge there are so many exciting things and momentum there.

Kurt Kuta, GO Topeka Board Secretary; President & CEO, CoreFirst Bank & Trust. Momentum 2022, Quality of Place Committee Chair. He was asked to frame the quality of place question around Momentum 2022. It is our roadmap; it is our strategy, many people here in the room have served on the steering committees, now the implementation committee and some workgroups. A lot of discussion on what holistic economic development means with holistic being the key word. What we are talking about tonight is trying to define what quality of place means and where it fits. One of the early meetings we had with Market Street when we were going through the steering community was a discussion on what is this all about. And one of our facilitators came right out and said this is really a battle for and the quest for attracting and retaining people and talent in your community. To have them choose to work, live, thrive, and enjoy your community. Without that you don't grow and if you don't grow, you don't attract new companies and then what you have for your existing community institutions they usually become negatively impacted and that includes existing companies, businesses, government, schools, nonprofits,

churches, and more. And that comment really hit him and stuck with him and he thinks impacted a lot of others and we really started to focus our discussion around that.

So with that he took a look at the strategy framework that was provided in our road map. And right on page 3, it goes in to say “Topeka-Shawnee County’s talent pool is threatened by factors such as persistent net out-migration and relatively small gains in educational attainment. If the status quo holds, the community’s workforce is likely to become smaller and less competitive. Changing this trajectory will require a multi-faceted approach.” How he saw that was the old game of economic development, the rules of economic development that he has been involved in really don’t apply anymore and we need to look at things differently. The plan goes on to say “The community must improve its ability to produce “homegrown” talent and offer the kind of quality of place amenities – downtown, social offerings, aesthetics, housing options, etc. – that educated and skilled individuals demand.” His comment to that is “and to keep them here.” It goes on to say “Investments in talent and quality of place must therefore be seen as crucial parts of a holistic approach to economic development.” It is right in our plan saying it is married right to it. Other parts of this go on to say “The public input process revealed that Topeka-Shawnee County suffers from deep and persistent low morale. Expanding economic opportunities and improving quality of place can go a long way toward improving these perceptions in a short amount of time.” Going on to page 15 it says “On the matter of how to better attract and retain talent, Topeka-Shawnee County stakeholders contacted through the public input process were in strong consensus on one of the most important things the community must do: improve quality of place.” One thing that did strike him when he reviewed it was it said out of all the primary jobs in the community that pay at least \$40,000, and that is our target with giving incentives, it said that 40% of those are held by individuals that live outside of our community. So the 12 jobs they just approved that we hope we get - 5 of them outside of the community. Some other things that “Topeka-Shawnee County generally lacks the type of mixed-use “live-work-play” environments that are increasingly in demand, particularly among young professionals and empty nesters.”

So that is just from the plan, and as we get into our workgroup, we got into this and we started to tackle several things and we are trying to define something. And some of these things are big, they are broad in range, and quite frankly it takes a lot of funding. So just to give them a flavor of some of the things they are talking about: one of them is to provide some education that can be used throughout our community for traditional incentives - TIFF’s, CID’s, Star Bonds, etc. so that people can better understand how all of these programs work along with the risks. Those types of programs are tried and true public-private partnerships that he thinks are going to be needed to improve our quality of place. But not everybody understands how they work and there is risk. So we felt that maybe we needed to bring some education forward. We talk about where are these people going to live if we attract them here? Certainly again private investment whether it be for a single family residence or multi-family but there are also some things we need to figure out how we can work with some programs for existing stock to improve existing properties or repairs as well as promote some other programs that are already out there. Whether they be through our governmental agencies or some nonprofits to promote so people can use those and make sure we are leveraging that. We have barely even touched on our subject of affordable housing. He saw recently in a forum on that, that we are short on that supply to the tune of about 6,000 units. Where does that fit in for quality of place? Infrastructure, a big topic in quality of place. We are talking everything from street repairs, sidewalks, bike paths, bikeways, parks, facilities in the parks, better traffic light flow. How do you fund that out of the hopefully \$6 million we are going to raise through Momentum 2022? That is a city and county government issue. How do we tie that in? We figured out that blight is an issue in our group. If they weren’t aware we have some blight in our community. We said we can’t ignore so we started talking about code

enforcement. The city has a code enforcement program, how can that best be supported. From homeownership, to landlords, to commercial properties that are not being used or maintained properly, do we consider promoting a land bank, what do you do with that land after you bring it in, that is all being discussed. Then we have also talked about things such as gateways, leading people to the attractions we have today, how can they find those. A lot of this, how do you fund this? At the last JEDO meeting we talked about some carry-over money. Is that a source we need to start talking about? But he thinks we need to understand how this all fits in first.

Cody Foster, Chair Greater Topeka Partnership Board, Co-Founder Advisors Excel. Sitting here and observing just all the awesome things and the Brewbank team and sitting through that and seeing the top ten finalists and how passionate they are about Topeka right now and the good things that are going on is pretty neat to see. All of them are to be commended because from a leadership standpoint to see the progress that we have made even in the last few years is a credit to the fact that they are open to having this discussion on quality of life. As he thinks they have heard from a lot of people it is a big deal right now in our community and is being discussed and to have them discuss it from a leadership and economic development standpoint is really important.

He is representing three different roles in this topic. He is the Chair of the Greater Topeka Partnership Board and this is a topic that has been brought up in every single board meeting. The second role is as a business owner who has about 500 employees here in Topeka and they are planning on hiring somewhere around 90-100 more this year. They have been able to relocate people from other parts of the county here. One of the things they like to say a lot is they feel like they have built a destination employer that can bring people in. The challenge they have started to have is sometimes Topeka is not viewed as a destination location. He was reminded of that in the last month. They had two younger gentlemen who moved here, one from Chicago, one from Indianapolis. They encourage all of their employees to live in Topeka. And both of these guys, both under 30, lived in Topeka for a year, they have both moved to Lawrence in the last month because they don't feel like there are a lot of things to do. So that leads to the third role and that is as a quality of life investors that currently has about \$30 million in projects going on downtown, one of which is opening in sixteen days (The Pennant). The amount of excitement of that opening that they have had is unbelievable just the people who have reached out and are excited about that opening.

So the primary reason he has decided to make some investments in what he would call these quality of life projects is because it was getting harder and harder for their company to attract great talent as they continue to grow and he thinks when you hear some of the numbers of the unemployment rate that we have and how low that it is, this is a conversation that a lot of CEO's around town are having. They are all starting to compete for the same people. So he realized if they were going to grow the population of employees that he had to do some things to address what tends to be the number one topic. He wanted to do some economic development research for them. At Advisors Excel - of their top 50 income earners in the year 2017 - 21 of them do not live in Topeka. Those 21 people represent \$14 million in income in 2017. Now to be fair 9 of those 21 do live in Shawnee County. He thinks they employee half of Silver Lake and Rossville. Which leaves 12 of those 21 who live in either Lawrence or the Kansas City area. Those 12 represent almost \$8 million in income in 2017. So he sat down with all 21 of those employees in preparation of this and he asked them why they don't live in Topeka, what is the number one reason. The number one reason was quality of life, that there is nothing to do in Topeka when you compare it to Lawrence or Kansas City, that there are just a lot more options elsewhere. That was the number one answer for 9 of the 12 who chose to live in Lawrence or Kansas City. Number two answer was crime and number three was the schools. The schools were a big topic for those that chose to live in Shawnee County but outside of the City of Topeka.

He thinks one of the things that he saw when they started talking about making some investments is we are in a vicious cycle. When 40% of your top income earners choose to head out of town and spend their money there that is just a cycle that keeps us from moving forward as a community. So looking at economic development from the standpoint of how do we improve the number one thing that is preventing people not just from working here but also living here and spending their money here is a really important topic. He thinks we have the potential to make a huge impact. Whether we earn or get some of those people to move back to the community or whether we just quit letting people leave here because we do address some of the reasons they are leaving, that is a really great opportunity. He will end his comments with this, quality of life as economic development is really hard and how do you measure and determine how that money is spent. His only thought on that, he and Commissioner Archer were having a discussion on the quality of life project in Topeka this weekend on Twitter. But what hit him about that is that people are never going to completely agree on a project. What he thinks we are hearing is that there is an overwhelming support to use money to develop more quality of life projects here in Topeka. We have elected all of them to lead us through all these different projects and not everyone is going to always agree with what those projects are but they have all done an incredible job in leading and the community is saying we need more investment into quality of life and we trust all of them to make wise decisions around what those projects are and figure out a way to determine what projects are worthy and move forward.

Councilman Padilla stated he thinks Mr. Foster is one of many corporate citizens that Topeka has the privilege to have in Topeka and he thanks him for being the role model for others for businesses to work with the government to bring these changes about.

Mr. Foster replied he appreciates that and there are many that came before him. What he would say about that is that is the most exciting thing is that never in the 20+ years that he has lived here has he seen the commitment both on the private and public side to make Topeka a better community. There really is some incredible momentum.

Councilman Coen asked if he was finding that employees that get married, do they end up moving back to Topeka for the convenience?

Mr. Foster replied no they don't. That is kind of his mission right now. What happens is a lot of those 12 people primary live in Lawrence. A lot of them moved there either when they were single or newly married without kids. Now almost all of them have young kids and the kids are more engaged in stuff. So he has been selling this idea of the commute from Lawrence to Topeka, but here is the challenge with that now. They have established roots in those communities, so uprooting and they are friends with their neighbors, he has had a lot of those conversations. He isn't going to go after the young, single person who wants a lot of stuff to do, he tries to go after the person who has a young family and doesn't want to drive 40 minutes every day, but all of them say they can't ever see moving back because their kids have all their friends there and they are involved things, which he thinks speaks to the urgency that we have to stop the flow of people going out because as they move out and establish roots, it's no different than the reason he lives in Topeka and he is so passionate about it, is because he has roots here and he can't imagine uprooting and moving away. He thinks it is our best opportunity to try to continue to attract those people back in but it's tough once they get established in another community they don't want to uproot that and move back.

Councilman Lesser stated he gets the quality of life. And one example that people may not remember is we had a really up and coming company Newtech that developed the video toaster and was just killing it. And they reminded him a lot of Advisors Excel just really setting the world on fire and he is sure it was much more complicated than he is going to make it but he had some friends who worked there and they left because they wanted something to do. All the guys were going to Kansas City and so he gets it and we have to in order to keep our job force, to make companies here viable, we have to create things for people to do and destination activities for them. We have had the Porubsky's, the Bobo's, the Northstar, all of these things they have been here forever, that people know of and we need to build on that and create the Norseman's, the Pennant's, the Evel Knievel Museum's, all those different things that are going to want to make people stay and have something to do.

Commissioner Cook stated before we go into discussion, Molly Howey with GO Topeka helped him set up these people to come speak tonight as a representation of our community. The young professionals, the business owners, the Momentum 2022, the Greater Topeka Partnership. But since we have him here, he would ask Skip Smallwood to come back forward and just briefly talk to us about where does quality of place factor into economic development from the ADO standpoint.

Skip Smallwood stated that he found the comments very interesting and he wishes more communities would have these kinds of discussions. Really the short answer to his question is yes, there definitely is a direct relationship and correlation between the quality of place and economic development and he will address it more from the prospect side. He doesn't know how many prospect meetings he has been involved with, and naturally they are going to look at logistics, infrastructure, those are all critical. But sometimes there are those intangibles we just don't know about, we don't know why the decision was made, we think we have everything they are looking for and then we find out that, thanks to the internet now there is so much data out there, that a lot of these individuals are looking at these communities and they are really looking at what is there and the more important question they are asking is if they are going to be able to attract talent and sometimes that knocks a community out. Even though they have all the other attributes they are looking for they are just not convinced they are going to be able to attract the talent. And even your existing companies are now faced with this challenge. Westar for example, he used to work for a utility and they were constantly struggling as to where they were going to find their future workers.

So what are they looking for? That is the question that everyone is asking, so they are looking for what kinds of investments are you making to your downtown, because they are looking for vibrancy and looking for what engagement is going on with the downtown area, are there new restaurants, new activities. They are looking at recreational things, because people are outdoors. They are looking at your educational systems, they want to know how much investment is being put into the public schools – STEM is very critical, we have got to remember that a lot of these individuals are looking at their children, they want to make sure their kids go to schools that allow them to be engineers or scientists or whatever they want to be. And they are looking at crime, he knows there was one community that was looked at for a project and they just could not answer the question as to why they had a high crime rate. The statistics are there, even though you can debate the FBI numbers, which sometimes is used, because in that particular case the site visit included the future plant manager which no one knew about. Back home his wife was “googling” that community and she had a list of everyone one of the towns this company was visiting and she, believe it or not, was going to have some input in where this company was going to locate. And we forget about that sometimes. And because this community had a high crime rate, they got knocked out. So that is the name of the game now, even though infrastructure and logistics and all those things are very important. You are seeing the talent issue arise more and more, the workforce development is becoming very critical.

And he thinks what the Momentum 2022 Strategic Plan is doing, one of the goals is homegrown talent and he thinks that works well with quality of place. So really the challenge for them and GO Topeka is to try to find those key performance metrics that tie back into the plan so they can measure their progress and then have that information available so all those outsiders can see and also your existing companies as well. He didn't know Topeka that well when he came here but the few days he spent here, he walked away with a very favorable impression and when you show a town and begin to demonstrate that you can do some things and you are trying to better yourself, that sends a loud message. But he will say in a prospect meeting, lots of times they are looking beyond what we normally think about and looking at your community as a whole and if they are going to be able to attract workers and have happy workers. He will end with this, he knows one community that employs about 2,500 employees, it is a huge OEM manufacturer, this small community. They are having trouble attracting engineers, which is primarily what they are looking for. They don't have the housing stock and it is just such a small community. These are individuals that are coming from Georgia Tech, Vanderbilt, very highly regarded engineering schools, and they don't want to move there. They say they will come there but they don't want to live there and they are willing to drive over an hour to get to the plant. So you have to think about that, but he thinks they are at a good point, where they are beginning to put together their performance metrics, but they have to tie it all back to their plan now and if talent is what they are looking at, those are things they need to identify. And he knows we always talk about the millennials, but don't forget about guys his age who are thinking of retiring soon. Those people are looking around at where they want to live, and looking at things like healthcare, broadband, airport connections. So you have to think about the whole broader picture but it all ties back into economic development.

Commissioner Cook stated bringing us back full circle to where we began, our 2018 Cash Carry Forward Agreement that we discussed that the last JEDO meeting, we had started a discussion of Quality of Place. And just to pick on Commissioner Archer, he thinks he had brought up when the voters voted on the economic development incentives with the sales tax, it was for economic development and where does that factor in? He knows this is an ongoing discussion but does quality of place have a role in our economic development?

Commissioner Archer responded sure it does. But quality of place is wide open. He made a list – is affordable housing a quality of place issue? You are darn right it is. Parks & Recreation? Absolutely. TPAC, Roads and Bridges, Downtown Plaza, the East Topeka Learning Center, the Topeka Zoo, Kansas Expocentre, they are all quality of life issues. But the interesting thing is, the Topeka Zoo and the Expocentre were on the ballot. People voted for those. That is the difference. In his view to do a lot of the things that we want to do with quality of place, we are going to need to have tax money to do them. We are going to have to have a referendum, because it is going to cost a lot of money to do the things that we want to do. So in his view they might as well start talking now about referendums on taxes for quality of life and quality of place.

Mayor De La Isla stated she thinks the big question here is what is economic development? Economic development simply summarized is getting jobs and the people to work on them because eventually when you have good jobs and you have people living in the community, you have higher revenues and those revenues help you provide all of the other things that you are supposed to provide as a city or as a county. She wants to remind them, because he who forgets his history is doomed to repeat it. You want to talk about momentum, 2010 Kiplingers, in 2007 this community started talking about downtown redevelopment and bringing back the core of our city. It was a group of volunteers, citizens of the City of

Topeka who said selflessly without being paid to do the job, said we are going to get together and we are going to bring back our downtown. That was 2007. In 2010, we were recognized by Kiplingers as one of the top ten communities to be looking at for the past ten years. Let's see what they said. "Like any city, Topeka has room for improvement. Its downtown district, near the picturesque capital dome empties at 5:00 p.m. Various groups and business people are collaborating on a downtown revitalization project and the development of an artists' district is underway at the Kansas River." That was in 2010. We seriously have and we are in the middle of a war for talent. We have a 3% unemployment rate. We are hearing not only from our young people like Angel and Gabe, we are hearing from people like Cody Foster, we are hearing from people all over the community telling us they are starving for an entertainment district so that the young people who are coming into our community can go ahead and enjoy this.

And if we want to go ahead and get very legal about the situation, Cody Foster said a word that really resonated with her and he said the word leadership. And if we are going to be leaders, it is their task according to the Interlocal Agreement, to determine what economic development really is. In the first page it says, "For purposes of this agreement, economic development includes: research, target marketing, existing business retention and expansion, new business recruitment, infrastructure development, site acquisition, incentive funds and workforce training and expansion, support economic development for socially and economically disadvantaged individuals and/or business enterprises and consider inclusion of urban economic development programs related to youth employment and the rehabilitation of blighted, derelict and underutilized facilities and infrastructure (for purposes of attracting economic development prospects), in addition to other related activities," It is telling us in there that we have the language that we need in order to address the economic development as a priority and quality of life as a priority. We have the language, so she does not think we are bound at this point in time, the language actually gives them the freedom to determine what is economic development and what makes a community thrive. We are being told by our community, we are planning on it with Momentum 2022, and she thinks that we have a wonderful opportunity to start talking about something new and have the leadership to say these are the things that we are going to invest in, have a policy about it, so we have a chance to have a very frank discussion. But she doesn't think we have to go back to the ballot, we have the language right here that not only is authorizing them but it is calling them to be leaders in this area and really listen to what our constituents are saying.

Commissioner Cook stated he doesn't know about going back to the ballot or if there may be issues that we need to have a referendum on, but he doesn't think all issues would need to go back to a referendum. But for him, how do we measure our success? How do we measure what falls into economic development versus what is our role and what is not our role? And he is looking at how do we set those policies of what falls into Quality of Place and what does not? Because before we start down a path of establishing a project or setting aside funds for a project, we need to establish that it falls within those policies, and of having that metric of measuring that success. And he thinks that is an important part of that policy. He would really like to hear from all the JEDO members, voting and nonvoting, especially those who are new to the City Council.

Councilman Emerson stated he will admit with the downtown redevelopment, he was a skeptic about 5-6 years ago because he remembers in 1987 or 1988 we did the brick walks and stuff and then in maybe 2005-2006 we did the street parking thing for about a year. And even though he loves any construction project, he just thought here we go again, the third time spending millions of dollars. But he has to say he was wrong because shortly after he was appointed, his daughters were still in high school at the time and one night they asked if they could all go to downtown Lawrence on Mass Street. And he thought he is City Council now and he needs to try to support the City, so he said let's go to downtown Topeka, there is a lot of stuff to do and it was really pulling teeth to get them to do it. But he made a deal for them to go there for 20-30 minutes and if they don't like it they would leave and go to Lawrence. They went down

there and saw all the pocket parks that are now there, they went to Cashmere Popcorn and there was a jazz band out playing by Hazel Hill and it was great. His kids were doing stuff and he and his wife were standing out talking and he said wow he was wrong. He didn't have the vision for that and that is something that has haunted him ever since. He needs to have more of a vision for what things can be not what they have been. He does think quality of life is a critical part of economic development. He does agree with Commissioner Archer on how do we narrow that down because he sees that as the big issue that we are going to have. He can foresee 100 people wanting their project be the thing we do and that is going to be the tough part.

Councilman Padilla stated he has grown up here and has worked for the City for almost his entire adult life, he is not unfamiliar with the challenges the governing body is trying to overcome. He can remember growing up in this town and downtown was the place to go. You shopped here, you ate here, and you just hung out with your friends. That is when Topeka felt like it had an identity. But then things changed and we decided to just focus on one side of town, we were going to put all our eggs in that basket and abandon what we already had. That is the thing that he thinks hurt us and hurt his memory of Topeka. Why don't we cherish what we have, maintain it and grow it and go from there. Now that was then, now we have to look towards our future without looking back but he thinks we do have to look back because those are the things that have been talked about tonight, roots. You develop those roots because of your experiences in this town. And yes quality of life is totally essential to any kind of economic development in any city. He encourages some of the comments said earlier about a renaissance, about an energy, a momentum as it were to move forward. Talking has been good and it is necessary but jump off the ledge and let's go forward and continue that effort.

Councilman Mays stated he is a lifelong Topekan as well. He would say that quality of place is one of the main reasons he decided to run for elected office. When he sees Topeka now versus when he was a kid he is encouraged. He looks around and he sees opportunity everywhere. Just looking at Kansas Avenue, the bones are there but we still have a lot of work to do. We have a lot of quality things to do in Topeka but what we don't have is a central district where we can walk from place to place. And he does travel and typically when he is in other cities the first thing he does is get on google or yelp and find the local establishments so he can take in the culture where you can find in that particular place. And in Topeka if you want to do that, you have to have a car because you might want to check out Blind Tiger, or Fuzzy's Taco Shop, there is not a place where you can take an Uber and then walk around for a couple of hours. He doesn't know exactly how we narrow it down, as Commissioner Archer was saying, but he thinks it is a very important piece of economic development.

Commissioner Buhler stated she knows we have used the terms "quality of place" and "quality of life" and she doesn't know if they are the same thing or all of the above. To her, community development is economic development and when we started out with GO Topeka with the holistic strategic planning, it was a GO Topeka Strategic Plan and it developed into community development is economic development. She would argue that we are doing some transportation initiatives, we are doing the East Topeka Learning Center, we are looking into Broadband, 712 Innovations, those are just a few examples that are included in economic development. And those are quality of life, quality of place. But she will also say there is not enough money to do everything. So how do we approach this, what is the process and how do we prioritize and how do we measure the impact on any one given project and having the metrics to tie it back into the plan.

Councilman Lesser stated that he would add that when he thinks about quality of place, he thinks of disposable income and things people will do in their free time. And he learned a little bit from Commissioner Buhler when they worked together on Rossville, on the pool as quality of life, and the really nice park there is quality of life, and those are things that help to keep people from moving

elsewhere. So looking back on that on a small scale helps him think about doing those things here on a larger scale.

Commissioner Cook stated from the video that was played earlier, it said we may not have all the answers and tonight he can guarantee we do not have all the answers. But by having the opportunity to hear from the community and different participants and stakeholders, and hearing from the JEDO Board members, we have had a healthy discussion tonight and that is one thing he thinks was needed before we start anything new. He will try to work with the comments made tonight to try to work towards maybe something we would look at the May JEDO Meeting as to this ongoing discussion of where does quality of place factor into our economic development plan and a pledge to the carry over funds or any other funds we may have.

Mayor De La Isla asked would it be too bold to ask this body to consider, for Shawnee County it seems like if we consider what we have all heard not only from the community but hearing from other people, it seems that the center corridor on Kansas Avenue seems to have occurred several times. People saying that we lost that center and core and that they are looking for a dynamic core which people can navigate. And when she thinks of a dynamic core she doesn't think of just downtown Topeka, she goes from NOTO all the way down. Would it be too bold for us to maybe consider as Commissioner Cook is thinking this through and putting something together, putting that center corridor one of our top priorities for quality of life because it seems like we have been having the conversations since Kiplingers 2010 that this is an area that needed intensive attention.

Commissioner Cook responded he doesn't know if we can limit it to just one part. He thinks quality of place does factor into our downtown really from the riverfront all the way down.

Mayor De La Isla replied she isn't saying limiting it but saying that as we are trying to narrow it down, to say that will be one of our priority areas.

Commissioner Cook responded he thinks that is something to look at having more discussion at the May JEDO meeting as we look at an actionable item.

Commissioner Archer stated another idea that we haven't really talked about is take the \$2 million or look at other surplus, there is a lot of money in GO Topeka that could be used in the community. We could split it and give the City half and the County half and those governing bodies could then make their own priorities. If the corridor is the City's priority, they can spend the money there. If the Expocentre is the County's priority, we would spend the money there. But that is always an option or something to consider as we take whatever surplus we have.

Mayor De La Isla replied she appreciates that sentiment. However, she thinks the beauty of having this body is the fact that we are all working together to better the community and community isn't limited to City or County it is all of us. And going ahead and saying we take the easy way out and divide the money and you take your ball home and I take my ball home and we will play with them apart just completely obliterates the beautiful effort of all of us coming together and planning together for our community and as leaders establish that vision. She would highly encourage all of us working together.

Commissioner Cook stated let us come back in May with a proposed actionable item as to this. He will also be working with legal counsel, Jim Crowl, Shawnee County Counselor, to help draft whatever the item may be.

Commissioner Buhler asked would it be a proposed item JEDO would vote on or a proposed process by which we would decide on which projects would be eligible, she just wants to clarify what we would be voting on in May.

Jim Crowl, Shawnee County Counselor stated he thinks that would be JEDO's decision to decide do we want to draft a policy and move this discussion forward based upon a draft policy or are we not there yet and we need to have more of an outline and define and discuss parameters that we then use to draft policy. He will do what they want him to do and will do whatever he can to help, but he thinks that is the decision of the JEDO Board to direct how far we go with this.

Commissioner Cook stated in the past JEDO has used a subcommittee to help bring things back to us. Would there be a direction from this body to have a group of City and/or County that would help work on that proposed actionable item and if so who would be willing to serve. He sees Mayor De La Isla would like to serve and Councilman Lesser would like to serve and he is also willing to serve. The three of them will work together to bring an item back for discussion and possible action in May.

ITEM NO. 13: General Public Comment

The following individuals appeared to speak for general public comment:

1. Carol Marple stated that having come to these meetings over a number of years they are 1,000% better and this was a good meeting. When Matt Pivarnik started with GO Topeka he hit the ground running and she doesn't think he has taken a breath since he got here. He and his staff have brought a lot of needed positive changes to GO Topeka. There are still a couple issues she still has. She would like to know, when we talk about numbers she would like to see a list, she would like to know what they are. She does not like generalizations because she wants to know where her money goes to. She wants everyone to think about what have we heard tonight, what area have we heard about and that has been Topeka. She wants to remind them that people that live outside of Topeka also pay this sales tax. And she thinks it is time that the communities around Topeka and different areas, Montara for example, and our small towns, it is time for us to be included. She heard Rossville and Silver Lake mentioned in passing as good places to live, and that is right. But how about having some programs, classes, satellite offices, do some stuff with 712 Innovations in those small towns. You have to remember we are paying this tax too and we would like to see something that they are going to benefit from. She doesn't come to downtown much, maybe she would if it had more to offer, but she does things with her grandkids in Rossville, they have a wonderful playground and the pool. Auburn doesn't have anything. We need to spread it out, we cannot forget about the community because we are also taxpayers. She does believe that quality of place does have a place in economic development. If we don't have quality of life, quality of place, we are not going to have growth.

Commissioner Buhler stated she did want to clarify something that the cities of the 3rd class – Willard, Rossville, Silver Lake, and Auburn – they all receive the County half-cent sales tax, but those monies goes to those governing bodies and Willard does have a Mayor/City Council form of government, but they receive those sales tax dollars directly to those governing bodies and those governing bodies choose to do what they want with those sales tax dollars. So the difference being, with City of Topeka and Shawnee County as governments have decided to come together in the Interlocal Agreement and that is how have JEDO who then contracts with GO Topeka. But those cities do receive those dollars through the half-cent sales tax. And she does know a few years ago there was a feature on how some of those cities were using their half-cent sales tax dollars and some was for the pool in Rossville and other projects in those communities.

NO FURTHER BUSINESS appearing the meeting was adjourned at 8:42 p.m.