



Larry E. Wolgast, Mayor
215 SE 7th Street, Room 352
Topeka, Kansas 66603

Public Forum Notice
March 11, 2015
6:00 – 8:00 p.m.
Heritage Hall, Kansas Expocentre

Mayor Larry Wolgast, JEDO Chairperson, announces a public forum Wednesday, March 11, 2015, in Heritage Hall at the Kansas Expocentre, located at One Expocentre Drive, Topeka, Kansas, from 6:00-8:00 p.m. to allow JEDO Board members to hear from the community prior to the Board developing a request for proposal (RFP) on the mission and goals for economic development in Topeka and Shawnee County.

The JEDO Board of Directors at its February 11, 2015, meeting discussed issuing an RFP to solicit proposals from economic development consultants to conduct an analysis for Topeka and Shawnee County from an economic development perspective. (The draft of the minutes from the February 11, 2015 JEDO Board meeting are posted on the City and County websites.)

With the recent passage of the county-wide half cent sales tax that will continue funding for economic development for 15 additional years, the Board is desirous of redefining its mission and goals for economic development, learning the latest initiatives for economic development in other communities, reviewing how performance measures can be improved, and determining the best use of incentives and related issues.

The JEDO Board invites the public to share their views to assist the Board in developing the RFP.

- Individuals will be recognized in the order they sign up to speak.
- Those who wish to speak can sign up at the public forum or contact the City Clerk's Office before 5:00 p.m. on March 11, 2015, at 785-368-3940 or via email at cclerk@topeka.org.
- Speakers will be allowed a maximum of four minutes to speak and it is suggested that written copies of statements also be submitted.

For additional information, please contact the City Clerk's Office at (785) 368-3940 or 368-3941.



Memorandum

Larry E. Wolgast, Mayor
215 SE 7th Street, Room 352
Topeka, Kansas 66603
785-368-3895

TO: JEDO Board Members
FROM: Mayor Larry Wolgast, JEDO Chairperson

DATE: February 26, 2015

Commissioner Cook, Councilman Harmon and I have discussed a process for carrying out the directive of the JEDO Board to establish an RFP. (The draft of the minutes from the February 11, 2015 Board meeting have been sent to Board members and posted on the City and County websites.)

I have asked Councilman Harmon to place in a document the goals and objectives of what an RFP would contain; he has agreed to do so.

I plan to call a special meeting of the JEDO Board to review, discuss and take action on the proposal at a meeting tentatively set for March 25, 2015. At this meeting, the JEDO Board would take action on what would be accomplished by the consultant's study and an RFP would be developed.

However, it would be beneficial to have a forum at which the public could state their views on what should be the purpose of a study prior to the meeting of the JEDO Board. This would allow the interested parties in the community to state their views on the direction the JEDO Board should take with the RFP.

That forum would be held on Wednesday, March 11, 2015 in Heritage Hall at the Kansas Expo Centre, 6:00 - 8:00 p.m. This would allow the JEDO Board members to hear from the community prior to a written document being presented to the JEDO Board. We apologize for the short notice, but are hopeful you will be able to attend. Notice of the public forum will occur on Monday, March 2, 2015.

Tentatively, a special meeting of the JEDO Board would be held Wednesday, March 25, 2015, at 6:00 p.m. to discuss and take action on a document from which an RFP could be written. Please place this date on your calendar.

To summarize:

1. Councilman Harmon is developing a proposal to place before the Board on which an RFP could be written.
2. A public forum will be held March 11, 2015 for interested parties to state their views on what should be included in an RFP.
3. Tentatively, a JEDO Board meeting will be held March 25, 2015 to review and take action on an RFP.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact me.

Cc: Mary Feighny, City Attorney's office
Brenda Younger, City Clerk
Jim Colson, City Manager
Rich Eckert, County Counselor
Jane Rezac, County Commission Office Administrator
Doug Kinsinger, GO Topeka President and CEO
Scott Smathers, GO Topeka Vice President of Economic Development
Scott Griffith, GO Topeka Board of Directors Chair



PUBLIC FORUM
MARCH 11, 2015

Public Comment

1. Joseph Ledbetter, Citizens for Accountability in Government
2. Maryanna Quilty
3. Clark Trammell
4. Alan Cobb
5. Mark Ruelle
6. John Campos
7. Lazonne Grays
8. Mick Urban
9. Keith Warta
10. Neil Dobler
11. Janet Stanek
12. Scott Griffith

Citizens for Accountability in Government March 11th, 2015

Four minutes to speak is not long enough to fix 13 years of problems with J.E.D.O. We want to know tonight what is going to happen to these stated concerns and recommendations? _____ How will they be used? _____ .
Please answer us on the record. Thank you.

*For purposes of these suggestions/ recommendations “the contractor, or funds” refers presently to GoTopeka or successors and “funds”, is the Economic Development funds of the sales tax.

Best practices need to be discussed and incorporated into JEDO inter-local agreement and the contract with the contractor and the bylaws of the Contractor.

There must be complete transparency by the contractor with the public with their meetings, minutes, use of funds (Ref. Their RFP Application for the three year contract, and public policy of the State of Kansas for transparency of public funds, et al.

There must be complete honesty with the funds and accountability of those funds each and every month.

Recommend monthly meetings of JEDO on economic development. Also, the Public needs to be able to get their ideas and concerns on the agenda for discussion. They pay the taxes and they are ignored currently.

There needs to be 1. A definition of economic development, 2. and publically set goals for contractor 3. and mission statements for JEDO *and* the contractor.

Financial statements and monthly expenditures of the contractor need public discussion at each and every meeting, and should have public input encouraged.

All discussion items at JEDO meetings should encourage public input.

The contractor must be a stand alone organization with no ties to the Topeka Chamber of Commerce.

Any consultant should not be paid by GoTopeka or the contractor, but by JEDO alone.

There should NEVER be any public money in local elections from economic development funds, IE office space, phones, salaries, internet, et al. NEVER. That needs to be covered by consultant.

Carry over(carry forward funds) should be turned over to the control of JEDO immediately.

All land that has been bought with JEDO approval and in GoTopeka's name should be transferred immediately to JEDO and be titled in the name of JEDO.

There should be a complete outside audit of contractor, directed and paid for by JEDO. It should include a minimum of past five years of the contractor(GoTopeka). And more years added to audit if found to be necessary.

JEDO minutes (Rough Draft) posted within 14 days after each meeting.

JEDO agendas with documents out to public 14 days before every JEDO meeting.

JEDO /Contractor budget out to public 60 days in advance/ with a public hearing on it 30 days in advance of that budget vote.

Frankly we have enough talent in Shawnee County to solicit any and all solutions from the Citizens at large. Have a completely open discussion in a series of meetings open to public discussion and participation, and then draft recommendations for adoption by City and County separately.

Alternative to JEDO: for the \$5million economic development monies.

Ref. Joseph Ledbetter, Attorney 3/11/15

60%(\$3million) of the funds given to City of Topeka to set up it's own Economic Development program with incentives for Small Businesses, Large Businesses, Start ups and job training, and employee mentoring programs, and housing programs.

40% (\$2million)of the funds given to the Shawnee County Government for Parks N Rec and possibly have the Zoo get part of the funds and become a County Zoo.

DATE: March 11, 2015

To: Joint Economic Development Organization

The League of Women Voters of Topeka and Shawnee County commends the Joint Economic Development Organization (JEDO) for seeking community input regarding a request for proposal (RFP) concerning the performance of Go Topeka's economic development efforts. We especially acknowledge the initiation of an RFP by Councilman Harmon. As we have studied economic development agencies, we have learned that increasingly more cities and states are moving in this direction, seeking evaluations on the effectiveness of their economic development agencies.

We suggest that development of an RFP should have as its purpose to assess whether JEDO's economic development has been effective in promoting the growth of new businesses, supporting the expansion of existing businesses, and attracting new businesses to Topeka and Shawnee County in terms of Councilman Harmon's recommendations concerning Go Topeka's: 1)mission, 2)objectives, 3)operations, and 4)) marketing.


Additionally, the League recommends that the RFP should require that the sought performance evaluation or audit be conducted according to generally accepted governmental auditing standards. These standards require that an audit be planned and performed to obtain sufficient, appropriate evidence in order to provide a reasonable basis for findings and conclusions.

We also recommend that the RFP should require determination of whether:

- a comprehensive and program-coordinated economic development plan guides the efforts of Go Topeka;
- an adequate performance measurement system of goals, objectives and measures exist;
- Go Topeka's results, as opposed to activities, have been cost effective in terms of economic development;
- Go Topeka's reported "outcome measures" are reliable, and distinguished from "output efforts and activities".

Thank you for your time and consideration of the League's suggestions regarding an RFP concerning Go Topeka's performance.

Sincerely,


Maryanna Quilty, President
League of Women Voters Topeka Shawnee County

Date: March 11, 2015

To: Joint Economic Development Organization (JEDO)

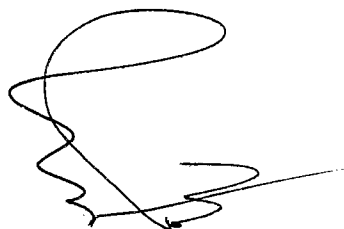
Fr: Clark W. Trammell
cwiliet@aol.com

Re: Assessments, Recommendations & Solutions

This document is presented to you as my professional comments, assessments and criticisms in support of this conversation to assess the organizational, operational and administrative aspects of JEDO. I am submitting these observations to become part of a positive and constructive process to accomplish the objectives in evaluating the JEDO.

The pathway opened up by Councilman Richard Harmon gives all of us the opportunity to engage in a nonpartisan dialogue to discuss the JEDO and create a strong Economic Development program that can and will become a win-win for all involved. This is an exciting venture for all Shawnee County citizens and we cannot fail to seize this opportunity to come together for the mutual benefit of everyone affected by the JEDO organizations responsibilities.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Clark W. Trammell', written in a cursive style.

Basic Issues:

(*) **CORE PROBLEM:** Dysfunctional JEDO organization/operating structure.

COMMENT: As currently organized the JEDO cannot operate effectively nor efficiently. It is a secondary responsibility to those who sit and act as the board.

(*) JEDO does not operate as an ongoing concern even though the business of JEDO is being administered and carried out daily by its hired contractor (currently) GO Topeka. In short, due to lack of guidance and ongoing operational attention by JEDO it has allowed the contractor (GO Topeka) to, in essence, manage JEDO rather than JEDO managing the contractor and their contract for services.

(*) In a recent meeting with Mayor Wolgast he commented that "JEDO only meets at best 4 times a year"; he expressed that the JEDO board members (City Council Members/Shawnee County Commissioners) have numerous other duties in their primary city/county position capacities including those who have other employment/jobs; that they do not have the time to completely grasp the many issues that come forward to JEDO, which would include administration and business matters.

(*) This was also implied, if not directly indicated at the most recent JEDO meeting by Richard Harmon during Topic 6: "Discussion regarding the process to develop JEDO performance measurements for publically allocated economic development funds". Harmon suggested that JEDO put out an RFP to review the following four areas of JEDO:

- (*) Mission Statement (Define what the JEDO mission is)
- (*) Objectives
- (*) Operations - Organization Structure
- (*) Marketing

(Note: Add a topic 5: JEDO Structure)

(Note: JEDO member De La Isla also made a suggestion that the JEDO structure/organization be reviewed under this RFP contract/objective.)

A discussion then followed about organizing a 5 member community committee to draft this RFP for presentation to the JEDO board within 60 days.

(*) It must be understood that JEDO is not another City or County governmental agency or extension of either entity. It is a distinct and separate business entity responsible for a specific set of goals, objectives and responsibilities. JEDO, in layman's terms, is a quasi-governmental/business entity. The JEDO board members wear 2 hats with the responsibility to bridge back and forth the ideologies and responsibilities for government regulation and business decision making.

(Note: It is important to clarify the status of the current JEDO board members. Board member Schmidt commented at the last JEDO meeting that the board members were volunteers. That is incorrect. The current JEDO board is paid through the compensation they accepted for their City/County elected positions, this is a part of their responsibility as a City Council Representative or County Commissioner.

(*) Lack of Training:

COMMENT: It is vital for the success of the JEDO mission that the Board Members have the skills and time to do the job necessary to properly and effectively manage JEDO and the contractors and any RFP being administered. Due to personal time constraints along with a limited set of basic and intrinsic business skills needed to oversee and manage a business like JEDO, the JEDO board has been inefficient in its oversight necessary to manage this organization. After watching the JEDO meetings for several years, sitting in on GO Topeka board meetings for several years, attending the last 2 JEDO meetings and meeting with the Mayor on JEDO issues and concerns, the problems discussed here became quite evident. The JEDO group has not exhibited the skills to do this job, nor the necessary time encompassed by a very weak organizational structure and lack of business tools to lead this important financial vehicle. It is evident they don't know who or what they are supposed to be as acknowledged by JEDO board member Nathan Schmidt at the last JEDO meeting by his comment that he thought the JEDO board was only seated to provide "Policy Review."

(*) Dysfunctional standards & procedure:

COMMENT: These areas are not structured to be user friendly and easy flowing, they exacerbate the problems with the JEDO administrative process both from within and without the JEDO organization. As written, these meeting operating standards and procedures are designed to be conservative and structured to retain the control of any outside input and involvement, **they are not user friendly**. The current guidelines are poorly drafted, formatted and written, and need to be updated to a professional standard with flexibility for those not on the JEDO board to be an active participant in the discussion and decision making process.

(*) Mission Statement or current Mission Statement:

COMMENT: There must be a good "Mission Statement" for both the JEDO and the contractor (GO Topeka). These statements outline what the purpose of the organization is and it's goals and objectives of same (a very important part of any organization's operations). If there is a JEDO Mission Statement then it needs to be updated. Times change and so must organizations and operations.

(*) Definition of the terms:

COMMENT: The term "Economic Development" needs to be defined by JEDO so everyone can understand what the JEDO mission is. Currently everyone has an opinion of what the JEDO responsibility to "Economic Development" is. We need to all get on the same page and focus on what this is. Doing this will stop a lot of confusion and assumptions of what should be done; it will identify what the mission is; what oversight should be; and what projects fit into the JEDO funding budget.

(Note: GO Topeka and any hired contractor should also provide a "Mission Statement" and definition of their responsibilities to "Economic Development" and how they will be administered.)

SUMMARY:

The comments in this summary are all supported as outlined by others including members of the JEDO board. The problems surround four main areas, and if the recommended actions/changes being suggested are implemented the whole JEDO program can be positively turned around to become a strong asset to this community. The four core problem areas are:

- (*) JEDO structure
- (*) Board training and skill set development to sit on JEDO
- (*) Re-write the business guidelines and procedures
- (*) Clarify Mission Statement and Definition of Terminology "Economic Development"

RECOMMENDATION:

It is strongly recommended that the structure of the JEDO board be changed to include voting participants from the community. At least 2 seats should be held by the community at large. The current JEDO-GO Topeka structure is not what is best nor the best process for the current Economic Development needs of Topeka and Shawnee County. One head on two bodies (Topeka Chamber & GO Topeka) does not work. At minimum it promotes political conflicts. This is a very real problem.

A direct solution to remedy these JEDO problems is to hire a professional as E.O. of JEDO to administer and manage the numerous projects and relationships that JEDO is approving and funding along with doing the arms and legs daily work that the current JEDO board members do not have time for. This will put JEDO in charge of it's contractor (GO Topeka) or any other contractor and fill in the gaps of information and knowledge of business matters this group needs on an ongoing basis. It will eliminate the current problems of oversight and good business management immediately.

This tax money and what the JEDO is chartered to do is too important to accept what is and has been currently going on. It can be corrected to be the asset and economic tool it was originally designed to be if these steps are implemented and problems discussed and corrected.

02-13-2015

STATE AUTHORITY-STATUTE REQUIREMENTS

The Joint Economic Development Organization a/k/a JEDO can only exist under state law. Inter-local agreements can only exist because of state statute. It is important as well as a compliant responsibility for the JEDO and any of its service contractors, i.e. GO Topeka, to review/study the state statutes that give JEDO its existence and powers and to secure compliance with same.

State statute requires the JEDO to lead in its duties; not follow or be directed by a third party. There are specific statutes that cover the coming together of municipalities to collectively capture, administer and distribute public funds for a targeted purpose such as economic development. A county can only exist due to state statute. A formal partner with the city, JEDO is governed under state law & statute, not city code or county home-rule.

Assuming the above to be true, then it begs the question about the Topeka Chamber/GO Topeka structure with one common President/CEO. This organizational/operational design might not pass "muster" of the state statute as a Joint Economic Development Organization (JEDO) that procures services and spends public dollars as implied under fair and open competition as required by state law (statutory & administrative policy).

RECOMMENDATION: The consultant/consulting group hired to look into JEDO and its structure, organizational design and operational policies/procedures should also do a thorough review of the state statutes that give powers to the city and county to include their latitude of operation & administration as a quasi-governmental entity.

A vital part of creating this document should include input from knowledgeable and informed citizens. Several key people that should be on this interview list for input are: Joe Ledbetter, Lazone Greys and Carol Marple.

Cronyism and Economic Growth

“The most fundamental problem is that many public officials appear to believe that they can influence the course of their state or local economies through incentives and subsidies to a degree far beyond anything supported by even the most optimistic evidence.” The Failures of Economic Development Incentives

-Peters and Fisher, *Journal of the American Planning Association*, 2004

Why economic development incentives don't work

“... companies receiving generous public subsidies rarely meet the job creation or hourly wage targets promised in return. They often pull up stakes and move their operations elsewhere when the subsidies run out.” P. 120

“[The studies] which find business location decisions to be favorably influenced by targeted tax incentives, also conclude that the benefits to the communities that offered them were less than their costs.” P. 11

Hicks and Shughart, *“Unleashing Capitalism: Why Prosperity Stops at the West Virginia*

- “Smoke-stack” chasing or “economic development” has not been shown to produce net job growth or economic growth
- The “smokestack chasing” process is, by definition, a zero-sum game. The sought after business has all the negotiating leverage, and will capture all of the potential value.
- Subjecting personal viewpoints for the wisdom of the marketplace does not succeed in the long term. It is folly to think that a select few can pick winners and losers in the marketplace. Public officials’ ability to micro-manage the economy is limited to non-existent
- Incentives for selected firms raises taxes on the remaining firms
- Job growth is generated from within, not from firms moving in; organic move-in vs purchase
- Fewer than 1/2 % of jobs in any given year have moved to Kansas from another state
- These investments do not support long-term growth—and short-circuit the process of business dynamism. There’s little upside to the community and the benefits primarily accrue to the company, not the community

Research on Why Eco Devo Incentives Don't Work

- ✓ National study of development incentives, 1969-1985 No evidence of incentive impact on manufacturing value-added or unemployment, thus suggesting that tax incentives were ineffective Ambrosius (1989)
- ✓ National study of state economic growth and development programs, 1979-1995 General fiscal policy found to be mildly effective, while targeted incentives reduced economic performance (as measured by per capita income) Tregan (1999)
- ✓ 366 Ohio firms, 1993-1995 Small reduction in employment by businesses which received Ohio's tax incentives. Gabe and Kraybill (2002)
- ✓ Panel study of impacts of entry by 109 large firms in the 1980s No evidence of large firm impacts on local economy Fox and Murray (2004)

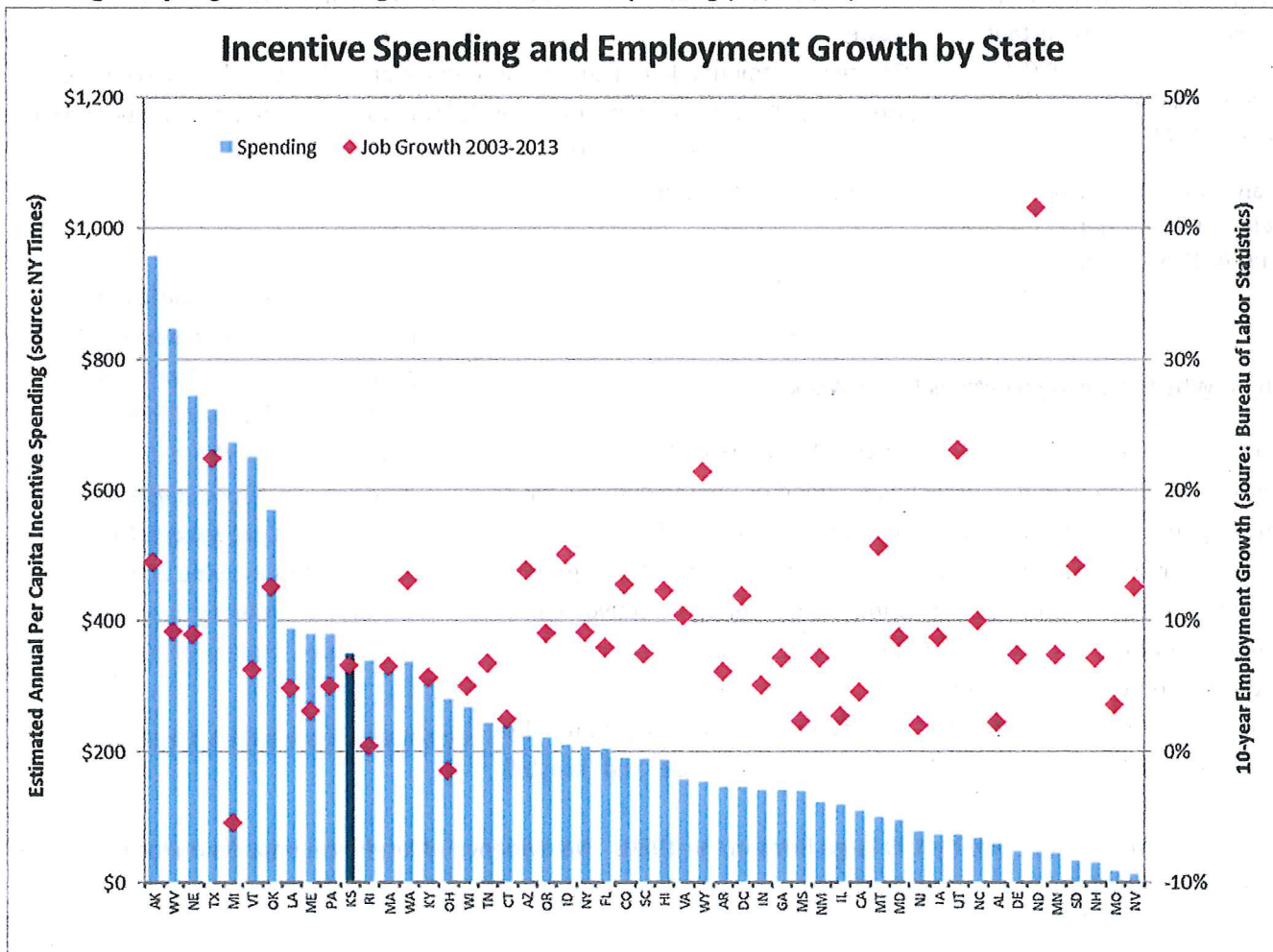
“U.S. states and localities often engage in economic development politics using incentives and abatements for specific firms or industries. Yet, there is very little empirical evidence suggesting that such policies are successful.” Why Do Localities Provide Economic Development Incentives? Growth and Change, September 2012

"In sum, the research to date suggests that economic development incentives do not always induce firms to create substantial jobs and investment that would not occur without the incentives. This appears to be the case despite the fact that companies say incentives are important factors in site selection." Jonathan Q. Morgan, Using Economic Development Incentives: For Better or for Worse, Popular Government Winter 2009

- ✓ Panel study of large firms entrance in Georgia 1984-1998 Employment impact of large firms is less than gross job creation (by about 70%), and thus tax incentives are unlikely to be efficacious Edmiston (2004)
- ✓ Penal study of Michigan's MEGA tax incentives 1995-2004 Tax incentives had no impact on targeted industries (wholesale and manufacturing), but did lead to a transient increase in construction employment at the cost of roughly \$125,000 per job. LaFavie and Hicks (2005)

"... preliminary findings on the Kansas PEAK program, and Kansas incentive programs more generally, is that there is no concrete evidence that they are effective in generating jobs in Kansas." Evaluating Firm-Specific Location Incentives, Nathan Jensen for the Ewing Kauffman Foundation, 2014

New York Times staff spent ten months gathering state and local economic development spending data (total and per capita). The chart below shows per capita spending from the study, plotted with BLS job growth data from 2003-2013. Many of the states with high job growth have relatively low incentive spending (WY, UT, ND, MT, SD, NV, ID, AZ). States with negative job growth have high levels of incentive spending (MI, OH, RI)



Mr. Mayor, members of JEDO, good evening and thank you for the opportunity to participate in this public forum. My name is Mark Ruelle and I serve as the CEO at Westar Energy. I appreciate your efforts to prioritize our community's economic development efforts and to listen to feedback about these efforts.

For many years, Westar Energy has actively helped our communities grow. We do so through both monetary support of community projects, such as the downtown redevelopment project, and as volunteers on local boards. In fact, I serve on the board of GO Topeka because I strongly believe in its efforts to

create exceptional opportunities for growth, innovation and economic diversity.

I know you share in that vision for Topeka and, as good stewards of the tax dollars that support our economic progress, I know you continually look for ways to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of our efforts. That's why I think it is important for all of us to stay focused on our primary goal of growing the Topeka and Shawnee County economy by attracting and retaining primary jobs.

Of course, there is a lot of discussion about the best way to do that and it is easy to follow paths about ancillary issues that do impact economic growth. But

remember that with limited resources, we must focus on new dollars flowing into Topeka and Shawnee County and that only happens when we create and retain primary jobs. If we follow those broader paths, we risk spreading our resources too thin and failing to make an impact at all.

I urge you not to slice the pie too thin for short-term goals, but instead concentrate on creating a bigger pie for long-term growth. Thank you for your service and your efforts to build a better Topeka. I appreciate your time and consideration.

Mick Urban testimony for JEDO Public Forum

March 11, 2015 - Heritage Hall - Kansas Expocentre - 6:00 – 8:00 p.m.

The Value of Partnership

Good evening Mr. Mayor and members of JEDO. My name is Mick Urban and I work for Kansas Gas Service as the manager of government relations. In addition I have been a member of the GoTopeka Board since 2008. I applaud your efforts to assess our current economic development efforts. Working together, we should be able to make meaningful improvements in the way our community goes about attracting and retaining employers. I would like to express my strong support for at least one aspect of our current system; the structure of the relationship between the taxpayers of Shawnee County, JEDO and GoTopeka.

Our community leaders showed wisdom at the turn of the century when they developed the idea of a Joint Economic Development Organization tasked with overseeing the expenditure of sales tax dollars dedicated to economic development. They were also wise to recognize that the real, day-to-day, detailed work of going out into the world to find and attract businesses to locate here is a specialty. It is technical work and should not be misunderstood to be a routine governmental function.

One of the reasons Topeka's economic development is strong is because JEDO has delegated the technical work to GoTopeka and empowered the experts on its staff to carry-out the mission of growing our economy by drawing new employers to the region and ensuring existing ones have all the resources they need to expand and add jobs here. By partnering with the private interests who had the vision to found GoTopeka, the City government has given Topeka a leg-up over many of its competitors; communities which run economic development as an ancillary government office.

Mick Urban testimony for JEDO Public Forum

March 11, 2015 - Heritage Hall - Kansas Expocentre - 6:00 – 8:00 p.m.

GoTopeka's staff is able to concentrate on studying the ever-changing Topeka market, identifying those business sectors which represent the greatest opportunity to leverage our assets and taking that story across the country and the world to some of the fastest growing companies. GoTopeka has the hands-on knowledge of the global marketplace to be able to assertively solicit those companies that are looking to relocate or add a new facility and make the best case for why Topeka and Shawnee County should be their number one choice.

GoTopeka works day in and day out with professional site selectors from around the nation. As might be expected, those site selectors ask a lot of questions on behalf of their clients and they do not wait long for the answers. Candidate communities that take too much time to get up to speed and develop answers are quickly left behind. GoTopeka's staff has a comprehensive working expertise of the various incentive programs and Topeka properties which would best fit a prospective employer. So they have ready answers for site selectors and this has kept Topeka in the competition time and again. In the process of working with site selectors and potential new employers, GoTopeka gathers vital intelligence about what job creators are really looking for in a community and in a workforce. This information has been invaluable as our educational leaders have worked to develop programs which better prepare our youth for tomorrow's workplace.

In closing, while the consultant you engage for this process may identify a number of ways we can improve, I hope they, and you, will agree that the structure we have in which our elected officials oversee the process and our contracted experts carry-out the technical work is the best, proven recipe for growing our economy.

Thank you.

Testimony for JEDO Public Forum

Mr. Mayor, members of JEDO, good evening. My name is Keith Warta and I reside at 901 SE Oakridge Lane in Topeka. I am president of Bartlett & West.

This is an exciting time to be a Topekan. So many people and groups across the City have embraced a truly inspiring vision of what our town can become. I am eager to see where we will be as a community in the coming years.

One key to realizing our vision is to continue to work hard to grow our local economy. That means bringing new employers here and doing everything we can to help our existing employers thrive and grow. I don't know of too many Topekans who challenge that. I want to applaud the members of JEDO for their commitment to the premise that growing the economy, bringing more jobs to Topeka, should be one of our main focuses now so that our children will be very proud of what Topeka has become in future decades.

Your task, then, is about optimizing the way our community approaches economic development. I think this is a very worthy project and I expect that the end result will be evolutionary, rather than revolutionary. That is, I firmly believe our existing program of economic development is structured soundly and is being executed the right way. The members of JEDO are accountable to the taxpayers and GoTopeka is accountable to you. Working together, your organizations are in a good position to continue to deliver excellent results to our community.

To be sure, a nationally-qualified expert should be able to give us all some good insights into how the best communities do economic development. I look forward to seeing what they have to say. We should be ready to implement promptly whatever good ideas they bring back for improving the way Topeka positions itself in the marketplace,

Jennifer Goodrich

From: Brenda Younger
Sent: Wednesday, March 11, 2015 9:48 PM
To: Jennifer Goodrich
Subject: Fwd: This evening's JEDO meeting

Please make sure this is included in file packet for permanent record

Sent from my iPad

Begin forwarded message:

From: Doug Kinsinger <dkinsinger@topekachamber.org>
Date: March 11, 2015 at 4:12:55 PM CDT
To: City Council <Council@Topeka.org>, Bob Archer <bob.archer@snco.us>, Kevin Cook <kevin.cook@snco.us>, Megan Barrett <Megan.Berrett@snco.us>, Rich Eckert <rich.eckert@snco.us>, Shelly Buhler <shelly.buhler@snco.us>, Scott Smathers <ssmathers@gotopeka.com>
Cc: Brenda Younger <BYounger@Topeka.org>, Doug Kinsinger <dkinsinger@topekachamber.org>
Subject: This evening's JEDO meeting

JEDO members, thank you for the opportunity for the public to express their interest in the RFP process with your meeting this evening. I fully support the RFP process you will be discussing and I appreciate the value and benefit that can be derived as we work together to improve our community's economy.

So as not to have the perception of influencing the RFP process, I am electing not to attend this evening's meeting. Should you have questions you would like me to address, please feel free to contact me. Thank you for your service.

Douglas S. Kinsinger, CCE
President/CEO
Greater Topeka Chamber of Commerce/GO Topeka
120 SE Sixth Avenue, Suite 110
Topeka, Kansas 66603-3515
785.234.2644 office
785.234.8656 fax
www.topekachamber.org