

**MINUTES OF THE SOUTHERN NEVADA ENTREPRENEURSHIP TASK FORCE
January 23, 2017**

The Lieutenant Governor's Southern Nevada Entrepreneurship Task Force was called to order by Lieutenant Governor Mark Hutchison at 9:00 a.m. on Monday, January 23, 2017, at the InNEVation Center, 6795 S Edmond Street, Las Vegas, Nevada. Copies of the minutes and meeting materials are available on the Lieutenant Governor's website: [www.
http://ltgov.nv.gov/Resources/Entrepreneurship/](http://ltgov.nv.gov/Resources/Entrepreneurship/)

1. CALL TO ORDER, ROLL CALL AND ESTABLISH QUORUM

TASK FORCE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Bill Botts
Jimmy Jacobson
Leith Martin
Camille McCue
Jonas Peterson
Heather Wilde
Eugene Wong

TASK FORCE MEMBERS ABSENT:

Zach Miles
Bill Payne

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:

Mark Hutchison, Lieutenant Governor
Cathy Erskine, Policy Analyst
Kirsten Van Ry, Communications Director

There is a quorum.

2. PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

3. OPENING REMARKS

Lieutenant Governor Hutchison welcomed Camille McCue as a new member to the Entrepreneurship Task Force and asked her to share a little bit about herself.

Ms. McCue stated that she is the Director for Technology Innovations and the Adelson Educational Campus. She works with pre-K-12 students on being innovators and transforming apps and products into marketable items.

4. APPROVAL OF THE DECEMBER 15, 2016 TASK FORCE MEETING MINUTES

A MOTION WAS MADE BY HEATHER WILDE TO APPROVE THE DECEMBER 15, 2016 MEETING MINUTES; THIS MOTION WAS SECONDED BY BILL BOTTS. THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

5. TASK FORCE MEMBER COMMENTS

Ms. Erskine thanked Bill Botts for arranging the donation of the book *Startup Communities* by Brad Feld. The books are available to task force members interested in reading the book.

Mr. Botts noted that the books were donated through Iron Yard Ventures and Brad Feld himself. Further, Mr. Botts stated that RedFlint and venturecapital.org are following the format of developing a startup community as explained in the book. He noted that venturecapital.org has been successful in Salt Lake City as well as Boise.

6. DISCUSSION ON MISSION STATEMENT FOR TASK FORCE

Ms. Erskine included in the meeting packet the vision and mission statement that was developed and approved by the Northern Task Force. She asked for comments from the southern members.

Mr. Botts indicated that the vision statement was grandiose and beyond the group's ability to execute. He agrees that Nevada should strive to be one of the top entrepreneurial-friendly states in the nation, but will not be number one in the nation.

Ms. Wilde noted that a vision statement is supposed to be an overarching goal. A vision statement should be something in between mildly unrealistic and unrealistic. She does not see anything wrong with the mission statement being grandiose.

Mr. Martin saw truth in both points. He noted that within the timeframe of the task force, Nevada will not be the number one entrepreneurial-friendly state in the nation. But, it does not mean that the task force cannot shoot for that goal.

Mr. Botts said that it is a twenty year program to reach the level of an entrepreneurial-friendly ecosystem that is comparable to Silicon Valley, Boulder City and the like.

Ms. Wilde noted that she believes Silicon Valley is more business friendly than entrepreneurial friendly. Eight people living in a house living off Top Ramen is hardly entrepreneurial friendly.

Overall Mr. Peterson likes the mission statement, but noted that it is all dependent of what you are measuring. He noted that in the fall of 2016 the Small Business Enterprise Council named Nevada as the number one policy friendly state for entrepreneurs. Again, stressing that it is all about how you measure.

Lieutenant Governor Hutchison directed the group to take a closer look at the mission statement presented and asked for feedback.

Ms. McCue suggested inserting language specific to education. Education is fundamental and it must be impacted in order to reach the overall vision. She suggested adding, "cultivating educational experiences at the K-12 and collegiate level that foster entrepreneurship."

Ms. Wilde agreed and noted that it is consistent with what the group has identified as a weakness.

Lieutenant Governor Hutchison noted that the suggestions will be shared with the northern group to see if the ideas can be combined.

7. DISCUSSION OF THE REGIONS STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

Ms. Erskine noted that at the last meeting she presented a bullet-point document of strengths and weaknesses that was based on dialogue from previous meetings. She indicated that at the last meeting Mr. Botts suggested treating the strengths and weakness list as a living document and also suggested prioritizing the lists.

Ms. Erskine updated the strengths and weakness list and created a definition to explain each strength and weakness. She said she thought that it was important to further identify each strength and weakness before asking the group to prioritize the lists. She noted the definitions were her interpretation of what was discussed and that the definitions can be altered however the task force sees fit.

Ms. Erskine shared a comment she received via email from Mr. Payne regarding the strengths and weakness list. Mr. Payne made reference to the lack of role models, mentoring, entrepreneurial support (business plans, marketing plans), entrepreneurial peer organizations, investor training, and adult entrepreneur training.

Prior to the meeting Ms. Erskine administered a survey to task force members. The survey asked members to prioritize and rank the strengths and weaknesses. The purpose of the

ranking was to how members opinions of the regions greatest strength and most prevalent problem. Eight out of the nine members completed the survey and the results widely varied and were not conclusive.

The overall consensus from the group was that the results of the ranking were scatted and did not provide any insight.

Ms. McCue suggested using the Likert Scale instead. She explained that terms that appear to be ranked towards the bottom, even though relatively ranked low compared to the other items, does not necessarily mean the perception was that those were low items. All eight could have been highly ranked, but those were the "least good thing." The Likert Scale is a rating scale rather than a ranking scale. Ranking forces relative positions but it may not perceive that something is worse or better. She suggested using a rating scale of 1 to 5.

Mr. Botts indicated that at this point it does not make sense to prioritize the strengths and weaknesses. Lieutenant Governor Hutchison agreed.

Lieutenant Governor Hutchison questioned whether or not the task force wanted to include the lack of mentors to the list.

Mr. Martin agreed that lack of mentors is a weakness. Lack of mentors could be categorized under lack of education and awareness.

Lieutenant Governor Hutchison asked if lack of mentor should be a stand-alone category or rolled into lack of education and awareness.

Mr. Botts responded that is has to do with a support structure. Mentors, business plan support, help with identifying your business, falls under "support structure." Mentorship falls under that support system.

Ms. Wilde commented that "support structure" could fall under disconnected and fragmented community. "Mentors" could fall under lack of education and awareness.

Mr. Martin pointed out the inconsistencies between the two categories and the definitions. Under the strength category Access/Availability of Resources is defined as "many organizations and programs in Southern Nevada provide entrepreneurial resources, i.e., mentoring, connections, educational classes, networking. But under the weakness category it indicated that there are no mentors and a weak support system.

Mr. Wong noted that there are resources but the resources are not integrated.

Mr. Botts stated that trying to preordain strengths and weaknesses is not the right

solution. He suggested having all of the characteristics on a long list and then using the Likert Scale to rate each category to figure out what the strengths and weaknesses are.

Mr. Botts noted the importance of integrating the various entrepreneurial pieces in Southern Nevada and stressed the importance collaboration within the entrepreneurial community.

Lieutenant Governor Hutchison reiterated the task force's concern with the ranking the regions strengths and weaknesses. Noting that staff will instead use the Likert Scale to rate the characteristics of a startup community and to determine the state of the startup community.

Ms. Erskine asked members to send additional characteristics of a startup community via email to be included in the survey.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY BILL BOTTS TO RESTRUCTURE THE RANKING SYSTEM OF STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES TO A LISTING OF CHARACTERISTICS AND RATE USING THE LIKERT SCALE; THIS MOTION WAS SECONDED BY EUGENE WONG. THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

8. OUTLINE AND DISCUSS POTENTIAL REGIONAL FRAMEWORK

Ms. Erskine provided task members an overview of the potential regional framework, noting that the framework would model the Governor's Strategic Plan structure. Ms. Erskine provided emphasis on what the information the regional framework would provide including the strengths and weaknesses, inventory, and the future of the community.

Mr. Payne inquired as to whether the strategic plan was to be added to the Governor's Framework.

Lt. Governor clarified that the Governor's plan was to be used simply as a structure and guideline for formatting.

Lt. Governor provided additional comments to clarify for the Task Force, the purpose of bringing the group together and the mission behind creation of the Regional Framework, noting that the task force was not to exist in perpetuity. Instead, the intent is to provide the Regional Framework to show the strengths and weaknesses of both the North and South and include an inventory of all of the resources and steps that may be taken in the future.

Ms. Erskine noted that the regional framework would include the vision and mission statements and a list of goals after they having been delineated. Ms. Erskine noted that

categories and subcategories will be included and how they may be included. Ms. Erskine noted that the Task Force shall decide which categories to be included-- the decision of which may come either before or after the ranking of priorities.

Lt. Governor Hutchison inquired as to what was needed to come out of this specific agenda item.

Ms. Erskine noted that this agenda item was purely for presentation purposes and for feedback on the proposal.

Lt. Governor suggested walking through the proposal to solicit feedback and engage the task members on the proposal.

Ms. Erskine presented the notion of breaking the regional framework document down by the preexisting categories in the inventory.

Mr. Botts suggested giving each member an opportunity to look over the proposed framework and the inventory categories as a whole.

Mr. Martin commented that originally, the deliverable was unknown and discussions were focused on entrepreneurship as a whole. Mr. Martin then asked for clarification on whether or not the document that was being discussed is the task force's deliverable.

Lt. Governor agreed that the document being discussed was to be the group's deliverable. Namely, by utilizing the talents of the task force members, to identify the regional strengths and weaknesses for the entrepreneurs in the state, to take an inventory of the resources for the communities in Northern and Southern Nevada.

Ms. Wilde asked who the intended reader of the document is to be.

Lt. Governor noted that the document would be for the entrepreneur community itself, particularly the inventory, and policymakers. Lt. Governor noted that this will likely be an evolving process with future task forces to refine. Notwithstanding, this task force will have the first opportunity for the community and the policy making process.

Ms. McCue stated that the document would be looking for the "what is" to provide information for entrepreneurs and looking at the "what could be" for the policy makers.

Mr. Botts noted that he would be worried about the document not being properly utilized. Mr. Botts offered an approach to use the task force to fund a steering committee in order to build the entrepreneurship community with the current pieces in place, noting that a more pragmatic approach may work better.

Lt. Governor stated that the idea may be better toward the end of the process, depending upon what the ideas exist toward the end of task force, and noting in agreement that the document certainly shouldn't be ignored.

Ms. Erskine stated that the document could also be used on trade missions and as a marketing tool. Likewise, as an education piece for legislators.

Mr. Jacobson commented that he would encourage the task force to add a member from the Latino Community, as many new businesses are started by Latinos and will likely be a large part of Southern Nevada's future.

Lt. Governor noted that the Latino Chamber of Commerce may be a good resource for the task force to connect with in engaging the Latino community.

Ms. Erskine noted that the Latino Chamber has been hosting many programs for business and entrepreneurship. Ms. Erskine noted that engaging the Latino community can be added as an agenda item for the next meeting.

Lt. Governor commented that each member should come with any suggestions.

Ms. McCue noted that there was no representation of K-12 on the current category list; nor any listing of magnet programs represented on the listings, either. Ms. McCue commented that she would send a list following the meeting. Ms. McCue also noted that competitions could be added as another category—whether K-12 or at the adult level.

Mr. Martin noted that competitions could likely be pulled out of "startup events" which could be separated further into another category.

Lt. Governor asked Mr. Martin to provide a brief background on the original category document.

Mr. Martin provided the task force a background of the document, stating that it had originated with Mr. Botts. Mr. Martin then noted that he then worked with Mr. Peterson to provide the details for the inventory document. Mr. Martin then asked for feedback as to whether or not some of the details of the inventory were up to date, for instance, the Vegas Jelly.

Ms. Wilde indicated that the Vegas Jelly does not exist any longer.

Mr. Martin stated that the Vegas Jelly could then be stricken from the inventory. Mr. Martin stated he had no visibility in YPO; stating that he does know that EO exists.

Ms. Wilde indicated that YPO does not.

Mr. Martin indicated that YPO could be stricken.

Ms. Wilde inquired as to whether 1 Million Cups was on the list.

Mr. Martin answered that it was not, and asked whether there was a 1 Million Cups in Southern Nevada.

Ms. Wilde stated that Southern Nevada does but it is currently in stasis; and that two different individuals are currently running it.

Mr. Martin asked the task members if they noticed anything else that was missing.

Ms. McCue stated that K-12 was missing and competitions, for instance DECA and FBLA – two major competitions at the high school level where hundreds if not thousands of students participate and start the pipeline of local entrepreneurs.

Ms. Wilde noted that First Robotics has a large presence, too.

Ms. McCue stated that from a medical perspective, HOSA could also be included.

Lt. Governor Hutchison asked Ms. Erskine to resend the inventory out to task force members for edits and feedback for each task force member's continual input and updating.

Mr. Martin inquired whether any member had knowledge of the Nevada Center of Entrepreneurship and Technology. Mr. Martin stated that he believed it was originally on a list that Mr. Peterson had sent early on in the process.

Ms. Wilde stated that the group does exist but not for the task force's purpose; as the group helps to reeducate individuals after loss of employment.

Lt. Governor inquired as to whether it was part of Nevada Division of Employment and Training and Rehabilitation.

Ms. Wilde believed that it was, and that it's a very specific niche. Although it's not something that the task force will generally run into, it should be kept on the list. Ms. Wilde commented that there is a similar group that has recently began named SNAP that works with women and men in prisons.

Mr. Peterson stated that this document is meant to be dynamic, and would welcome any changes by the group.

Mr. Botts suggested that the task force update and ensure everything is current.

Lt. Governor suggested that the task force break off to make a new category for competitions.

Ms. Erskine noted that it looked as though there would be sufficient items to fall under a K-12 education category, too.

Mr. Martin suggested having the list redone by the next meeting, and providing contact information for each organization in order to update the chart online and link each name to the website of the organization.

Mr. Botts agreed with the suggestion of housing the document online.

Lt. Governor inquired as to what website(s) the task force envisioned the document would be housed on within the entrepreneur community.

Mr. Wong stated that the information must be optimized and the organizations all within contact before placing it online so they can decide where the best place to house the information would be.

Ms. Wilde stated that \$1 Office Space is no longer \$1.

Mr. Martin suggested that part of the discussion should focus on where the information should be centralized - for instance, somewhere recognizable such as VegasTech, LVGEA, etc.

Mr. Peterson stated that he was happy to update the document and share with the group, and host wherever.

Ms. Erskine noted that she didn't believe the state website could house it, but could link to it.

Lt. Governor stated that the document should be housed somewhere where there would be an incentive to keep it current and updated.

Mr. Wong stated that he believed UNLV would be supportive of hosting the document.

Mr. Jacobson stated that he believed as far as deliverables this sounded great; and could also be used as an abbreviated handout, and as a press story, as well.

Lt. Governor agreed with the suggestion, and asked if there was a dominant entrepreneurship publication in southern Nevada.

Ms. Wilde stated that Vegas Seven, Vegas Inc., WENDOH Media, and downtown.vegas sites as they're advertised at the airports.

Mr. Botts indicated that when the document is cleaned up, it has the potential to be a powerful tool for everything, whether marketing, tracking where the entrepreneur community is, what's going on, and ultimately for engaging the community.

Ms. Erskine stated that the community would also be able to track the expansion of resources as the columns grew longer.

Lt. Governor indicated that following the meeting, staff would send out the inventory for comments and edits, as well as the rankings to gauge where the Entrepreneurship Task Force is and define where the community wants to go in the future. Lt. Governor recapped what Mr. Jacobson had missed earlier on in the meeting re: the mission statement and the vision statement, noting whether Nevada could be the, or one of the, friendliest states in the nation.

Lt. Governor closed agenda item #8, noting that no action was required.

9. CLOSING REMARKS

Ms. Wilde noted that RedFlint was hosting an Entrepreneurial Enterprise Symposium on Saturday from 8am-12pm.

Mr. Martin inquired as to how to ensure everyone was engaged and cohesive in their messaging about the community.

Lt. Governor noted that to Mr. Martin's question; was communication an issue the Task Force wants to take on.

Mr. Wong suggested the issue to be put on the next agenda.

Ms. McCue stated that there need be a clearinghouse/website that has a constantly updated calendar.

Mr. Jacobson reiterated the task force should reach out to the Latino and minority communities.

Ms. Erskine stated that the next meeting will likely be in March; depending upon session, noting that there may be more time between meetings, suggesting that between this time and June, there'd likely be two meetings.

10. PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. Botts stated that he and Mr. Payne were making connections among the community and wanted to ensure they were not acting in conflict as members of the task force.

Lt. Governor stated that so long as they were acting as individuals and not as members of the task force, he did not believe so.

Mr. Botts stated that he and Mr. Payne were not advertising the task force, nor were they holding themselves out as members of the task force.

11. ADJOURNMENT

A MOTION WAS MADE BY EUGENE WONG TO ADJOURN; THIS MOTION WAS SECONDED BY CAMILE MCCUE. THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.