



**Visioneering  
Unified Legislative Alliance Meeting  
October 23, 2009  
11:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.  
Central Park Lodge, Andover, Kansas**

**Meeting Notes**

**Attendees:** Tom Bruno, Angela Buzard, Shane Coelho, Les Depperschmidt, Rep. Nile Dillmore, Michelle Eastman, Becky Eby, Diane Gjerstad, Stephanie Knebel, Keith Lawing, Jeff Longwell, Anne Maack, Sen. Ty Masterson, Andy Schlapp, Scott Schneider, Carolyn Smith, John Waltner, Rep. Jim Ward, Bruce Witt, John Wong, Joe Yager, Kristi Zukovich, Mary Ellen Conlee, Kathy Sexton, Dale Goter, Kristy Williams

**Review Guiding Principals, Benchmarks**

The guiding principals and key benchmarks were reviewed. The benchmark focus areas are job growth, per capita income and education.

(<http://www.visioneeringwichita.com/minutes/ula/guiding%20principals.pdf>)

**Panel of Legislators**

Becky Eby with REAP provided the following notes from the legislative panel discussion.

***Legislative Panel Discussion: Senator Ty Masterson, Representative Nile Dillmore, and Representative Jim Ward***

***Main Areas of Focus for Legislators this Session***

- Senator Masterson would like to focus on creating a unified voice for economic development in the region for the 2010 legislative session.
- Representative Ward plans on focusing on job growth and health care in 2010. He noted that the South Central Legislative Delegation would need to be on defense for this session, in regards to current regional projects, especially Kansas Affordable Airfares.
- Representative Dillmore would like to focus on getting assistance for laid-off aircraft industry workers and other laid-off members of the workforce, and finding a way to ensure that the area is receiving a payback from its investments. He noted the developmental disability funding wait time and the backlog of Medicaid applications within the state.

***South Central Kansas Legislative Delegation Relationships***

- The panel noted that the relationship of the SCK legislative delegation is one of partnerships and is very collegial.
- The delegation has been able to identify issues that they all agree on, and work, to the best of their ability, to promote those issues during the legislative session.
- The panel spoke on the importance on infrastructure (lobbyists, city and county representation, etc.) in helping provide area legislators with information during the legislative session.
  - It was noted that those lobbying for the area are some of the most qualified, knowledgeable, ethical, cooperative, and helpful individuals in Topeka.

- The panel commented on their ability to deliver straight forward, objective information.
- The panel also noted that the area needed more infrastructure, representation, and voices in Topeka to be successful.
- Representative Dillmore noted that with less representation, the ability for legislators to act in the “Golden 2-3 Minutes” is lessened.

### **ULA**

- The panel commended the Visioneering Unified Legislative Alliance for unifying the SCK legislative delegation, educating constituents on the process, its constraints, and how things get done.

### ***How can representation in Topeka be justified as an appropriate tax expenditure?***

- Representative Dillmore noted that as the legislative process unfolds it is a question of coverage. Having someone in Topeka to speak up for your region, city, or county can have a big impact on what affects your hometown.
  - If you have someone there, your viewpoint will be heard, as well as your support.
  - However it may be hard to justify this to constituents because they often don't see the process as it unfolds.
- Senator Masterson noted that people need to understand that legislators and lobbyists have their interests in mind.

### ***Impact of the perception of an unrivaled gubernatorial election***

- Representative Ward noted that Parkinson will most likely have a larger influence since he is not running for governor.
  - He stated that he would be a big player in the legislative process, and that the politics of the season would definitely affect the legislative session.
  - He also noted that Kansans want debate during the gubernatorial election and that this would happen with strong candidates from both parties.
- Senator Masterson noted that Governor Parkinson's power would be significant as a statesman.
  - He stated that the governor was respected on both sides of the aisle and that he would have an opportunity to affect policy.

### ***Other Forms of Information for SCK Legislators***

- Representative Dillmore noted that a cooperative role was needed, with a large group of individuals in Topeka to maintain a network of communication and impact what is going on, and how it will affect area communities.

### ***Area Return on Investment***

- Mayor Waltner noted that the reason the region had been successful on specific priorities was due to good partnerships. However, he asked why the region, which produces jobs and money for the state, does not see funds coming back to the region in a proportionate fashion?
  - Mayor Waltner asked what could be done to manage this.
- Representative Ward stated that this was not a D & R issue, that it was a geography issues.

- He noted that the area legislators need to prove to legislators from outside the region that our policies and programs are good for Kansas in order to convince “free agents” to voter in their favor.
- He also noted that SCK legislators need to step up and not support other regions if they can’t support our region.
- Representative Dillmore and Senator Masterson noted that urban representation has grown while rural representation is decreasing, and that this was also affecting the areas return on investment.
- Representative Ward also noted that leadership on both sides of the aisle is important to advocate the area’s programs and projects.
- Community Partnership was once again noted as being extremely important.
  - Communities need to share information, send people to Topeka, and engage and support their legislators with thorough information and communication.

***What is in jeopardy on the ULA?***

- Representative Dillmore stated that the ULA gets the right programs to the top, and that all programs and projects are important.
- Representative Ward said that with the limited amount of resources, we need to be sure not to give avenues for others to criticize what we have been working on.
- Getting involved with the Governors budget would be helpful, but this is difficult to do.
- Opposition is embedded into the system, and SCK legislators will be on defense during the 2010 legislative session.
- Mr. Tom Bruno, Bruno and Associates, noted that the ULA might want to look at building partnerships with other regions, such as with Southwest Kansas on the issues of transportation.
- Andy Schlapp also suggested that the REAP region be expanded.

<b>Previous &amp; Current Submissions</b>
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One new proposal has been received from the Northern Flyer Alliance. Several of the re-submissions have already been received. Deadline is Oct 30<sup>th</sup>.

<b>Next Meeting</b>
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Next meeting – Nov 12<sup>th</sup> – Wichita Realtors Association, 170 W Dewey, Wichita. The agenda will be scoring and Q&A of proposals. **It is very important to have good attendance.**

Policy Summit will be Dec 3 & 4 at the Courtyard by Marriott, Old Town.