**Summary of the Day**

**Cathlamet**

April 17th, 2015

*There are a number of reasons you will want to undertake this exercise:*

* *You may have a board or other oversight structure which you want to report to.*
* *You may appreciate having something like this to tell friends and partners about what took place, and what you and others are working on.*
* *You can use it as a media release to let people know what’s happening in their area or region.*
* *It can be a terrific recruitment tool if you develop a post-event program of work.*
* *You can use it to monitor progress on your post event activity plan.*
* *The conference planning team will use it in future planning and to share results among the sites.*

***Do not let the day end without summarizing what good work occurred!***

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**Morning Session:**

We met on April 17th at Cathlamet to attend the live local broadcast of the 2015 Pathways to Prosperity conference which focused on enhancing our local and regional entrepreneurial ecosystem. The morning began with a live broadcast of remarks by Mr. Erik Pages, noted expert in the field of rural economic development and entrepreneurism.

**Erik’s first session focused on the question: “Who are the entrepreneurs?”**

The key takeaways for us were:

Small businesses really do make bigger impact than we think they do. There are more small businesses than you think. Need to provide more opportunities for youngsters to learn about business and experience starting a small business. One idea is the Washington High School Small Business Week – established entity, set up stock, competitive with prizes; helped with communication and everything involved in small businesses. 77% of firms were self-funded – higher than thought. We have several examples of boomers as entrepreneurs – lifestyle reasons and smaller nest eggs. Good information on Millennials -- most educated but not starting businesses because of student loans, etc.

Following the presentation the group engaged in an activity designed to\_identify local businesses and impacts of those businesses.

We learned that we have many small businesses in our community like those described but many of us don’t know much about them or their impacts and as a result of the presentation and our discussion we will: find ways we can help these small businesses network more often. Maybe we could have an entrepreneur network, and as part of that start looking for mentors that can review local business plans, location ideas, give feedback, etc., kind of like Shark Tank.

**Afternoon Session:**

In the afternoon we had another live broadcast from Mr. Pages focusing on the **needs of local entrepreneurs and what rural leaders can do to support them.**

Some of the important things we learned from this presentation included:

\_\_Networking is important. Youth entrepreneurship is valuable in next steps.

Afterward we engaged in another exercise(s) designed to identify our services and resources.

The key takeaways for us were:

We need to get a better handle on what our local resources are for businesses and how they find them

As a result, we agreed upon these next steps to assist entrepreneurs/small businesses in our area:

1. Chatroom, facebook , email list for entrepreneurs in community
   1. There are some things that would be surprising/helpful for new businesses to know, i.e. challenges of internet reliability, cost of utilities and trash service, where retail space is coming available, etc.
2. Resource guide -- where to get help, more outreach for local businesses. What’s available within 50 miles, i.e. SBDC, Score
3. Entrepreneur gatherings, get-togethers. Get industries to work together, i.e. restaurants with pub crawls or t-shirts promotions. Help with communications.
4. Promotion ideas where local businesses are working together, like glass floats in Lincoln City with chamber. Work together on ideas to get tourists there during off season.
5. Helping boards be more open to new ideas. Working with older civic groups; inject innovation.

Please provide a quick collection of attendee data:

1. \_\_\_\_\_5\_\_\_\_ Number of Entrepreneurs
2. \_\_\_\_\_3\_\_\_\_ Number of professionals representing agencies
3. \_\_\_\_\_0\_\_\_ Number of interested community members

Please send the list of attendees to Debra Hansen at [debra.hansen@wsu.edu](mailto:debra.hansen@wsu.edu)