

Approved: January 30, 1996
date

MINUTES OF THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE.

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Alicia Salisbury at 8:00 a.m. on January 29, 1996, in Room 123-S of the Capitol.

Members present: Senators Salisbury, Burke, Gooch, Harris, Hensley, Jordan, Petty, Ranson, Steffes and Vidricksen.

Committee staff present: Lynne Holt, Legislative Research Department
Betty Bomar, Committee Secretary

Conferees appearing before the committee:
Susan Bittell, Ellis
Kurt Saylor, Sabetha
Tracy Taylor, Overland Park
William I. Wilhelm, Wichita

Others attending: See attached list

Confirmation hearing on the appointment of Susan Bittell, Member, Kansas Technology Enterprise Corporation, term expiring January 15, 1998.

Susan Bittell, testified she had seventeen years of marketing experience, working in an advertising agency, teaching at a University, working for a nonprofit organization and a manufacturer. Ms. Bittell stated she served as a consultant for the Small Business Development Center in western Kansas. She is presently national marketing director of Wheelchairs of Kansas. Ms. Bittell stated her present position has enlightened her first hand as to how technology applies to manufacturing and what MAMTEC has to offer. Wheelchairs of Kansas has been assisted by Western Kansas Technology Corporation, the Center for Design, Development and Production, and KTEC's office of Innovation & Research. Ms. Bittell stated she represented the private sector of the KTEC Board and is concerned regarding the Board's accountability in light of Kansas Inc.'s Report and the KTEC response. Ms. Bittell stated her support for the idea of regional business centers and believes such a concept would work well in the western part of the state, and particularly the "one-stop shopping" approach. Ms. Bittell, in response to questions, stated she is well aware she represents the citizens of the State of Kansas, and a "watch-dog" for the taxpayer's interests. Attachment 1

Confirmation hearing on the appointment of Kurt Saylor, Member, Kansas Technology Enterprise Corporation, term expiring January 15, 1999.

Kurt Saylor, testified he had twenty years experience as a banker in Sabetha and the surrounding area of northeast Kansas. Mr. Saylor stated he is experienced in the financial and lending field; can read a balance sheet and understands high risk loans. He has put together financial packages for companies, at both the local and international level. Mr. Saylor stated he believes his experience in the banking industry and his familiarity with the lending aspect of banking, particularly, is beneficial to the KTEC Board and that he can make a contribution to economic development and creation of jobs.

Confirmation hearing on the appointment of Tracy B. Taylor, Member, Kansas Technology Enterprise Corporation, term expiring January 15, 1998.

Tracy B. Taylor, testified he has had fifteen years experience in the areas of mergers, acquisitions and venture capital, working at the World Headquarters of Ford Motor Company, Butler Manufacturing, and Sprint Corporation. Mr. Taylor stated he reviewed business cases of emerging companies for the purpose of assessing valuations, product viability, soundness of strategy, financing structure and marketability. He stated he has a keen interest in the subject of both venture capital and economic development for the state of Kansas. Mr. Taylor advised he is currently managing partner, Cohen-Esrey Housing Partners. Mr. Taylor stated his business and entrepreneurial experience will be of benefit while serving on the KTEC Board, as it enables him to sort through the proposals to determine those that are viable and will create economic development.

CONTINUATION SHEET

MINUTES OF THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, Room 123-S Statehouse, at 8:00 a.m. on January 29, 1996.

Confirmation on the reappointment of William J. Wilhelm, Ph.D., Member, Kansas Technology Enterprise Corporation, term expiring January 15, 1999.

Dr. William Wilhelm, Dean, Department of Engineering, Wichita State University, stated he appeared before the Committee two years ago when he was first appointed to the KTEC Board. Dr. Wilhelm testified that he manages and oversees research programs at the University and is Director of the Center of Excellence. Dr. Wilhelm stated he serves on the Small Research Grant Committee and is able to share his assessment with other members of the Committee in approving grants. Dr. Wilhelm advised the grant applications reflect a greater awareness of KTEC and its various programs, as there are more grant applications and from more areas of the state. In response to the question where should the line be drawn and what action should be taken when employees of universities profit from the sale of products produced on university time with the assistance of university employees, undergraduate students and university laboratories, Dr. Wilhelm stated the individual should not be the beneficiary of profits. He stated the Board of Regents is quite aware of this potential and presently in the process of defining "conflict of interest". This question is raised often at the Board meetings. Relating to royalties, these are negotiated on a case by case basis.

The Committee adjourned at 9:00 a.m.

Upon motion of Senator Steffes, seconded by Senator Ranson, the Minutes of the January 26, 1996, meeting are unanimously approved.

The next meeting is scheduled for January 30, 1996.

Confirmation Hearing
Governor's Appointment to
Kansas Technology Enterprise Corporation
Board of Directors

Susan Bittel, APR

There's no doubt that technology is the key to the future in our global economy. In creating Kansas Technology Enterprise Corporation, I believe our state has taken an important step toward securing the economic future of Kansas.

Experience/Qualifications

My educational background includes Bachelor of Arts, Bachelor of Fine Arts, and Master of Science degrees, extensive computer design experience, and accreditation in the field of public relations.

In my 17 years of marketing experience, I've worked in an advertising agency, taught at a University, worked for a nonprofit organization, and a manufacturer. After eight years of teaching at FHSU I have a greater understanding of the research component in a University setting and added interest in what the Centers of Excellence are accomplishing. In addition to teaching, I served as a consultant for the Small Business Development Center in western Kansas. Many small business people and start-up companies contact the SBDC for assistance, and I've been involved in advising them on marketing concerns, including business plans and budgeting. I also continue to present workshops for the SBDC.

Economic development efforts include work with the Ellis County Coalition for Economic Development, Hays Area Chamber of Commerce, and the Small Business Development Center to attract and grow businesses in our part of the state. Experiencing the other side of the economic development process, I was involved in internal negotiations that brought my current employer to Ellis County.

My present position is national marketing director of Wheelchairs of Kansas, a manufacturing firm that makes and distributes durable medical products for obese individuals. We've been successful in niche marketing for this very specialized group. This position has given me the opportunity to observe first hand how technology applies to manufacturing and to learn what MAMTEC has to offer. My company has also been assisted by Western Kansas Technology Corporation, the Center for Design, Development & Production, and KTEC's office of Innovation & Research.

Contributions

I can contribute a working knowledge of economic development, understanding of technology as it applies to my experiences, a private sector perspective, and many western Kansas business contacts. In addition, I can offer my knowledge of the marketing process: how to increase awareness, understanding and utilization of KTEC programs both in the state and throughout the country. Niche marketing, focusing on key constituencies, is a necessity in my job. KTEC also has a specialty niche which needs a special focus. My background working in and with small businesses can be viewed as an asset. I can also offer a business woman's perspective and enthusiasm for economic development efforts where technology is concerned.

Issues/Goals

As a board member representing the private sector, I'm concerned with accountability. In light of the Kansas Inc. Report and the KTEC response, I feel there's a need for continued and increased accountability, especially where these kinds of dollars are concerned. KTEC needs to continue to find better ways of measuring results and opening channels of communication with other state agencies involved in economic development efforts. As a KTEC board member, I will look for high returns on this substantial investment of taxpayer's money.

The idea of regional business centers is of interest to me because I believe they would work well, particularly in the western part of the state. I believe the "one-stop shopping" concept is an excellent way to get all resources coordinated. I'm also interested in more equitable assistance from KTEC programs to the entire state, but particularly in the western region that I represent.

In our global society, we need to continue the vision and the work of reaching beyond our borders with technology. KTEC makes this possible and, with proper guidance, can continue to build on a technology base and make a substantial difference in the future economy of our state. That's an exciting prospect and I would like to be a part of it by serving on the KTEC Board.

*Senate Commerce Committee
January 29, 1996
Attachment 1.*