State Administrative Committee (SAC) Minutes

November 17, 2014

Teleconference

Attendees:

NRCS – Loren Graff
RD – Karissa Stiers
FSA – Jack Salava, Patty Hageman
IT – Gail Painter

Meeting was called to order at 10:00 a.m.

Minutes:

The minutes of the August 20, 2014 meeting were approved by the SAC in previous e-mail correspondence.

1. Coordination of Special Emphasis Program Responsibilities among USDA Agencies

   Agency representatives discussed their present resources for handling Special Emphasis Program activities and the roles of the Special Emphasis Program Managers. The three agencies differ in the amount of involvement placed in SEP activities. Limited staffing has made it difficult to conduct SEP activities.

   RD recommended a small work group be established to further review how SEP activities could be coordinated. Loren volunteered NRCS to chair the group (either himself or Dan Meyerhoff). NRCS currently has several SEMs chairs for various initiatives (federal women, Asian/pacific, etc.) Work group discussions maybe could be handled via conference call. Loren asked for names from each agency so he could try to coordinate a call to review/discuss options on how to combine resources to handle SEP services/tasks among agencies.

2. Completion of ART Reviews – Follow up for Corrective Actions

   The FY2014 completed ART reviews of Kansas facilities were submitted to the Office of Civil Rights and DAFO on October 31, 2014. Reviewers from FSA and NRCS completed the reviews during FY 2014. Facilities are inspected on a 3-year rotation; however, additional inspections are also completed following completion of new lease items/projects. A memo has been received from the Office of Civil Rights advising that
building corrections need to be made for those deficient items identified in the
inspections. A response is to be made within 90 days of the letter from Office of Civil
Rights. Patty Hageman reported she will be going through the findings, providing
landlords with copy of AD-2056 and requesting corrections be made.

3. **Schedule for ART Reviews in FY 2015**

A new list will be prepared for those offices that will need to be reviewed in FY 2015.
Patty will be working on and provide list to SAC. Approved FY2015 list will then be
assigned to ART reviewers.

New reviewers may need to be trained. Both NRCS and FSA have had some changes in
personnel and will need to get some replacements. Training consists of working with
experienced trainers several times. SAC may look into getting more formal training.

4. **Status of Center of Excellence for Leasing Project – Extensions / Long Term Lease
Solicitations**

Patty Hageman is serving as a Regional Co-Leader (for Iowa, Kansas, Missouri and
Nebraska) on the USDA Secretary’s Center for Excellence on Leasing Project. She
reports that the USDA agencies are still concentrating on Phase I of the project which is
to get USDA leases out of hold-over status and place under lease extensions. While
much progress has been made in this phase, there are still a few landlords who have
resisted the extensions as they are desiring rent increases and/or new long term leases.
Some have not had a rent increase for extended period.

Phase II of the project will involve the use of the recently awarded national broker
contract. The Governance Board is working on rebalancing the workload for RPLOs and
the broker contract is one of the tools that they have established to assist in this effort.
Broker packets were due by November 14, 2014. In Kansas, 9 locations were identified
by SAC to be handled by the broker. These locations include Burlington (Coffey
County), Kingman (Kingman County), Great Bend (Barton County), Oberlin (Decatur
County), WaKeeney (Trego County), Topeka (Shawnee County), Clay Center (Clay
County), Lincoln (Lincoln County) and St. Francis (Cheyenne County).

These 9 locations were submitted to obtain a long-term lease through the full and open
solicitation lease process. While a broker contractor will be negotiating long term leases
under the open solicitation process, the RPLO will still be the lease contracting officer
who will sign/award the leases. Agencies will still be involved in establishing the fair
and reasonable competitive range, will still approve an acceptable lease rate and still
approve acceptable office space. Though the process is being sent through a broker
contractor, there is still a lot of work and responsibility that will remain with the RPLO.
5. **Space Justifications for Service Centers**

USDA space guidelines for “new space” place tighter restrictions on space availability to employees. While the Agencies have been working under the previous USDA space regulations that allow 150 sq ft per employee plus additional square feet for shared areas, the new USDA space regulations for “new space” effectively lowers the sq ft allowed per employee as there is no allowance for additional square footage for shared areas. Space in shared areas has to be absorbed from the 150 sq ft allotted for each employee. For proposed “new leases”, Kansas RPLO has requested waivers to continue using the 150 sq ft per employee by including justifications/explanations of high customer traffic requiring space at desks to work with clients and the lack of telework as an option to most employees. FSA-MSD has approved the requests for waiver and are allowing the use of the 150 sq ft per employee plus continue the authorization of 150 sq ft to FSA to use as GIS space and additional space for shared areas. Note, the new USDA space guidelines do not apply to “succeeding leases” where USDA remains in existing space.

6. **Smoke Detector Distribution to USDA Service Centers**

FSA has purchased smoke detectors as a safety precaution for all the USDA Service Centers. In the future, this will be added as a requirement for the lease holder to provide and maintain. The Office of Homeland Security & Emergency Coordination Physical Security Division recently conducted a risk analysis of Kansas USDA Service Centers based on the recently completed FY2014 Physical Security Self-Assessments. The assessments revealed the lack of smoke detectors as a common finding in several USDA facilities in Kansas. Funding was available from FSA to provide the smoke detectors for the initial installation. Instructions will be provided to the USDA Service Center to locate smoke detectors in the common areas such as break room, storage area(s) and if extra, place in hallways. Some additional units will be temporarily maintained at the Kansas FSA State Office until all offices have adequate coverage. Offices are being advised to put the units up if they feel comfortable in handling the task. If not, the building owner should be contacted for assistance.

7. **LincPass Stations – Riley/Geary and Iola**

The Enrollment Station that was located at the Riley/Geary FSA Office in Manhattan, KS has been moved to the Agricultural Research Service Building located at 1515 College Avenue, Manhattan, KS. The move took place on November 17, 2014. Staff have been trained to be registrars and the system is up and running. Many thank to Tom Shanover and staff from the USDA-ARS Center for Grain and Animal Health Research for taking on this responsibility.

Rural Development has announced that their agency will no longer be able to operate the Light Activation Site for LincPass in Iola once some changes are made to personnel and
the building space at that facility. Some options are being explored by other agencies to take on the responsibility of handling the Light Activation Site and still maintain a presence in the SE area of the state. FSA will check with the DD for the area and get back to Rural Development if a viable option is found.

8. Building Issues: Burlington

The landlord has not been providing janitorial supplies for this location which has prompted an emergency purchase. Furthermore, maintenance of the building has not been kept up as required. Cure notices will be issued and the cost of repairs, maintenance, etc. will be deducted from rent payments if not handled by the landlord.

Concern has been raised that the landlord will not have snow removal handled in a timely manner. The RPLO will check with the landlord to see if preparations have been made.

9. Lease Updates

a. Altamont - Labette
   Renovations are underway with expectations the landlord will have completed by end of December. Carol Adams is working with staff on a furniture layout. Space will be turned back to the landlord at this facility.

b. Iola – Allen
   The RPLO is still waiting on the landlord to submit a lease proposal for succeeding lease based on previously approved SAC building plan which included turning back space to lessor.

c. Winfield – Cowley
   Lessor has requested lease extension due to failing health. FSA and NRCS approve the requested lease extension pending received of approved GSA lease delegation authority.

d. Girard – Crawford
   The IT room is completed. Plans are to have the rest of the facility completed by the end of December. NRCS will have carpet replaced first and then FSA. FSA’s date for carpet removal is December 19-20.

e. Lyndon – Osage
   All interior work is complete. Still a few follow-up items to complete, including installation of a couple keyless entry systems for USDA exterior doors (i.e. entrance where employees enter the building from parking area and where shared facilities with non-government entities exist). Also, concrete work needs to be
completed for a curb-cut to allow closer handicap access for USDA customers. Though the landlord has met accessibility requirements for the public USDA entrance, he has agreed to pour a wider cement pad at the entrance to allow more ready access to individuals who may be in a wheelchair. As weather permits, concrete work will be accomplished to complete these corrections.

f. Fredonia – Wilson
   All is complete.

g. Manhattan – Riley/Geary
   The process for closing the Rural Development office in Manhattan is moving forward. The decision could come as soon as December.

10. EVOIP Phone Systems

   Gail Painter from ITS updated SAC on installation plans for new phone systems. These new EVOIP systems will be installed at the following locations sometime after January 1, 2015.

   Garden City, Hays, South Hutchinson, Wichita, Manhattan FSA State Office, Iola, and Topeka Rural Development State Office will be receiving new systems. Lyons/Rice County was scheduled to be done in 2015 but was moved up and completed in the last year.

   There are still 57 NIC systems being used. The EFI systems are going off warranty but don’t know how they will be replaced at this time.

11. Lexmark Systems

   New Lexmark color multi-functional machines are being delivered to USDA Service Centers; however, most are coming in pieces and not all pieces are being received at the same time. FSA Offices are to advise the IT Specialist when a piece does come in to an office. Approximately 20% of items have been received to date.

   Black and white copier/printers have not yet been shipped.

12. SAC Chairperson

   The SAC Chairperson designation will follow the same designation as the State FAC. For 2015 Calendar Year, the Chairperson will be Karissa Stiers with Rural Development.
13. Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Kansas SAC will be at 10 a.m. via conference call on January 27, 2015. Rural Development will make announcement of the arrangements for the call.