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**RURAL DEVELOPMENT COUNCILS:**

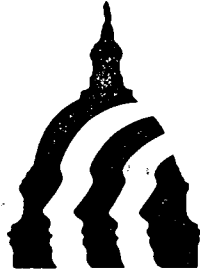
**PRELIMINARY  
FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS**

**Volume 2  
CASE STUDIES**

**Beryl A. Radin,  
Principal Investigator  
Professor of Public Administration  
Washington Public Affairs Center  
University of Southern California**

**October 1991**

**A report to the State Rural Policy Program of the Aspen Institute**



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## INTRODUCTION

This second volume of the Rural Development Councils: Preliminary Findings and Conclusions contains the eight state case studies that have been developed to track the development of the federal-state initiative. Case studies were written by members of the Case Study Team following a common outline. The team members met together during the summer of 1991 to compare findings and to identify areas of further inquiry. These case studies represent a baseline analysis of the process; it is much too early to provide an assessment of the outcomes of this initiative.

Descriptions of relevant background issues and the Council process in Kansas, Maine, Mississippi, Oregon, South Carolina, South Dakota, Texas and Washington are included.

Each case study includes the following elements:

1. Nature of the rural sector
2. Governmental structure
3. Past relationships and efforts
4. Membership on the Council
5. Council staff
6. Meetings
7. The Council's substantive agenda
8. Participation in institutes
9. Future plans

**KANSAS RURAL DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL**

Barbara S. Romzek  
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September 1991

## I. NATURE OF THE RURAL SECTOR

The state of Kansas is predominantly rural in character. The state has three major highly urbanized population centers; they are Kansas City, Topeka (the state capitol), and Wichita. The rest of the state is predominantly small towns. The state overall has experienced a decline in population; it will lose a seat in the national House of Representatives based upon the 1990 census. The rural areas have experienced more decline than the urban areas.

### Demographics

The state of Kansas has a total population of 2,475,258.<sup>1</sup> This figure represents 1.00 % of the total U.S. population. Its population of urban places, defined as having 10,000 or more residents, is 2,158,591. The population of small urban places (with a population between 10,000 and 50,000) is 853,766; which is 34.5% of the state's population. The rural population is 316,667. This represents 12.8 of the state's population. The state's farming population is 173,000, which represents 7.3% of the state's population.<sup>2</sup>

Using U.S. Bureau of the Census standards, Kansas has only nine metropolitan counties (an area with a central city of at least 50,000 and towns and cities economically tied to it). This group of counties has over 53 percent of the entire state population.<sup>3</sup> It has 35 counties with a total population of 10,000 or more that are non-metropolitan. These mid-sized counties have 34 percent of the state's population, 853,776 people. The remaining 61 Kansas counties with a total population less than 10,000.<sup>4</sup> Slightly over 58 percent of the state's population is employed in the farming sector. The state has 69,000 farms, covering 48 million farm acres.<sup>5</sup>

### Nature of Rural

Kansas has two distinct economies, metropolitan and non-metropolitan. Historically almost all of the growth in Kansas has been in the metropolitan areas. Little had been done in Kansas to address development issues in communities with less than 10,000 population.

In its deliberations, the Kansas Rural Development Council (KRDC) recognized that it would not be possible to reach a consensus on the definition of a rural community, so they bypassed the issue. For purposes of KRDC activities, all of Kansas is defined as rural. Yet members readily admit that they are focusing their

energies on the non-metropolitan communities. For example, some of their efforts have been focused on Hutchison, KS, which is considered rural even though it has approximately 50,000 in population. It is surrounded by counties of low population density.

When people in Kansas talk about a rural culture they are referring to communities that have people who are fiercely independent and who do not like anyone else telling them what to do. Rural residents typically value hard work, family, and control over their own destiny. Residents enjoy a sense of community and they tend to have an intense loyalty to place and a great deal of pride. Examples often mentioned were the voluntary clean-up efforts that took place after a recent tornado hit a rural community. Members of KRDC characterized these rural communities as lacking in a cross-fertilization of people and ideas. There is out-migration but no in-migration.

There is a misconception that rural communities are agricultural. While rural communities may have strong roots in agriculture as the foundation of their local economies, and they may afford a pastoral lifestyle, they are not necessarily heavily dependent upon agriculture. For example, Montgomery County, KS is considered very rural, yet its dominant industry is manufacturing.<sup>6</sup> Thirty percent of Montgomery County's employment is in manufacturing, a percentage which is comparable to Wichita's economy. In smaller counties (under 10,000) 30 percent of the employment is government employment; the norm in the state is 18.5 percent government employment.<sup>7</sup> Rural communities may have limited access to some services, such as health care.

Regarding development, residents of rural communities tend to be parochial in their thinking and have very high expectations for themselves, government services, and their potential for growth. They expect clean air and a safe environment. They tend to adopt a defensive posture vis-a-vis any indicators of decline.

## **II. GOVERNMENTAL STRUCTURE**

### Governor-Legislature

The state of Kansas has a bicameral legislature and a Governor who is elected for a four-year term. There are 40 Senators and 125 Representatives, for a total legislative body of 165. The legislators are part-time representatives. The legislature meets for approximately 100 days annually, running from mid January to late April or early May. Legislators are paid a salary and per diem for each day the body is in session.



Kansas is a predominantly Republican state but the policy distinctions between Republican and Democrat partisans are not great. The Republican party has traditionally controlled both the Senate and the House, yet the Governor's Office is often filled by moderate-to-conservative Democrats. The recent history of Kansas is one of moderate Republican/conservative Democrat coalition government. The state makes progress slowly, but there are no deep-seated partisan schisms that undermine good working relationships.

Kansas governors are often drawn from the legislature and tend to come from rural backgrounds. For example, the two most recent past governors, Carlin and Hayden, both held leadership positions (former Speakers of the House) in the legislature before being elected Governor. Carlin is ostensibly a farmer. Hayden had an insurance business in a rural town.

A rural/urban split is a defining characteristic of Kansas politics. State political issues are increasingly played out in the urban areas, especially the governor's races. Governors can not win office without urban votes. Party affiliation is not as good a predictor of political success or acceptance as whether one is an "insider." The current Governor served as State Treasurer for 16 years before running for Governor. She began her political career as a Republican but switched parties several years ago when she saw her career prospects blocked in the Republican party. Finney was elected due to an anti-incumbent reaction among the voters of Kansas. Even though she served in statewide office for so long, Finney is an outsider in the politics of both parties, Republican and Democrat. For example, Democratic Governor Joan Finney's strongest allies are conservative Republicans; they agree on a low tax, no spend policy agenda.

While Kansas is a predominantly rural state, it is becoming increasingly urbanized. The most urbanized county, Johnson County in northeastern Kansas is considered a Republican stronghold but it has been a partisan toss-up in the past two governor's races. Kansas urban counties can be as antagonistic toward Republicans as Democrats.

Under normal circumstances, the governor acts as the agenda leader in the state and works with the legislature to try and get that agenda enacted into law. Finney took a different approach. She announced her main agenda items and then left it to the legislature to consider them. She basically took a "hands off" approach. Her proposals for initiative and referenda and property tax relief saw no action in the legislature. As a result, the state has had a deadlock between its legislative and executive leadership.

Most of Finney's impact on government thus far has been negative. The newly elected governor does not share the agendas of most legislators, nor of most of the

influential interests in the state. She successfully vetoed a bipartisan tax package that was hammered out in the legislature to deal with the state's fiscal problems. The House was unable to override her veto; it was 4 or 5 votes short of those needed. The Senate did not even try. The near-term prospects are for more governance deadlock.

#### Governor to Agencies

Six months into the term of her new administration, Governor Finney is still working out her relationships with the state agencies. She has had a great deal of trouble finding candidates to fill cabinet positions.

Generally, state agencies in find themselves in a state of limbo. They have faced budget and staff cuts and a lack of executive leadership. This includes the economic development programs which are housed in the Kansas Department of Commerce.

The reporting relationships between the governor and the state agencies are relatively straightforward in Kansas. An organization chart is included in the appendix. A somewhat different arrangement characterized the Department of Agriculture. The Dept. of Agriculture in Kansas is run by the Secretary of Agriculture. The Secretary is appointed by the Board of Agriculture, which is a 12 member elected body. The Secretary of Agriculture is not a member of the Board of Agriculture. The Secretary of Agriculture is considered part of the governor's cabinet if the governor chooses. It has been an off-and-on again situation with Governor Finney. At present, the Secretary of Agriculture is considered part of the Cabinet.

#### Legislature: Leadership patterns, role of rural legislators

Location is a key factor in the legislative leadership races. The rural/urban splits are important; so too is an east-west balance. The bodies try for balance in electing leaders. For example, if the President of the Senate is from a rural area, then they try to draw upon an urban area for the next lower level of leadership. The Senate President, Bud Burke, is from the most urbanized area in the state, Johnson County. The current Senate majority leader is from the western part of the state (Fred Curr, Pratt), which is rural.

The rural/urban split manifests itself in political struggles over state policy regarding agriculture, the state's educational funding formula for grades K-12, state funding for highways, and the state revenue for the mineral severance tax (which represents a redistribution from the state's rural areas to the state's general fund coffers), the state income tax (which disproportionately impacts the urban areas), and the state's water plan.

The role of rural leadership in the Kansas legislature will change because of redistricting. In last redistricting in the House of Representatives, (1989) urban areas picked up a number of seats (four each in Johnson County and Wichita). The Senate will be reapportioned in 1992. The pattern is a common one: the rural areas are losing substantial population and hence losing seats. The urbanized areas, especially Johnson County (Kansas City vicinity) and Sedgwick County (Wichita) are gaining representation. After redistricting in the Senate, there may be 6 or 7 senators who represent (geographically) half of the state.

### Senate

The urban/rural split also plays itself out within parties. Johnson County Republicans are viewed with a bit of suspicion by western Republicans. There is a long tradition of western Kansas Republicans who favor low spending and are generally very skeptical of government. This very different from Johnson County Republicans, who more or less recognize the complexity of contemporary life and believe in government's role in it.

The minority party (Democrat) in the Senate doesn't have to worry about balance as much because they haven't had control of the body in quite a while. They just try to pick the best people for the leadership roles.

### House

Rural interests tend to dominate the House leadership and most committee chairs are from rural districts. Four of the last five Kansas House Speakers have been from rural areas. The most recent one, Miller, has just retired; he was appointed by Governor Finney to the State Parole Board for a three-year term.

The Kansas House was reapportioned in 1989. In 1990 the Democrats became the majority party in the House. Kansas Democrats tend to be from urban areas, although there are some rural Democrats. A high percentage of the Democratic leadership is from urban areas. As a result, some long time urban Democrats became committee chairs.

The Kansas House is now controlled by Democrats for the first time in ages. There, they have tried to balance leadership positions. Speaker Barkis is from Paola; this is a rural area even though it is located in mostly urban Johnson County. The House Majority Leader, Whiteman, was from Wichita. He is now moving into the governor's cabinet. His successor as House Majority Leader is from an urban area.

The next echelon of political leadership in the state includes a number of women who have finally worked their way up the political pipeline in both parties. Observers judge them to be more talented than their male counterparts. And, since

many of them have husbands who support them financially, many of them have the time to be full-time legislators. As a result, observers see a trend toward more emphasis on rural health care issues than economic development issues.

### State-Local Relationships

Local governments get their operating authority from the state constitution. Local governments are continually lobbying the legislature. As a general rule, local governments want the state to stay out of local government issues. They argue that decisions are best made at the local level. While local governments get a great deal of money from the state, through the local ad valorem property tax reduction fund, grants, and the like, these revenues have been shrinking of late.

The general relationship between state and local governments can be characterized as somewhat adversarial. For example, several counties recently filed suit against the state's criteria for counting residency in the state's census. (The counties lost.) Several school districts are currently suing the state over its funding for K-12 education. One sign of how local governments are viewed by the state is seen in the requirement that local governments register as lobbyists in Topeka. They are subject to the same rules as private sector lobbyists.

Kansas has not had an intergovernmental body since the 1970s. There has not been any formal structure for the past 15 years. The Kansas League of Municipalities tried to do something about it three years ago, in the summer of 1988. They tried to recreate the Intergovernmental Relations Advisory Body. The initiative died because the then governor, Hayden, wouldn't even send a representative. The legislature said they would not participate if the governor was not interested. The Kansas League of Municipalities tried again in 1991 but were unsuccessful again. The legislature has been indifferent to it; they were not even willing to fund a study of intergovernmental relations.

There is not much interaction between local governments and state agencies. The general pattern is haphazard; relationships vary between different local governments and the state. Some local governments have good relationships with individuals and agencies; others do not. For example, if the Kansas Dept. of Health and Environment is charged with responsibilities that overlap local governments, it may or may not try to coordinate its activities with the relevant local governments

### Role of Private Sector

Not surprisingly, agricultural interests carry a great deal of weight in the state economy, for example, the Kansas Farm Bureau and the Kansas Oil and Gas Association. Their impact was noticeable in the deliberations over the property

classification amendment, which exempted farm machinery from property taxes. Agricultural property is now appraised on use value as opposed to development potential.

Commercial property owners and utilities also play a large role in state policy-making. When proposals to modify the property classification amendment (for property tax purposes) are made, the private sector lobbyists become very active. As a result, no changes in the amendment have passed; current vested interests have been very successful in thwarting change.

### **III. PAST RELATIONSHIPS AND EFFORTS**

#### Federal-State

The pattern of existing relationships between federal and state agencies has been one of substantial overlap, especially as it relates to rural development. There has been very little communication or coordination among actors. One exception to this pattern seems to be the relationships between HUD and the Kansas Department of Commerce. The Director of the Community Development Division of the Kansas Department of Commerce reports a good working relationship with the U.S. Housing and Urban Development Department and her office.

In the area of rural development, there is still some nervousness between the federal and state actors in the arena. The Extension Service people have not been active in the state of Kansas' initiatives regarding economic development. They have not been deliberately excluded. It's just that Extension has been reluctant to introduce or promote initiatives in agriculture. The Extension service has been active in Kansas facilitating strategic planning and leadership development in rural communities.

#### Federal-Federal

Within the state of Kansas the pattern of relationships among federal agencies has been one of passive cooperation. Each agency had its own agendas and pursued them separately. There were no joint efforts. They have good current relations with each other.

#### Past Efforts on State Level

The state of Kansas hit a recession in 1981. The state's economy went deeper than most states and came out of it slower. In 1985 the Institute of Public Policy and Business Research at the University of Kansas developed recommendations for stimulating economic development in the state of Kansas; these proposals were presented to the state legislature in 1986. Past efforts at the state level have focused

more on metropolitan economies. Almost all growth in the state has historically been in the metropolitan issues.

The state of Kansas' strategy regarding economic development is a balanced approach to 1) new business start-ups, 2) competitiveness of existing industry, and 3) recruitment of business from outside. By 1990, 46 out of 50 recommendations had been acted upon by the state legislature, including 10 basic pieces of legislation and seven constitutional amendments which were specifically tied to economic development.<sup>8</sup>

Reforms were instituted in the areas of human capital, infrastructure, entrepreneurial environment, capital markets, technology, quality of life, and institutional capacity/responsiveness. Specific reforms included:

*Human capital:* increase emphasis on education, fund Small Business Development Center.

*Infrastructure:* repeal the internal improvements prohibitions in the state constitution.

*Entrepreneurial environment:* sales tax exemption of manufacturing machinery and equipment. Expanded property tax abatement opportunities. Eliminated property tax on inventories, developing an agricultural marketing program.

*Capital markets:* established Kansas Venture Capital Inc., a public/private program for firms that are unable to get conventional capital.

*Technology:* expand funding for product development. Established the Kansas Technology Enterprise Corp.

*Quality of life:* Expand the state's commitment to the arts.

*Institutional capacity/responsiveness:* established a joint House-Senate committee on Economic Development; reorganized the Dept. of Commerce; it is now responsible for all economic development.

The state of Kansas is now systematically evaluating whether these different strategies have had an impact.

In 1987 Governor Hayden constituted a Task Force on the Future of Rural Communities to respond to complaints that most of the economic development initiatives were oriented toward metropolitan areas. And Kansas, Inc. developed a Rural Development Action Plan.<sup>9</sup> The general thrust of the initiatives is to involve rural communities in their own economic development. The shift has been to give rural communities a sense that they are responsible for their own economic development rather than the state being solely responsible. Specific action items included:<sup>10</sup>

*Health:* the creation of the Office of Rural Health in the Kansas Department of Health and Environment and medical malpractice insurance reforms.

*Strategic planning:* creation of a strategic planning grant program for communities; program is administered by the Kansas Department of Commerce.

*General:* creation of the Rural Assistance Center in the Kansas Department of Commerce.

In addition the National Institute for Rural Development was established through a national initiative. It is known as The Huck-Boyd Institute at Kansas State University.

The most recent trend in the state is to do much more for rural development. The current emphasis is on networking.

#### **IV. MEMBERSHIP ON THE COUNCIL**

##### Member Selection

The criteria for inclusion in the Kansas Rural Development Council includes having an interest in rural development and program responsibilities that relate to rural communities. The USDA sent out letters of invitation to all federal agencies having anything to do with rural issues asking that they join the new initiative. Anyone who responded with interest was included. The state of Kansas followed the same process. The Kansas Secretary of Commerce sent out invitations to all affected agencies asking them to participate, including representatives of local governments and the private sector. Efforts were made to get some female representation.

##### Steering Committee

The federal co-chair convened a Steering Committee to get KRDC off the ground. The co-chair selected committee members based upon people he knew and trusted. The committee was drawn from three federal agencies (HUD, SBA and Extension) and the Kansas Department of Commerce. The state agency representative was also the state co-chair.

##### Executive Committee

The Executive Committee has eleven members, four of them are from federal agencies, four state agencies, and three at-large members who were voted upon by the whole Council. These three at-large members are all drawn from the private sector.

### Full Council

The KRDC has 49 members. The composition of the full Council is as follows. There are 21 federal members. Federal members are drawn from one national office (the federal monitor who is with the Small Business Administration), 12 regional offices, and 8 state offices of federal agencies. There are 15 state agency representatives. Two KRDC members are drawn from local government associations, and there are 11 private sector members. Of the group, there are two African-Americans and five women.

Procedures followed by the KRDC in meetings is a group process. Group processes are seen as very important because the Council's success depends upon membership commitment to its broader interorganizational mission and goals. The Executive Director is not a voting member.

The Executive Director staffs the Executive Committee and the full KRDC. The Executive Director is a federal employee who has been "detailed" to the project by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Soil Conservation Service.

### Chairs, Co-chairs and Other Officers

The by-laws of the KRDC specify that the Council will have co-chairs, one a federal agency representative and the other a state agency representative. The by-laws further stipulate that the Secretary of the Kansas Department of Commerce will be the state's co-chair. The State Director of the Farmers Home Administration in Kansas is the federal co-chair.

The rationale behind having co-chairs was to make sure that the KRDC enjoyed state and federal cooperation. The state director of the Farmers Home Administration was the federal individual charged with getting the Rural Development Council up and running. Because of this charge, he was not willing to let go of the initiative completely. Nonetheless, he wanted to increase the chance that state agencies would cooperate in the interorganizational process. So he proposed the co-chair arrangement.

In the opinion of the federal co-chair, it hasn't worked. In the opinion of the representative of the Kansas Department of Commerce who has filled-in for the state co-chair in her absence, it hasn't worked. No one has a better suggestion; they just agree that it has not worked well. It is difficult for the Executive Director to deal with two bosses.

The chairs' roles in Council have been to attend to issues of operation. They alternate in directing meetings; together they set agendas. In other matters the co-chairs merely serve as members of the group.



### Missing Agencies

At the time of these interviews, the Bureau of Reclamation of the Dept. of Interior had not been involved. They were reported to be joining soon. Nor has there been much participation from the Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service. There is a sense that they lack commitment to the overall mission of the Council.

The State Board of Education has not participated. The presumed reason for their lack of involvement is a sense that their individual agency agendas are more pressing.

The local government actors, the Kansas League of Municipalities and the Kansas Association of Counties, have assumed very low profiles in the process. They remain a bit skeptical about whether there will be much pay-off in the process for local governments. Many similar programs have come and gone over the years.

### Members' Reasons For Involvement

Most of the people involved in KRDC administer programs that relate to the development of rural communities. They participate in KRDC because they see it as an opportunity to make their processes work better, more efficiently. Both federal agencies and state agencies seem to want to make a difference, to succeed in enhancing rural development. KRDC members report they are willing to change their operations somewhat and cooperate with others in an issue area if it means that their own agency's performance and mission will be enhanced. There do not appear to be any historical animosities among members; they've just never cooperated before.

Everyone reports they anticipate tremendous returns on their investment in networking. They value the chance to get to know others working in same issue areas and the chance to learn what other agencies do. They anticipate being able to use this new knowledge of individuals and programs to facilitate cooperation when future issues arise.

### Objectives and Goals

Despite the fact that KRDC has adopted a mission statement, the Council is still working to develop a consensus on its mission and the goals of this endeavor. Most members recognize the goal of getting state and federal agencies to work together, to minimize the negative impact of conflicting rules and regulations by facilitating coordination and cooperation. In this regard, KRDC has served federal and state agencies well. It is unclear whether local government and private sector members see how they relate to this objective.

One key goal is to build an element of confidence and trust in intergovernmental cooperation. To do this, many agencies and individuals will need to reconfigure their

thinking about their responsibilities. They will have to shift their role emphases from those of enforcement to facilitation.

The Executive Director reported that his goal is to respond to the national mandate. His interim goals are to build trust and cooperation among the Council members. He is trying to develop a shared sense of mission among the KRDC.

Interdepartmental cooperation and networking among KRDC members is one shared goal. Members see this as an immeasurable accomplishment that is invaluable to future success of individual agencies and broader progress in rural development. Members see KRDC as affording opportunities to make everyone's program look better. If KRDC can demonstrate this, then it will have accomplished a great deal. Some members reported feeling some pressure to justify (to their agencies or supervisors) the great expense of time they have invested in KRDC to date.

KRDC members do not report as much measurable success as they would like. They have not yet reached agreement on how to define success. There does seem to be some consensus that KRDC cannot take over the legal responsibilities of member agencies, nor should it become a superagency that supersedes the tasks and functions of its members.

Some members have suggested KRDC should be judged successful if individual administrators and agencies are more effective at doing their jobs since they became part of KRDC. Others have suggested determining whether there is evidence of improved cooperation and intergovernmental relationships among agencies working together. Long term success will be possible if KRDC manages to create working relationships among the various federal, state, local, and private sector organizations in the state. Is there any commitment to the processes of coordination, communication, and combining of resources among agencies? Is there an improved awareness of what other organizations are doing so something significant can happen?

Others object that it is too early to judge the success of KRDC. They suggest that KRDC is still developing its action plans and cannot be expected to show much in the way of measurable success. They argue that one cannot measure change in number of jobs or growth in one year.

KRDC has succeeded in getting itself organized. It has adopted by-laws, a mission statement, and a decision flow chart. Subcommittees have submitted reports and action plans have been developed. KRDC has enjoyed one clearly visible success that furthered economic development. There was a local economic development issue where the Kansas SBA and the Kansas Power and Light were able to knock down barriers to a small manufacturer relocating into a rural area.

KRDC hopes to create a data base so people would know whom to call if they have problem or opportunity for rural development and don't know where to go next.

### State Goals

The state agencies want to know if they can get increased federal monies targeted for Kansas. They report some frustration about vague, implied promises about federal action in the future.

### Federal Goals

Federal actors are responding to a national mandate for rural development. Hence, one of their goals is to participate in the KRDC. They report a great deal of progress in networking. They find it especially useful to get to know what other federal agencies are doing. They also want to know how they can work in concert with what the states are doing.

## **V. COUNCIL STAFF: EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

### Process of Selection

Phone calls went out from the USDA to state offices in Kansas wondering which federal agencies have people who can do the job of Executive Director for such a Council. The current Executive Director was one of the individuals who was asked if he was interested. Interested individuals attended a meeting where there were approximately 60 other people. Candidates talked to Walt Hill and Bob Lovan. A few people were interviewed, Richard Cox was hired.

### Reasons for Choice

It was decided that the Executive Director should be someone who had some knowledge about starting up a cooperative relationship. In this instance, that included someone who had experience with federal and state liaison work. Such an Executive Director needs unique interpersonal skills. The individual needs to be positive, energetic and personable, and able to build networks among KRDC co-chairs, Executive Committee and members.

The KRDC Executive Director was hired for his ability to deal with people and his familiarity with the issues facing rural communities. The Executive Director has a B.A. in agronomy and a Masters degree in Theology. He has worked for 15 years for the USDA in the Soil Conservation Service. He has a strong background in rural and

urban development and in Kansas. At one point he served as area resource conservationist for 18 Kansas counties.

#### Location of Staff Office

The Executive Director is the sole staff of the KRDC. His office is located within the Kansas Department of Commerce. He receives limited secretarial support from the Kansas Department of Commerce staff. KDOC positions for rural assistance were cut recently within the agency when the governor cut its budget. Hence, secretarial assistance envisioned for the Executive Director when KDOC offered him office space has evaporated.

#### Executive Director's Responsibilities

The Executive Director perceives his job responsibility to be provision of staff support to KRDC and the Executive Committee. He defines his job as work with the Council to build commitment to the mission of the organization and trust among members. He tries not to favor either the state members nor the federal members. He sees himself as a facilitator whose charge is to develop a shared sense of vision among Council members.

#### Available Resources

Minimal resources are available to the KRDC Executive Director. USDA Soil Conservation Service pays his salary, travel and automobile expenses. Minimal secretarial support and supplies are provided by the Kansas Department of Commerce.

#### Relationship to Federal Monitor

The relationship between the Executive Director and the federal monitor for Kansas is reported to be very good. The federal monitor tries to take a broad view of his job. He defines his role as alerting KRDC to matters of importance that may arise in D.C. because it is a federal initiative. The monitor says he tries to avoid giving detailed directions from D.C. He wants to give the KRDC, its Executive Committee, and the Executive Director wide latitude to do whatever they need. The federal monitor feels he can do this because he thinks the Kansas group has its act together organizationally and politically. The monitor has confidence in the co-chairs and the executive director. He reports that the Executive Director asks the right questions. In turn, the Executive Director reports having a good relationship with the federal monitor.

## VI. MEETINGS

### Description of Meetings

The KRDC had its initial meeting on Nov. 8, 1990. The state director of the Kansas Office of the Farmers Home Administration (FmHA) called a four-member Steering Committee together (three members from were federal agencies and one from a state agency). The state director asked members whom he knew and had confidence in.

The state director of FmHA extended invitations to join the KRDC to all federal agencies that might be interested. Kansas Governor Finney delegated the state's responsibility to her Secretary of the Kansas Department of Commerce (KDOC). The secretary of KDOC issued invitations to state and private sector actors. The Steering Committee met twice, in December 1990 and February 1991, and had one conference call. The Steering Committee convened the KRDC and drafted the KRDC by-laws which they then took to the whole Council for adoption.

The by-laws were adopted by the KRDC after little discussion. The perceptions of the by-laws adoption process differ between state and federal Council members. According to some state members, the Council did not spend enough time discussing the by-laws to get state people to feel ownership in them. This perception has made it difficult for nonfederal Council members to buy into the process over the long haul. In contrast, some federal members of the Council lamented the fact that some people wanted to spend too much time on by-laws.

KRDC began its business early in 1991. To date four full Council meetings have been held. The first was the training institute held in San Diego; 27 KRDC members attended. Meetings were also held on February 6, May 1, and June 18-21, 1991. The June meeting was devoted to a three-day Strategic Planning Institute. Another full Council meeting is scheduled for August 13, 1991. The Executive Committee has met three times, on May 23, July 1, and on July 29, 1991.

### Meeting Agendas

Meeting agendas are determined by the co-chairs. They consult and give the agenda to the Executive Director.

### Decision Rules

The KRDC meetings emphasize group process heavily. When votes need to be taken on an issue, the KRDC uses Roberts Rules of Order. The Executive Director takes the time in meetings to bring members who were absent from previous meeting(s) up-to-date on previous discussion. He tries to have everyone talk as much

as they need to so that they can buy into the overall mission. Despite this emphasis on discussion, some Council members still are undecided about whether their participation was welcome or meaningful.

## VII. THE COUNCIL'S SUBSTANTIVE AGENDA

### Content of the Agenda

KRDC is working off the federal mandate. It has set up subcommittee structure to address: Needs Assessment, Resources Inventory, Outreach, and Demonstration Projects.

Beyond the committee reports, these are the issues that members noted in their interviews.

*Nature of the mission of KRDC.* Even though the Council adopted a mission statement, it is still working to clarify the Council's purpose. They wonder if the KRDC should have a life of its own beyond the synergy of its member agencies. They are working to clarify the authority of KRDC.

In particular, KRDC is wrestling with the question of whether it should pursue case work or seek to develop a broader vision of its mission. The federal co-chair wants to avoid casework. The federal monitor sees case work as useful in the development of a broader vision. He thinks that solutions developed in response to case work may suggest broader policy initiatives. These individuals are representative of the diversity of opinion within the Council on this matter. Some members see the KRDC as providing a new vision for Kansas and creating new ways rural Kansas can deal with rural development problems. Other members think KRDC should take a project-by-project approach.

Since most of the members of KRDC work in large organizations, they tend to think of solutions in organizational terms. Some sense a pressure to create a superagency. Members are trying to resist that tendency. Nonetheless, they wrestle with the question, If KRDC doesn't have a life of its own, then what is its purpose? What is KRDC's unique role separate from its member agencies?

Thus far the consensus answer is that the Council will channel its energies through the various member agencies. KRDC does not see its role as one of developing its own clientele; rather, the Council prefers to help member agencies develop relations with their own clientele. The KRDC is trying to structure itself in such a way to insure that it functions as a communication and coordination agency rather than as a policy group. If the Council adopts this mission, then it must decide how KRDC can rally the forces of the various agencies to make things happen.

*Visibility.* Related to the issue of whether the KRDC is a separate agency and its mission is that of KRDC's visibility. The Council has discussed whether it should promote itself. The answer has been that the KRDC should only promote itself through action. This question of visibility raises the related issue of demonstration projects. The Council is still working on how to identify demonstration projects. Caution has been expressed that KRDC avoid raising expectations.

*Accessibility.* The Council has discussed the issue of access to KRDC coordinating processes. They face the question of who has legitimacy to raise an issue before the KRDC? Can an individual company that is trying to relocate contact KRDC? Or will KRDC only accept requests from public sector entities? It is unclear whether the Council has resolved this question to date.

*Scope of the Council's mission.* There is a diversity of opinion about the scope of KRDC's mission regarding rural development. Is there a difference between rural development and economic development? Some see rural development as a broader concept than economic development, one which encompasses concerns for the infrastructure, education, quality of life and economic development of rural communities. Others see rural development as a subcategory of economic development.

*Changing old administrative ways.* The Council faces the task of reconfiguring the thinking of federal and state administrators away from the more conventional enforcement mentality to that of a facilitating posture vis-a-vis activities in rural communities.

*Definition of rural.* The KRDC decided that, for purposes of its deliberations, all of the state of Kansas is rural. Nonetheless, the President of Kansas, Inc. notes that there are vast differences in problems and prospects of metropolitan, midsize and small communities in the state of Kansas.

*Involvement of local governments.* Service delivery in rural communities is an important challenge. How can KRDC tap the energies of local communities in the interests of rural development? How can KRDC get intergovernmental cooperation when problems fall into multiple jurisdictions? Is it possible to consolidate services in rural areas even if vested interests cannot countenance political consolidation of counties? How can KRDC become more representative of local government interests?

*Data base.* The Council has decided it would be valuable to develop a data base on rural development opportunities to which others in state can have access. But if KRDC is not a freestanding agency then the question arises as to how to build and support such a database. Questions that need to be answered include: Who pays? Who manages? Who is responsible?