Meeting about forming an Innovation Group/Scrum housed within MDA or MDH

Orville Freeman Building

October 13, 2016; noon – 2 pm

Present:

Linda Prail, MDH
Sarah Leach, MDH
Val Gamble, MDA
Cecilia Coulter, MFMA
Jane Jewett, MISA
Tracie Zerwas - MDH
Kathy Zeman (phone), MFMA

Reason for the group:

* Figure out applicable statutes and licensing for new business models
* Go through everything related to the model
* “Time-boxed” so you don’t lose momentum
* Fluid enough to bring in the right people for the task at hand
* Similar in structure and function to the “enforcement forum” within MDH, although this would deal with business development rather than enforcement.
* Similar to the group within MDA that has begun meeting every other week to deal with complex licensing questions.
* Needs to include non-regulatory representatives; i.e. SFA, RTC, MFMA, MISA. Those groups can do some advocacy: help the entrepreneurs ask the right questions, connect regulatory and non-regulatory dots.
* If housed within a regulatory agency, this group won’t be able to deal with all of the business planning/insurance/finance/marketing questions – those are another sphere – but need to connect the spheres.
	+ Fluid group membership could help; bring in the right experts.

Recommendations:

* Answer two main questions:
	+ Why do you need this? (And, why NOW?)
	+ What is the greater good if this is approved?
* State very clearly:
	+ WHAT is the problem
	+ HOW will you solve it
	+ WHO will you solve it with
	+ WHO will you solve it for
* Present 5 tight arguments; 4 of them with numbers. Suggested talking points:
	+ Needed and necessary; this is a pressing problem
	+ Timeliness
	+ Improve the economy
	+ Help underserved populations
	+ Contribute to equity
	+ Regulatory reform >> connected to expanded business opportunities
	+ Public vs. private funding; provide rationale
	+ Answer the question: Why do some businesses need this and others navigate the system okay?
		- Tie to innovation; pushing the envelope = need more help
		- Tie to equity; level the playing field for small-scale food entrepreneurs

More things to consider or hash out re: design of the concept:

* Complexity of delegated authority involvement
	+ DON’T suggest elimination of delegated authority.
	+ Make them required to be part of the group.
	+ Leverage for that could be via involvement of MDH’s Environmental Health Continuous Improvement Board.
		- Local public health agencies are a strong voice within EHCIB
		- Formed 2 yrs ago and is still defining its role, but momentum is in the direction of working together on things like performance measures and evaluation

http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/eh/local/cib/

* Justification for both Delegated Authority and Agency involvement could be via referencing of the Voluntary National Retail Food Regulatory Program Standards:
	+ Standard #1 – Regulatory Foundation
	+ Standard #7 – Industry & Community Relations

<http://www.fda.gov/Food/GuidanceRegulation/RetailFoodProtection/ProgramStandards/ucm245409.htm>

Or the Public Health Accreditation Board Standards & Measures:
<http://www.phaboard.org/accreditation-process/public-health-department-standards-and-measures/>

* Focus on MDA first, rather than MDH.
	+ MDH has fewer license categories
	+ MDH perceives their biggest problem as people coming in without business plans.
	+ Also an agency problem; not enough funding for enough staff to do consulting with applicants.
* Funding
	+ Ask for 2 years
	+ Don’t ask to split it between agencies; have it all in one agency.
	+ Outside funding is permitted in agencies, but it’s difficult. It still has to be approved by the Legislature.
	+ Funding for a new position like a facilitator for the group could come from outside funding held by an organization; similar to Bush grant; place a person in the agency but have someone else pay them.
		- BUT, with this scenario, would still need dedicated time from agency staff.
	+ Ask for FTE’s – worth of time. That’s flexible; then you can have several people contributing time.
	+ Require a report or timeline with specific indicators. Helps with Legislators’ concerns re: accountability.
* Terminology/Model
	+ “Task Force” vs. “Advisory Committee” – look at some models of other state-level committees
	+ “Pilot Project” – these can actually last for a long time.
	+ Sub-group of Food Safety & Defense Task Force?
	<https://mn.foodprotectiontaskforce.com/>
	+ Look at Dairy Diagnostic Teams as a model. Kathy Zeman has an older report on that model. Currently called “Dairy Profitability and Enhancement Teams:”
	<http://www.mda.state.mn.us/grants/grants/diagnostics.aspx>
* Build in a feedback aspect that will benefit the agencies – smart process
	+ Surveying or interviewing of entrepreneurs to determine where & how information should be presented to them
	+ Collect information about effective messaging