Leadership Missouri
June 15, 2011

The Storm

- May 22, 2011, 5:41 pm
- EF-5 tornado through Joplin and Duquesne
- Wind speeds of up to 300 mph
- The deadliest and most destructive single tornado in the U.S. in more than 60 years
From west to east, \( \frac{3}{4} \) of a mile wide, through six miles of Joplin and Duquesne at EF-4/5. Total path through Joplin and Duquesne: 10 miles

Nearly 560 employers demolished or substantially damaged; additional 400+ impacted by loss of utilities, loss of customers and/or injured employees.

More than 5,000 job positions impacted.
Response: Immediate

- Immediate (6:53 pm that night) posting on JACC facebook page. First info on where to seek help.

- First day, contact with SBTDC, SBA for business support center.

- Created “have-needs” boards to track resources

- Initial GIS mapping of path, for members and DB for non-members. Indicated 430 businesses / medical offices (Final 489)

Response: Immediate

By Tuesday, Chamber staff out in the area finding business owners and managers. More than 400 contacted in person in first 2 ½ weeks.
Response: Immediate

- Lists, lists, lists.
- Contractors, available buildings, emergency resources, “Haves”
- Listening, feedback. What did business need?
- Lots of hand-holding
Response: Immediate

- Fourth day, rebuilt website focused only on disaster resources, plus updates on status of businesses.

- Tuesday, nine days after, called first leadership meeting for updates, next steps, what needed to be kept on “future” list.

- Three weeks after, all 1100 Chamber members and 200+ impacted non-members reached.

Response: Into Summer

Sixth Week: Business Recovery Expo
Response: Into Summer

Business Expo – Holiday Inn

- Resources for Businesses
  - Small Business Technology and Development Center
  - Internal Revenue Service
  - University of Missouri Extension
  - Workforce Investment Board
  - City of Joplin
  - US Chamber of Commerce
  - Missouri Insurance Commissioner
  - Utility providers
  - Missouri Department of Economic Development
  - State of Missouri Resource and Recovery Center

- Two months, opened Joplin Tomorrow, loan program for companies creating new jobs.

- Helped schools with space at Mall and shell building, so they could open on time, Aug 17.

- Began campaign to “Shop Joplin”. And additional campaign to drive firms to Biz Recovery Center
Response: Into Summer
Helped Businesses reopened as quickly as possible in new or temporary locations. And celebrated!

Response: Sales Tax Campaign
- Quarter Center Parks & Stormwater Sales Tax
- 10 Yr. renewal; on ballot for August 2
- Too late to remove from ballot
- Implemented continuing committee; raised approx $20,000
- Measure passed with 82% YES!
Response: Into Fall

- Market Street “reset” study and recommendations; including need for ongoing business counseling support

- Leveraged Chamber resources to help SBTDC obtain additional two-year, $600,000 SBA funding

- Funding provides additional staff housed at Innovation Center

Response: CART

- Rolled original community leadership group formed post-tornado into CART.

- Instrumental role on CART. CART plan approved by City of Joplin, Village of Duquesne, Joplin Schools, JACC Board in historic joint meeting mid-January.

- CART plan led to new code/zoning overlays in impacted area approved by Council in March.

- Supported Master developer concept that is now moving forward.
Response: Career Pathways

- Worked with Joplin R-8 on evaluating and focusing Career Pathway learning and facility needs
- Added National Career Readiness Certification, embraced by School
- Need to expand High School and Tech School, combined into single larger facility to accommodate Career Pathway learning
- Part of $62-million bond request in April

Response: Support the Bond

- Numerous meetings for Chamber members and teams
- Op-ed in Globe; promotion in newsletter
- Issue passed with 58% YES!
Recommendations from the JACC Experience

- Have a disaster plan.
  - JACC; US Chamber of Commerce, ACCE

- Communication with team members, key vendors and membership
  - Minimal utilities; downed telephone lines; destroyed cell towers
  - Texts will still go through; key numbers in cell phone
  - Internet access will get to social media

Recommendations from the JACC Experiences

- Keep data backed-up, SECURE, available
  - Membership information, backed up and off-site.
    - Cloud-based with hard copy available
    - Addresses; potential to geo-map
    - Added cell phone numbers

- All computer data, including supplier contacts, contracts, monthly financials backed-up in real time and off-site
  - Tape backups may fail or be corrupted at any time.
  - Back-ups kept in office, car, house may be destroyed
  - Attorney, CPA offices may be gone
Recommendations from JACC Experience

- Business will have immediate resource needs
  - Lists:
    - General contractors, home contractors (associations?)
    - Heavy equipment, generators, disposal bins
    - Have-Need coordination
    - Available buildings / spaces
    - Office equipment, supplies
  
    - Financial support:
      - List of banks with phone numbers (their contacts gone)
      - SBA, will co-locate with FEMA; open full business recovery center only in major disasters
      - Small Business & Technology Development Center, counseling for financials, business and marketing plan

- Get outside help to staff office
  - Neighboring chambers, key volunteers, other associations, family, friends
  - Use to answer phones, address walk-ins, update lists, distribute information to staff

- Have laptop, tablet units, enabled for wireless, including cell phone connectivity
  - Wireless capacity in building

- Redundant internet service, if possible
  - Cable lost; had ATT T-1 backup
  - IF not at office, where can you connect
Recommendations from JACC Experience

- Have Facebook, other social media, page already established; update continuously

- Get out in area; communication is uncertain, face to face is better.

- Reach out to all businesses, not just members. Businesses outside the disaster area may also have been impacted, negatively or positively

- Keep close communication with City, county, schools, and Fed agencies if engaged
  - Media and public will call all to get the story; consistency of information is critical
  - Have a designated spokesperson

- Disaster is not the time to form partnerships
  - Work together on community development / betterment initiatives on an ongoing basis
  - Have clearly defined roles in normal times; makes it easier to focus in disaster
Recommendations from JACC Experience

- Form a Foundation
  - Useful for funding support for Chamber
  - In place to receive donations in a disaster

- Be prepared to be busier than you ever dreamed possible
  - Members and community will look to Chamber to be credible source of information, response
  - Make best decisions you can; little time to reflect
  - Be KIND, to yourself, your team, your family
  - Flexibility and Forgiveness

Rejoicing and Success

- 85% of employers destroyed or significantly damaged open today (more than 470)

- 95% of impacted job positions in place; many held permanently through storm

- More than two dozen new employers in city

- JT Fund has done several projects; adding more than 20 new jobs

- Now opening Business Stabilization Fund
Rejoicing and Success:
And more than 200 children gave their impressions of the storm and recovery in a mural dedicated on a sunny Sunday in September, four months after the tornado. A project of the Chamber’s Cultural Affairs Committee