



Northeastern Nevada Regional Development Authority
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Future of Wells Workshop

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With over fifty Wells resident's attending the future of Wells workshop presented by Northeastern Nevada Regional Development Authority, NNRDA (formerly Elko County Economic Diversification Authority, ECEDA), the original meeting room at Wells Fire Hall became too small. So the fire engine and the ambulance vehicles were moved outside and the crowd picked themselves, chairs and tables and moved into the roomier garage bay.

Founders Juliet Fox and David Beurle put on the FutureiQ workshop and their stated mission is to help people build more adaptable, successful and future-thinking communities and regions. The scheduled three-hour workshop started with a futures game that had a map of a rural area in Australia with three shires or counties. The three shires each had one town the smallest with 400 people, next 720 people and the largest with a population of 3100. The game scenario starts in 2008 and ends in the future 2030. The audience was divided into nine groups of six people that made decisions affecting the region's future. Decisions were made at three intervals and on three issues of economics, environment and social. The game ends with six different results illustrating the affects of the decisions; some reflect good growth in the three communities and the region while other results ended with weaker communities. The game was developed using actual data from real communities.

Playing this game introduced the audience to a better understanding of the second part of the workshop that used graphs and group discussions, to reinforce the value of future planning. Fox and Beurle stressed the importance that a rural community with on strong industry needs to be proactive in planning to ensure that it will remain viable in the future. They believe that "scenario planning" allows people to think "outside the box" by the exploration of many factors or drivers of the future and is better than traditional "strategic planning" which is a more rigid plan. The workshop was designed to help engage community groups in discussions about the importance of local and regional decisions in shaping their future.