



Meeting Minutes – Workforce Working Group

Date: February 14, 2017

Time: 11 AM – 12:30 PM

Location: Prior Lake City Hall – Parkview Conference

Work Group Members:

Michelle Choudek (Chair)	X	Lee Foley		Nick Slavik	X
Darren Kermes (Chair)	X	Brenda Lieske	X	Patricia Timmons	X
Mike Beard		Kathryn Reeder	X	Tim Wynes	X
Heather Fitzloff	X	Annie Sheehan-Kerber			

Staff Members:

Stacy Crakes	X	Mark Jacobs	X	Jean Sinell	X
Barb Dahl	X	Tim O’Neill	X	Jo Foust	X

Guests:

Melanie Smieja		Kathy Nielsen	X		

The following agenda items were discussed:

- School updates were provided.
 - **MNCAPS** - Crakes provided an update on a meeting with MNCAPS regarding a project students will work on, for the Workforce Group, to study why youth aged 16-24 years have a higher than average unemployment rate locally. Youth will conduct focus group sessions as a part of the project.
 - **Prior Lake Savage High School** –Crakes provided an update on a tour of the Prior Lake Savage High School and its IT spaces and Fab Lab. Potential for partnerships with the school and community to provide post-secondary education opportunities was noted. Space includes areas for welding, small engine repair, etc. MNSCU may be able to assist with programming. The school is looking at expanding programming as well.

Scott County is a place where people are stable, connected, educated, and contributing

- **Shakopee High School** –Dahl reported on the four academies at Shakopee High School and their partnerships with local employers. The school is receiving some funding through Ford Next Generation Learning. Educators and students are going out of the classroom and into the business environment.
 - **New Prague**-The school district is also planning to develop a program to tie students to local employers.
 - **Belle Plaine and Jordan** will be working together on a program to teach students to repair computers.
- **Employer Survey Feedback**

Crakes reported that Greater MSP was contacted regarding the use of their Business Retention and Expansion Survey. They have indicated SCALE and the Workforce Readiness Group may modify and use the form. Greater MSP is willing to input data gathered and provide a report with graphs.

The group reviewed the survey. Suggested changes include: adding the location of the business under “Company Information”, inquiring what percent of their workforce lives in Scott County, inquiring about their use of staffing agencies, asking about employee turn-over and factors leading to turnover, and including a transit related question. It was suggested the survey question related to sufficient housing for employees, be expanded to ask what type of housing is needed. It was also recommended the question relating to training be expanded to address the type of training and educated needed. Additional questions were suggested relating to how training is currently provided and if there are incentives for employees, such as tuition reimbursement. Under the Community Ratings section, it was suggested “Availability of Day Care” be included.

It was recommended a cover letter be provided explaining the purpose of the survey and that information obtained will be shared in aggregate with individual survey responses kept confidential. It was suggested businesses have the option to meet in person to complete the survey or fill it out electronically through an on-line survey.

It was suggested the group partner with local EDAs and possibly their Chamber of Commerce to gather the data. It was noted several organizations conduct business surveys. Coordination with Greater MSP, the MN Chamber of Commerce, etc. was recommended to avoid several agencies requesting the same data from businesses. Utilizing Greater MSP versus compiling results internally was also discussed.

A recent Belle Plaine Business Retention & Expansion Survey completed through the U of M Extension Office and a planned business survey in New Prague were discussed.

The next steps include updating the survey with proposed changes and distributing it to the Workforce Readiness Group, identifying major employers, and reaching out to the city administrators in the various communities to discuss the survey and who should be involved in conducting the survey.

- **Meeting on February 28, 2017**
 - **Details on Meeting.** A mini-retreat will be held on Tuesday, February 28, 2017 from 4:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. Each of the SCALE work groups; Housing, Workforce, Education and Transportation, will provide an update on their activities.

- **Data to highlight.** The group discussed data to report for the Workforce Group presentation. Each group is allotted 10 to 15 minutes. Tim O'Neil shared information from a presentation he did for FISH. The group agreed to highlight labor force trends including age trends in the labor force, unemployment rates for various age categories, educational requirements of jobs which are in demand and commuting data. A PowerPoint will be prepared highlighting the data the workforce group has gathered.

- **2017 Planning**

Information obtained from the other groups on February 28, 2017 meeting will be used to assist with 2017 Planning.

- **Next meeting:** The next Workforce Group meeting will be held on Tuesday, March 14, 2017 at 11 a.m. The employer survey and work plan will be discussed.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 12:30 p.m.