



**Meeting Minutes – Workforce Working Group**

Date: February 26, 2018

Time: 11 AM – 12:30 PM

Location: Savage City Hall, Marion Marietta Conference Room

**Work Group Members:**

Michelle Choudek	X	Tim O’Neill		Patricia Timmons	
Darren Kermes (Chair)		Kathy Nielsen	X	Jeff Vizenor	X
Mike Beard	X	Maja Numainville	X	Tim Wynes	
John Bezek	X	Jeff Pawlicki		Velvet Walker	X
Madelyn Hertaus		Kathryn Reeder		Cindy Walters	X
Donna LaBere	X	Vanessa Roman	X	Eric Weiss	X
Brenda Lieske		Erik Sill	X		
Kellie McElroy Hooper		Nick Slavik			

**Staff Members:**

Stacy Crakes	X	Mark Jacobs	X	Jo Foust	X
Barb Dahl	X	Jean Sinell			

**Guests:**

Annie Welch	X				

The meeting was called to order at 11:05 a.m. by Dahl.

Introductions were made.

**Agenda Item 1: PIPELINE Program Overview, Minnesota Department of Labor and Industry - Annie Welch.**

Dahl introduced Annie Welch, PIPELINE Program Manager with the MN Department of Labor and Industry. Ms. Welch explained the PIPELINE Program was originally launched in 2014. It is a legislative

initiative which shifts the focus from finding workers to giving workers the skills needed by employers. Pipeline Program Goals include: (1) Develop and enhance MN skilled labor, (2) Establish a dynamic in which employers lead the conversation and (3) Expand dual training and registered apprenticeship across MN.

Welch explained there are funding opportunities for employers through their Dual Funding Grant Program. The Department of Labor and Industry has grants for the four focus industries, including: Advanced Manufacturing, Agriculture, Health Care Service and Information Technology; with a focus on 22 occupations. Requirements for the occupations include: the occupations must be in demand, provide a family-sustaining wage and related instruction must result with an industry-recognized credential certificate or degree.

Dual training is an earn-as-you-learn approach where employers invest in employees by building a training infrastructure, developing career pathways and investing in the education of employees. Employers are required to develop competency standards, structured on-the-job training and related technical instruction.

Welch noted they have \$3.2 million in funds remaining. The Office of Higher Education administers the program and issues the Request for Proposals. Grants cover the cost of training including tuition, fees, books, and materials, with up to \$6,000 per student per year, and a maximum grant of \$150,000. Employers may apply if employees will be trained in an eligible occupation; have not yet attained the competency standards; and positions are located in Minnesota. Training on the Dual Funding Grant Program is available to employer applicants on March 6<sup>th</sup> from 1-4 p.m. at the Office of Higher Education.

It was noted the typical grants are to mid-size employers with 15 to 400 employees.

Welch also discussed Registered Apprenticeships. This program includes structured on-the job training, 144 hours of related instruction each year, safety training, a progressive wage schedule, and a state issued certification.

An overview of the Industry Council's role and responsibilities was provided along with the Dual Training Consulting Group.

Welch invite attendees to the Minnesota Apprenticeship Summit which will be held on March 7<sup>th</sup>.

## **Agenda Item 2: Employer Survey Update**

The Morris Leatherman Company has completed the phone survey with over 400 companies. Dahl provided a few highlights from the results, including:

- Of employers contacted, 75% agreed to an appointment to complete the survey. She noted this is considered relatively high as a Morris Leatherman noted 45-55% is common.
- Overall employers appear to be satisfied with the area.

- A majority of businesses indicated they do not have housing concerns. The 16% that did express concerns pointed to a need for affordable housing, rentals, and starter homes.
- Relating to transportation, most felt it the transportation system is working fine. Of those surveyed, employers reported 75% of their workforce is living in Scott County.
- While labor shortage was identified as an issue, it was not to the degree anticipated. Businesses did report losing candidates to other competitors, which affected their bottom line.

Dahl suggested a joint meeting in April with Housing and Transportation Working Groups for the presentation of the results of the survey. The group agreed.

### **Agenda Item 3: IZI Prep**

Nielsen provided an overview of Marnita's Table for community engagement sessions. She noted they have expertise in bringing together a diverse group of constituents, with 50% attendance by people of color.

The Intentional Social Interaction (IZI) is a three hour gathering of community members with a meal and discussion around identified topics. Education and Housing IZIs will be held in March. The Workforce Readiness Working Group will be the focus of the IZI on April 10<sup>th</sup> from 6-9 p.m. at Aspen Academy in Savage.

Nielsen requested committee input on the following:

- Sticky Stats - or sheets of paper with data or information we wish to communicate to those in attendance; and
- Mindstorm Questions - a list of seven or eight questions that we would like input on. Sixty to ninety minutes will be dedicated to group discussion, with each table responding to three to four of the questions. There will be a recorder at the table to summarize the data.

Dahl requested input on the information the Workforce Working Group wishes to share as well as what information we want to gain through the IZI.

The group discussed the target audience and noted while the focus has been on higher employment levels of those 16-24 years of age, it is difficult to get this age group to participate in events such as this. The Diversity across the county from smaller cities to those who reside and work in larger cities was discussed.

After discussion, the group felt the target audience should be (1) those that live and work in the county, to learn why they do so; (2) those living elsewhere and commuting into jobs to find out why they do not live in the county, and (3) those who are living here and commuting elsewhere to find out why they don't work here.

Data for Sticky Stats. Dahl and Crakes will develop statistics and messages that could be used for the Sticky Stats. They will provide this information to the group for input, prior to the IZI.

**Agenda Item 4: Other**

Eric Weiss reported the City of Shakopee has surveyed two large employers and their employees to gain a better understanding of where they live and why. He noted millennials have expressed an interest in living closer to the metropolitan area with other amenities, and are only being pushed out to suburbs for more affordability.

Weiss also shared information on the Shakopee Comprehensive Plan with their ten priorities and handouts focusing on housing opportunities, transportation, parks, trails and open space opportunities and economic vitality opportunities.

**Agenda Item 5: “Pieces of the Workforce Readiness Puzzle” – Bringing it all together:**

Dahl noted the Workforce Working Group has discussed various pieces of the puzzle to address Workforce Readiness including:

- IZI
- Employer Survey
- School Needs
- Post-Secondary Needs
- Monster.com quote – county jobs website
- Shakopee Comp Planning Information

At the next meeting, it was suggested these pieces be brought together to develop an action plan.

A proposed date will be shared soon for the next meeting to finalize IZI planning. This will be an optional meeting. Additionally dates for the Employer Survey review meeting with the housing and transportation groups will also be shared in the near future.

The meeting adjourned at 12:35 p.m.

***Workforce Readiness Vision Statement***

Elevate each person’s contribution to the community through a rich variety of local employment opportunities and career pathways.

