



Economic & Workforce Development
Meeting Minutes
October 5, 2017
8:30am – 10:00am

Attendees:

Betty Beth Johns (UCOM), Daniel VanderMolen (Goodwill), Jacob Maas (ACSET), Lisa Derr (GR Urban League), Michelle Bryk, Sara Proano (Hispanic Center), Cassandra Bell (DAKC), Marge Palmerlee (Degage), Jennifer Summers (Literacy Center of W MI), Trenessa Allen (GRHC), Allison Rudi (CSR), Sue Dobbs-Lyle (Goodwill), Debbie Nelson (Goodwill), Bob McKown (United Way), Cherie Elahl (NKC), Sandy Marroquin (Hispanic Center), Wende Randall (ENTF), Bree Butler (ENTF), Jamon Alexander (WMCAT), Juan Rosario (Kent County Friend of the Court), Jessica White-Hatinger (MI Works), John Gill (MI Works), Dale Dieleman (Comp Renew), Tracie Coffman (WKKF), DeDe Esque (IPS), Paul Doyle (IPS)

I. Welcome/Introduction & Question

- a. Your name, organization; What is the most recent celebration you took part in?

II. Vital Behaviors

It is important to focus on progressive improvement, not postponed perfection.

Vital behaviors include: preparation (Come prepared to give – receive info questions), curiosity (ask questions and for clarity, and invite questions to be asked), accountability (attend meetings, if you can't attend, notify and take time to check in), connectivity (Remember your WHY of this collective work), intentionality (assume positive and proactive intent), and commitment (Set a realistic self-investment of time, and be transparent in your commitment).

The group was then asked how these vital behaviors resonate with them. Some comments included the importance of intentionality being displayed by organizations. As a representative of an organization it's important to take back to that organization what has been shared and learned at the Eco & WFD meeting. As the year comes to a close, it provides a good opportunity for action teams to review year one of the three-year plan and go over the progress made. It is recommended that action teams review these vital behaviors amongst themselves.

III. 'State of the Sector' Discussion

The subcommittee discussed what are the big picture issues and what strategies can be used to solve policy issues.

There are some policies that greatly impact work. It was discussed how child care can have an enormous impact on success at work. There can be issues around funding and schedules involved with employment offered daycare. One suggested solution is education about community offered services rather than employment offered services. Promotion of workshops to certify individuals that could operate a childcare service from home to enable more private child care services opening.

Another policy area that impacts individuals and jobs is immigration status. When faced with deportation, families must prepare for separation of loved ones and loss of income, and crisis. Hispanic Center of Grand Rapids reports that regarding legislative actions, there has not been a lot of impact but very little advocacy on the part of anyone who needs representation with immigration struggles. Collaboration between individuals experiencing immigration issues and organizations is imperative because these individuals rarely have representation at meetings



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occurring around these issues. Comp Renew held a conference with an ACLU speaker and learned tactics to handle ICE. 211 gives out bi-lingual flyers detailing what to do in the instance of ICE coming do your door. Colleges have a unique situation also dealing with individuals who may be at risk because students are also caught up in immigration policy. Another issue may be that employers might have good intentions towards employees in these situations but are fearful about governmental policies. It is important to educate the communities that are at risk so they know how to handle ICE and daily life. As everyone in the subcommittee goes back to their organizations, take opportunities to discuss these issues and think of specific ways to handle these issues. This is imperative to help individuals gaining employment.

IV. Policy and Rapid Fire

DAKC is hosting a workshop about how non-profits can get involved around the millage issue. Michigan is the second highest state for receiving federal aid so, it was discussed that it is generally a good idea for everyone to keep an eye on the Federal budget.

The state has a "Green Book" which shows the number of people receiving assistance. It states that in Kent County about 7.8 million dollars is spent on assistance, this is money that impacts the economy and can be changed by the federal budget. A space will be provided on Trello to serve as a place to work around advocacy points and resources.

Comp Renew is currently going through major administration reconstruction. Comp Renew is also setting up a training program and area that will teach computer basics. A voucher will be given to those who complete the program to receive money off a laptop or desktop purchase.

GRCC has a new president and their current strategic plan ends this year. The new strategic plan under the new president involves every individual at GRCC and centers around action.

Michigan Works Service centers are now better able to serve the harder to reach individuals in the community and reach out to those who have a disability. They partnered with MRS and the second cohort started a couple weeks ago. Most students were able to qualify with MRS. This program is providing CNA training to those who may not succeed in the traditional training program. MI Works also partnered with the literacy center and offers basic services and offers services to the refugee community and has a newly hired refugee navigator. Once literacy is raised, individuals are then able to participate in career training through Michigan Works and GRCC.

Goodwill changed their policy so that those who work in the retail side of the store now also have access to the career resources offered through Goodwill. They are also currently expanding their CNA training services.

The Hispanic Center has a lot of useful programs that help the community. Because funds are limited, some programs have focus shifted from them. The youth department is suffering from a shortage of funds and grants to their programs focusing on students and parents of students. If anyone has any ideas or resources on helping the students specifically please contact the Hispanic Center.



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Action Team Updates

Please email Shavon or DeDe with your Action Team update and any of the following information that pertains to your group.

What have you accomplished as a team in the last month?

What do you plan to accomplish in the next month?

When do you anticipate coming to the large group for feedback, and in what format?

Is your team on track to meet your year one goal, and how can IPD and ENTf staff be of assistance?

V. Important Reminders

- a. Data Sharing Agreements – please hand into Wende. If you don't have it ready, still reach out to Wende.
- b. Shared Data Pull Process - mid to Late November to have data from data pull in.
- c. Steering Team Nomination Process/Forms – everyone received a nomination form in the meeting notice email, and you have until middle of November to submit. If you are nominating someone, please gain permission from them first.
- d. November/December Meetings – both meetings need to be rescheduled, please fill out the scheduling polls that went out via email!