



**DRAFT MINUTES  
REGION 3: RPI COLLABORATIVE**

**Wednesday, August 22, 2018**

- I. Call to Order AT 12:15PM
- II. Members Present, Determination of Quorum  
Jamie Huber, Chuck Hayes, Kym Johnson, Rina Bethany, Brenda Bachelder, Erich Podjaske, Mark Walling, Diane Love-Suvada, Patty O'Donnell, Steve Schnell, Sara McCauley, Tom Lennan, James Foltz, Molly Stepanski, Tricia Phelps
- III. Minutes of the Previous Meeting  
Motion Podjaske, second Bethany to approve minutes, motion carried
- IV. Financial Review
- V. Presentation/Discussion
  - A. Entrepreneurial support programs
    - i. Sawmill Rural Business Center – Diane Love-Suvada  
Diane Love-Suvada highlighted the programs of the Sawmill, formed to fill a large gap, expanding soon to Grayling; most important thing they do is education; assist with the RPI Entrepreneurial Network program; lunch and lounge is a social effort and shop local effort; offer beginning small farms class for entrepreneurs; 8-week program to bring a person with a business idea to launch in a short amount of time; partner with SBDC, Dave Emmel gets into a deep review of business plan analysis, Diane covers a broader range of education; most clients come mostly from word of mouth, light social media presence; website: <https://sawmillbusinesscenter.org>
    - ii. Small Business Development Center – Dave Emmel  
Cancelled; will be done at another meeting due to schedule conflict
- VI. Talent Update
  - A. Michigan Works! – schedule conflict, will be discussed next time
  - B. Brian Boyle, Issue Media  
Brian presented on the Issue Media Group and their efforts to attract talent to an area by pushing content; content oriented toward positive stories of innovation, quality of life, and the strengths of the community, content to build a relationship and better understanding of the region; program would cost money from the local region; content guided by local advisory group; big question: what would be the area of our region that would be covered by this type of program? They have not covered a region this large, could it be divided up or a rural innovative model be developed? Comment was made that the local news doesn't cover the big changes that occur over a longer period of time. And news doesn't get beyond the region, but we need to get the word out more and farther. Feeling was that communities don't see the need to cooperate and almost resist cooperating. But leveraging assets and talking about them collectively has to happen.
  - C. Other – Steve Schnell updated on the MiCareerQuest to let HS students explore high demand jobs; focus 2019 on one event and 2020 on one in the south; talent committee will recommend other 2019 efforts for

RPI grant. Youth Entrepreneurship RFP will be revised and reissued for any school to apply to be awarded a \$5000 grant to build a solid Entrepreneurial curriculum. One grant was awarded in the first round to Joyce McCoy in the Alpena schools. Jamie Huber emphasized the need to have skilled trades in high demand and link with local businesses.

Sara McCauley updated on the AdviseMI program through Michigan College Access Network (MCAN), grant money available to assist local schools to acquire a person to assist students to get higher education or training. There were no applicants in the last round and we'll need extra effort to get the word out as there appeared to be simple misunderstanding about the program.

VII. Community/Economic Development Updates

A. Regional Ag/Local Foods – Taste the Local Difference

Molly updated the RPI on local food events and certified local food events, with locally sources food. Industrial food system is not sustainable; print 55,000 copies of magazine for the state and NE Michigan is flying through them!

B. Broadband update – Tom Stephenson

Schedule conflict – this will be rescheduled

C. Regional Entrepreneurial Network

DNR listening sessions will be scheduled, first is October 4<sup>th</sup> in Grayling; letters of support for 2019 RPI app are needed very soon; draft will be ready for September meeting.

VIII. Participant Updates

IX. Public Comment

X. Adjournment – Next meeting date: 12:00pm, September 26<sup>th</sup> in Cheboygan at the Carnegie Building