

## MINUTES

### REGION 3: RPI COLLABORATIVE

October 23, 2017

Houghton Lake Public Library  
4431 W. Houghton Lake Dr.  
Houghton Lake, MI

**Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order by Erich Podjaske (standing in for Chair Doug Baum).

**Members Present:** Brenda Bacheldor, Lisa McComb, Tom Stephenson, Erich Podjaske, Rosalie Myers, Maureen Castern, Diane Rekowski, Dan Belz, Collin Hoffmeyer, Michelle Andrews, Rina Bethany, Doug Paulus. **Presenters:** Pete Pallas, Al Janutolo. **Ex-officio:** Lydia Murray –MEDC, Patty O’Donnell- MDOT. **Others:** Connor Hubbard – Alcona Public Schools, Kimberly Young – Houghton Lake Public Library. Ed Bergeron, Roscommon EDC.

**Minutes of the Previous Meeting:** L. McComb moved, seconded by C. Hoffmeyer to approve the minutes as presented. Ayes all, motion carried.

**Financial Review:** D. Rekowski reviewed the financial report for thru September 2017 Stated that NE RPI 3 received approx. a \$180k grant last year of which approximately \$100k has already been expended. Unexpended funds will be committed by year-end however implementation may be into the next year.

**Presentation:** *Employer Support of the National Guard.* Presenter: Pete Pallas, Al Janutolo, Ombudsmen.

Pete Pallas and Al Janutolo provided an overview of the program. Discussed benefits of hiring military and reservists (educated, leaders, followers, drug free, etc.). Stated there is a 7.8% unemployment rate for veterans, approx. 700k veterans. Half of all US military is guard and reserve, costs 80k to retrain an entry level of infantryman, which is why ESGR works so hard to maintain the 3 legged stool (employer, family, servicemen).

Shared stories about misunderstandings regarding the USERRA law and talked about the importance of ombudsman from ESGR. ESGR primary uses Michigan Works! for job referrals. Serve veterans who have been discharged within the last 12 months as well as guard and reserve. Approx. 35% of guard and reserve are underemployed. They also informed the Collaborative that there is a group trying to bring a VA hospital north.

**Talent Update:** S. Wycoff-McCauley provided an update on the following:

*Talent Tours:* Manufacturing Day: Region 3 had 98 students participate and 13 businesses from the NE Consortium and 7B had 68 students and 2 tours/businesses. Mini grants that were provided to schools played an important role in school participation. This acted as catalyst to create more talent tours. There will be a tour conducted in Roscommon. Dan Beltz discussed needing to conduct tours for middle schools.

*Hot Jobs!:* Materials are being disseminated to teachers within schools that provide career training. Already received positive feedback and a “thank you” from a middle school teacher in Houghton Lake. Kim Young discussed networking with the libraries for use of the Hot Jobs materials/videos.

C. Hoffmeyer brought up a discussion point; how do you focus those who are underemployed and out of school already (think 22 years old on mom and dad’s couch)? This would be a good topic for a future agenda item.

*Going Pro:* C.Hoffmeyer provided an overview of the program. Going Pro is a state department initiative that includes pathfinder career exploration tools, pre apprenticeship grant opportunity and other tools.

*College Exploration:* S. Wycoff-McCauley provided an overview of the direction the Talent subcommittee chose to take. The Committee met with the Coordinator of the MI College Access Network and discussed opportunities for Region 3. MCAN has targeted Region 3 as an underserved area and likely will fund an application in the region. Discussion followed on allocating the \$8750 for College Promotion to be used as match for a school in the region that receives a grant award. R. Allen moved, supported by D. Belz to allocate the \$8750 for a schools MCAN match. Ayes all, motion carried.

S. Wycoff-McCauley discussed the MCAN opportunity for an Innovation Grant to conduct regional focus groups of parents, teacher and students to better understand what barriers are preventing regional youth from pursuing post-secondary training opportunities, with an emphasis on college access. The hope is that completion of these focus groups would provide necessary insight to inform potential creation of a regional college access network or other region-wide strategies. L. McComb moved, seconded by R. Myers to apply for the Innovation grant to for a possible regional approach for MCAN services throughout Region 3. Ayes all, motion carried.

**Community/Economic Development Update:** D. Rekowski informed the Collaborative that Steve Schnell was hired by NEMCOG and will be coordinating the Regional Prosperity project as well as other NEMCOG economic and community development initiatives.

**2018 Regional Prosperity Grant Application- Projects:** D. Rekowski provided an handout of a draft 2018 RPI Work Plan for 2018. Discussion followed on the components of the workplan. L. McComb moved, seconded by R. Myers to approve the 2018 workplan including an ask for the additional funds to move to the Council level. Ayes all, motion carried.

**Other Business:** E. Podjaske requested a letter of support for the Regional Food Hub.

**Public Comment:** No public comment

**Updates:** Members provided updates for their service area.

**Next meeting Date:** November 29, 2017 at 1:00pm. Location will be provided

**Adjournment: Meeting was adjourned at 3:15 pm.**