



Northeast Michigan

Regional Prosperity Initiative

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**Minutes
of the
Region 3: RPI Collaborative
August 23, 2017
Stepanski Farm
Posen, MI**

Call to Order: Chair, Doug Baum called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m. Special thanks was given to Molly and Dion Stepanski and Doug Paulus (donated Brats) for the wonderful local foods lunch they provided.

Members Present: Marisue Moreau, Doug Baum, Lisa Bolen, Karen Godi, Molly Stepanski, Lisa McComb, Colin Hoffmeyer, Erica Comerford, Erich Podjaske, Natasha Allen, David Emmel, Rosalie Myers, , Dan Leonard. Supporting Agencies: Patty O'Donnell-MDOT, Donna LaCourt-MDARD.
Staff/Consultant: Diane Rekowski, Sara Wycoff-McCauley. Others: Doug Paulus, Theresa Kaiser, Maureen Castern.

Approval of Previous Minutes: M. Moreau moved, seconded by L. Bolen to receive and file the minutes of the June 2017 meeting. Ayes all, motion carried.

Financial Report: D. Rekowski informed the group that NEMCOG is consolidating their accounting with the NE MI Consortium/MI Works!. A financial report will be provided at the next meeting.

Presentation: Judy McNeil, Farm to Fork, Alcona County presented on the Alcona County program. The goal of the Farm to Fork program is to enhance economic development in Alcona County by becoming a "foodie" destination. Also looking at a regional Farm Conference.

Talent Update:

Talent Tours: D. Rekowski introduced Sara Wycoff-McCauley from Strategic Policy Consultants. S. McCauley provided a handout that summarized the recent meeting with the Planning Committee involved with organizing Talent Tours during MI Manufacturing Week. A RPI Talent Committee meeting is scheduled for September 7th to further discuss and finalize plans.

College Exploration: S. McCauley discussed the strategy of expanding 4-Year College attendance in NE MI. Looking at using the Hot Jobs Video Model as a way to expand the knowledge of 4-year degrees, both in and outside the region. The Videos could be used by teachers throughout the region as would all students rather than just those attending a college tour.

Talent Attraction: Discussed approaches to promoting the region's Quality of Life Attributes to those attending out of region colleges and training centers.

Hot Jobs: H. Sanderson reported that the interns completed the Hot Jobs project. There were 36 videos created and all will be posted on the discovernortheastmichigan.com website as well as NLEA's site. 33 packets are being made for distribution to schools.

NLEA will be hosting a Cheboygan County Business Pitch Night. It will be held on November 1, 2017, 7:00pm at the Cheboygan Opera House.

Community/Economic Development Committee Update:

Minigrants: The City of Alpena provided their Final Report on the 2016 Minigrant they received. 19 Trail Signs were installed within the City's existing trail system.

Regional Local Food Program: M. Stepanski updated the Collaborative on the local food events occurring in the region; signage in retail stores and finalizing the Building Healthy Communities grant application.

Broadband Amendment: D. Rekowski explained the need to amend the RPI Broadband Work Plan for the \$10,000 Line Item in the RPI grant. Currently it is for County Broadband Plans, and would like to revise the work plan to include \$5,000 to complete a County Vertical Asset Inventory. M Moreau moved seconded by E. Podjaske to amend the RPI Broadband Work Plan to include \$5,000 for a Vertical Asset Inventory. Ayes all, motion carried.

Placemaking Activities: D. Rekowski discussed the Trail town/Signage program. A kiosk will be placed at the Trail head in the City of Grayling. NOAA has also requested funds for the Maritime Heritage Trail to be placed in Alcona County.

Public Comment

No public comment.

Updates

Doug Paulus: discussed the need for an accurate database of agriculture/farms in region. Also, informed the group that the brats that were donated were made from lamb. Lamb is 154% less expensive to produce than beef.

MDARD: Donna LaCourt informed the group of two grant opportunities: MDARD Value Added – Regional Food Systems and the USDA Rural Business Development Grant.

MI Works!: C. Hoffmeyer and N. Allen discussed the Skilled Trades Training Funds, Apprenticeship, Veteran and Disability programs. NE MI Consortium/MI Works! also undergoing many staff changes.

NLEA: H. Sanderson reported on the "Pitch Night" to be held in Cheboygan on November 1 at 7pm. First Place will receive \$10,000.

Otsego County Economic Alliance: L. McComb reported on new development taking place in Gaylord: hotels, restaurants, auto stores. Also there will be a Headwaters Music Festival on August 26th at the Otsego Club in Gaylord.

Next Meeting: Judy McNeil offered to sponsor the September 20th, 2017 meeting in Alcona County Lost Lake Woods. Lunch will be served at noon with the meeting following at 1:00pm. Directions will be provided.

Adjournment

Meeting was adjourned at 3:00pm.