



Northeast Michigan

Regional Prosperity Initiative

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**Minutes
of the
Region 3: RPI Collaborative
September 25, 2017
University Center
Gaylord, MI**

Call to Order: Chair, Doug Baum called the meeting to order at 10:05 a.m.

Members Present: Doug Baum, Lisa Bolen, Lisa McComb, Collin Hoffmeyer, Erich Podjaske, , Rosalie Myers, Dan Leonard, Lydia Murray, Hannah Sanderson, Doug Paulus, Maureen Casern-French, Luanne Mabarak, Dan Leonard, Natasha Allen, Audra Leininger and Tom Stephenson.

Staff/Consultant: Diane Rekowski, Theresa Huff, Sara Wychoff-McCauley.

Introductions: All attendees introduced themselves.

Approval of Previous Minutes: L. McComb moved, seconded by R. Myers to receive and file the minutes of the August, 2017 meeting. Ayes all, motion carried.

Financial Report: D. Rekowski provided a financial report for period ending August 31, 2017. A motion was made by L. Mabarak, seconded by H. Sanderson to accept the financial report as presented. Ayes, all, motion carried.

Presentation: Randy Keen of ARAUCO presented on the ARAUCO Particleboard Plant being constructed in Grayling, MI. It's a \$400 million project and is one of the largest, most important investments ARAUCO has made in North America. Running the plant will create 200 direct jobs and will operate 24/7. These positions will be very skilled positions and will come with great wages and benefits. The plant is expected to be in full operation beginning the third quarter 2018 and full production in January 2019. A furniture store is likely to be located next to ARAUCO in the next year or so.

2018 RPI Grant Application: D. Rekowski informed the group that the RPI 2018 Grant Application is due December 1, 2017. The Collaborative will need to decide the desired strategies to request funding for at the October 25th meeting

Talent Update

Talent Tours: N. Allen and C. Hoffmeyer have organized talent tours October 4th through the 6th. Will be coordinating with high schools. Gave a brief list of companies that have committed. S. Wychoff-McCauley updated the group on bids sent to companies for video- taping the talent tours. One bid was received so far.

College & Training Exploration: S. Wychoff-McCauley discussed the strategy of expanding 4-Year College attendance in NE MI they grew up to work and pay off student loans because of lack of jobs.

Community College numbers are higher, which is good. Where are the gaps? We have a lack of The next Talent Committee meeting will be October 6 at the University Center at 10:00 a.m.

Talent Attraction: A. Leininger updated the Collaborative on the Millennial Roundtable that she hosted in August at a Brew Pub in Alpena. Had a great turn out, approximately 45 people showed up. Was held from 5-7 p.m. and people came early and stayed late. There was a lot of interest and passion with networking with others in the north.

Hot Jobs: H. Sanderson reported that the interns completed the Hot Jobs project. The videos and materials are posted on the discovernortheastmichigan.com website. Packets will be provided to schools by MI Works! staff in early October. Discussed the need to conduct a follow-up survey to teachers on use of the materials.

Community/Economic Development Committee Update:

D. Rekowski: Provided 2016 Final Report of the City of Alpena's mini-grant project

Rail & Energy Forum: L. McComb provided an update on a forum recently held by Representative Triston Cole on the use rail for freight and resources available. Discussed electrical vehicle charging stations being installed in region. There will be an increasing demand coming in the near future as more highly efficient electrical vehicles come on the market.

Other Business

Partner Updates:

H. Sanderson: CEC conference coming up in Howell, MI. Passed around a handout on the Conference.

R. Myers: Informed the group Roscommon will be applying for the Rising Tide Program. Grayling and Roscommon Chambers worked together on the "MI Cares for Tourism".

D. Paulus: Provided a new rendering on the Northern Marketing/Food Hub project. Discussed use of building, i.e. culinary program, food related shops, meat market. Expansions are already being added to the building plans as more interest is being expressed. Plan to open in April of 2019. Also, requested letters of support from members of the Collaborative. D. Paulus will provide a sample letter from which members can write their letter of support.

M. Castern-French: Discussed their farm to Fork Event recently held. They were expecting 40 people and had 80. Other events are planned. There is a website for more information.

Tom Stephenson, Connect MI: Provided handouts, 5G: The Next Generation of Cellular Technology and States Take on Broadband Privacy. There is a lot going on. 5G is being provided in build-outs in Grayling, Gaylord and Alpena areas. Many new towers are going up in region. State looking at providing low interest loans for projects; has to be a fairly large project. FFC releases capital report amount, due out in February, 2018.

L. McComb: Just approved the PACE program (Property Access Clean Energy). Can get properties assessed and energy saving devices/equipment can be paid by the energy savings.

D. Leonard, MEDC: Discussed middle-housing issue Grayling is having. Organized a meeting with MSHDA in Grayling to discuss problems and resolutions.

Public Comment

No public comment.

Next Meeting: Will be held, October 25, 2017 in Roscommon County at one of the Libraries. R. Myers to confirm location. Lunch will be at noon and the meeting will be 1-3 p.m.

Adjournment

Meeting was adjourned at 1:10 p.m.