

**Employer Engagement Committee
Meeting Summary
August 6, 2019**

The Employer Engagement Committee Meeting was called to order at 5:30 p.m. by Cary Robbins.

NAME	PRESENT (Oglesby)	PRESENT (Sterling)	ABSENT	NAME	PRESENT (Oglesby)	PRESENT (Sterling)	ABSENT
Jim Andreoni	X			Barbara Majeski			X
Mary Boogemans	X			Lisa McCarthy			X
Linda Burt			X	Dave Mennie			X
Debbie Clausen	X			Kris Noble		X	
Jerry Corcoran	X			Cary Robbins		X	
Mike Dean			X	Amy Strawn	X		
Patty Head			X	James Weed			X
Deana Jones			X	Robert White			X
Kevin Lindeman	X						

OTHERS PRESENT (Sterling): Dianna Schuler

OTHERS PRESENT (IVCC): Pam Furlan, Randy Freeman

OTHERS PRESENT (by phone): Deborah Boden, Northwest Illinois Economic Development

Business Meeting

Approval of Minutes

Motion to approve the June 4, 2019 summary and the April 2, 2019 minutes was made by Jim Andreoni. Seconded by Cary Robbins. Motion carried.

Update on RTPPI

Dianna gave some background on the purpose of the RTPPI project. That the project was for the inter-agency business services team to meet with area businesses and discover the needs and challenges they are facing, determine if there would be anything within the one-stop system that could address those needs and challenges, develop a plan with the company to implement, and then get feedback on how that plan worked. She reported that there are several projects in the works and few others that might take a little longer than the pilot period that partners are working on.

Dianna reported that for sub-region 1 the business service team will be hosting a hiring event for Advantage Logistic on August 7, 2019 and one for Caster and Allure in sub-region 3 the following week. She stated that in sub-region 2 Roger is working with Bonnell on locating some training providers for some potential incumbent worker training to meet their needs. These 3 project comprise the official 3 pilot projects for RTPPI and we will be collecting data on how the process works in order to make any necessary changes.

Other, more long term projects, include work being done by Illinois Valley Community College to prepare a welding training course for Vactor in Streator. IVCC will be piloting the course this fall with welding trainers from Streator High School, the area Career Center, and other local experts in the field. Kris reported on the efforts at the Whiteside Area Career Center to grow an automotive program. She stated that right now they see an average of 2 to 6 seniors that can go into automotive service and tire alignment. She stated that they are trying to grow the program to focus on specialty training.

Business Services Report

Dianna reported that the report was included in the mailing and is mostly informational. She reminded members that the report is for the work done by BEST, Inc. and IDES.

Update on CMA

Dianna reported that since the CMA program at IVCC has now been approved by the Illinois Community College Board there will be a meeting with the US Department of Labor, BEST, Inc., IVCC, and St. Margaret's on August 22nd to move forward with the registered apprenticeship program on behalf of NCI Works. Pam stated that she'd like some press on the development of the program. Jerry stated that Fran Brolley was already working on a press release and suggested we work together with him on a joint press release. Pam agreed that partnering on the press release was a good idea.

Pain Points and EEC Survey Discussion

Pam stated that she would like for the Employer Engagement Committee (CME) to do a survey to find out what area companies identify as their pain points. She stated that she mentioned this at the Chief Manufacturing Executive meeting and found that they are not able to find qualified applicants. She indicated that responses to this type of survey could be used to develop a programmatic response to their needs. She stated that members of CME indicated that they have many applicants that are no shows for the interview. Kris indicated that there has been some focus groups working on the Sterling Comprehensive Plan and that, when you filter out those residents that are working or not looking for work, there are still a lot of people looking for work. She also stated that there are a lot of jobs available. She recommended looking at labor shortage with the skills needed.

Randy indicated that there can be a transportation issues for those that are qualified. He went on to state that being a rural area is an issue. He mentioned tickets for various infractions complicated things because if one is not working they can't pay the fines and it becomes problematic from there. Pam indicated that this specific issue is part of the deeper dive she'd like to see done. Pam went on to inform the committee that NCICG will be holding a summit in September and that the focus of that summit is workforce. She stated that NCICG has invited various state and federal agencies to discuss issues the area is facing. Transportation and housing being among those issues to be discussed.

Randy asked if it was possible to bring back the donated car program. Jerry said that the short answer is yes. Pam indicated that a discussion with the Department of Labor could be possible and see if it can happen. Jim added that as of January 2020 fines for traffic violations will be going up. Leading to a possible harder time for many to pay for them.

Pam said that she would be looking to the committee for feedback on the survey. She went on to state that Bonnie Campbell is needing to do an assessment with business input for Perkins and this assessment could be easily incorporated into the survey. Dianna suggested that while Bonnie is developing her assessment that she could be looking at other surveys that NCI Works has conducted.

Randy mentioned that another hurdle that the county is dealing with is the fact that recreational marijuana takes effect January 1, 2020. Dianna suggested that those that want some input into HR policies on this topic attend the October 4, 2019 NCI Works Employer Conference. She stated that the attorney from Chicago that did a webinar for the state's chamber will be there to discuss this topic. Cary stated that he knows some companies that have done away with drug testing entirely because of the fact that it is harder to pinpoint when an applicant last used marijuana. Debbie suggested also getting

applicant input. Dianna stated that we did something similar a few years ago and would try to find that instrument and the results. Jim also indicated that even minor offenses may show up on background check if an individual ended up with court supervision. He stated that unless that offense gets expunged it will show up.

Dianna will look for what has been done and touch base with Bonnie on the progress of her assessment.

Review of BLM Survey

Pam reported that the survey results were mostly informational on what members are looking for. She stated that the Executive Committee will be taking a larger role in doing certain tasks and will take into account the responses from the survey for the development of the meetings. One possibility would be a panel of millennials and asking them questions on what attracts/keeps them in the area.

Other Business

Pam asked for some discussion on the possibility of developing some pre-apprenticeship programs for youth. She stated that Whiteside Area Career Center had been working on some with the US Department of Labor but for now that planning process has been put on hold. She asked the committee if they thought that youth pre-apprenticeships would work. Jim asked if it would be something that could get those under 18 in the door at manufacturing establishments. Mary stated that replacement applicants right now is an issue for her right now and wondered if this would help. Randy Freeman stated that there is a great deal of road construction going on and that workers will be needed.

Pam requested that some research on youth pre-apprenticeship be done especially focusing on where they have been successful. Dianna mentioned that it might be worthwhile to hold a focus group or summit to discuss with the various industry sectors.

Public Comment

None

Adjournment

With there being no further business a motion to adjourn was made by Jim Andreoni. Motion was seconded by Jerry Corcoran and carried. Meeting adjourned at 6:30 p.m.

Dianna Schuler