

**NORTHWEST CENTRAL IL WORKS (NCI WORKS)
(via Electronic Means) MEETING MINUTES
November 25, 2014**

The NCI Works Meeting was called to order by Co-Chair Linda Burt at 5:30 p.m. Roll call was taken. Since this was the first NCI Works meeting via electronic means, Linda asked members to speak clearly and state their names prior to conversation or a motion.

Name	Present IVCC	Present SVCC	Absent	Name	Present IVCC	Present SVCC	Absent
James Andreoni			X	Kevin Lindeman	X		
Dave Argubright			X	Barbara Majeski			X
Ed Bochniak			X	Jon Mandrell			X
Mary Boogemans	X			David Mennie			X
Kathy Brady			X	Jean Millar		X	
Linda Burt	X			Bill Norden			X
Jim Carlson	X			Joe Panzica	X		
Vicki Carlson		X		Stacey Parr			X
Debbie Clausen	X			Mike Phalen			X
Dr. Jerry Corcoran	X			Tom Pigati	X		
Nancy Curran	X			Kevin Reibel		X	
Tim Farraher			X	Cary Robbins		X	
Monte Flack	X			Jennifer Robbins		X	
Carrie Folken			X	Marvin Schultz			X
Janet Graham			X	John Spencer			X
Linda Hessenberger			X	Betty Steinert		X	
Vanessa Hoffeditz			X	Teresa Strum		X	
Dave Howell		X		Mark Szula			X
Deana Jones			X	Gerald Waszkowiak	X		
Dr. Joe Kanosky		X		James Weed			X
Mary Ann Kolls		X		DeAnna White			X
Amy Liebing			X	Theresa Wittenauer		X	

OTHERS PRESENT AT SVCC LOCATION: Pam Furlan, Kathy Day

OTHERS PRESENT AT IVCC LOCATION: Jo Ann Johnson, Randy Freeman

Approval of Meeting Minutes

Dr. Jerry Corcoran motioned to approve the September 23, 2014 Meeting Minutes as submitted. Motion was seconded by Mary Boogemans and carried.

Business Climate Discussion

Cary Robbins began the discussion by saying that business at Sterling Steel is good. He said that some workers will be retiring during the next few years so there is a need to find skilled workers for maintenance jobs. Cary also commented that they are fighting the increased costs of health care.

Dave Howell told members that there has been a slight improvement in loan demand which is a good sign. From the banking perspective, Dave said that the economy is improving slowly.

Kevin Reibel with Metform told members that business seems to be good. He said that they hired 10 people recently and he continues to work 58-60 hours a week.

Jennifer Robbins with Duro Automotive told members that the manufacturing business is steady. She said they are not doing any hiring at the present time.

Jean Millar said that Dixon Floral is picking up due to the holidays. She said that it is difficult to find entry level employees who want to commit to working. Jean told members that there is a lot of unskilled workers applying for positions.

Betty Steinert informed members that in the Whiteside County area, Thomson Prison is hiring, Wahl Clipper will be adding a large addition and will be adding workers and a Holiday Inn in Rock Falls has begun construction.

Vicki Carlson with the Dixon Chamber of Commerce said that the IL Department of Corrections will be extending their mental health facilities and adding 100 employees. She told members that there was a rumor that the cement plant would be reopening soon. Vicki stated that there was a blind ad in the newspaper announcing a business opening and hiring 65 individuals.

Teresa Strum informed members that health care business is going well. She continued by saying that the health care business is on the verge of a nursing (RNs) shortage. Teresa said discussion is to be held as to how to meet those needs and demands.

Theresa Wittenauer with Blackhawk Hills Regional Council said that the 6 northwest counties in Northern Illinois continues to see the demand for civil and computer engineers as well as welders. She said that they are seeing more positive growth in the eastern part of the district, but was unable to elaborate.

Tom Pigati (Pigati Builders) informed members that the housing industry is slow to recover in the area. Although, he said that this year was better than the previous year.

Gerald Waszkowiak with American Nickolid stated that they are seeing evidence in the economy resulting in more business but not in hiring.

Joe Panzica said that LaSalle County is seeing an influx with the sand companies. He said that transportation employees are working 6 days a week and 12 hours a day.

Monte Flack announced that Mid-American Growers was recently purchased by Color Point. He said that the new company has changed their growing policies that will lead to less products in the spring.

Kevin Lindeman told members that he concurred with Joe Panzica regarding the sand mine industry in LaSalle County. He informed members that funding has been secured to conduct a regional transportation study linked to a possible intermodal facility in Streator.

Jim Carlson told members that 10 teachers at Seneca High School submitted letters of retirement over the next five-years. He said that they will not be replacing these teachers which will result in larger class size for instruction. On a positive note, Jim said that he attended a meeting with administrators from Grundy, Bureau and LaSalle County and learned that property values are recovering.

Dr. Corcoran with IL Valley Community College echoed with Jim Carlson and Joe Panzica reported about the sand mine industry. Dr. Corcoran noted that enrollments at IVCC are down.

Debbie Clausen with LMK Industries reported that business is steady. Debbie said that LMK has openings for qualified skilled applicants which are hard to fill. She reported that the steel plant in Hennepin (Putnam County) was purchased so we should be hearing about the future of that plant.

Mary Boogemans stated that Advantage Logistics is holding steady despite the reduction in force they had earlier in the year. She said that they have openings for 10-15 part-time employees at the current time, but it is a struggle to get individuals who only want part-time employment.

Nancy Curran with IL Dept. of Employment Security stated that the lines at the Unemployment Office are long due to the weather change and election.

Linda Burt (St. Margaret's Health) echoed Teresa Strum's comments in regarding to health care. She said that the Affordable Care Act (ACA) has made a difference in their census. She continued by saying that there is a tremendous change in educational opportunity and requirements for employees. Linda stated that in the next several years St. Margaret's expects several retirees.

Pam informed members that the Business Relations Representatives with the Business Employment Skills Team, Inc. have reported that some hiring of employees in the manufacturing industry.

New Business

New Member Appointment

Pam informed members that Carrie Folken, Program Manager with the Business Employment Skills Team, Inc. was recently appointed to NCI Works replacing Kathy Day.

Resignation of Members

Jim Carson motioned to accept the resignation of Kathy Brady with regret. Motion was seconded by Nancy Curran and carried.

Pam informed members that a letter of resignation was received from Mike Phalen. Joe Panzica told members that he was not re-elected to the LaSalle County Board and officially submitted his resignation from NCI Works. Tom Pigati motioned to accept the resignations of Mike Phalen and Joe Panzica with regret. Motion was seconded by Gerald Waszkowiak and carried.

Reappointment of NCI Works Members

Pam reported that the terms were up for the following members: Ed Bochniak, Mary Boogemans, Vicki Carlson, Tim Farraher, Vanessa Hoffeditz, Dave Howell, Deana Jones, James Knauf, Amy Liebing, Kevin Lindeman, John Mandrell, Cary Robbins, and Gerald Waszkowiak. She said that Chief Elected Officials will vote on their reappointment in December.

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Update

Pam provided members with an update on the Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act (WIOA). She told members that as long as there remains a majority of business representation on NCI Works we will not refill the vacancies. Pam said that under the new legislation the number of WIB members appears to be a minimum of 22.

Pam told members that Draft Regulations are due by mid-January with an effective date of July 1, 2015. She said that locally staff have been meeting in preparation of the new program. Under the new legislation, Pam said, there are 4 Core Partners that include IL Department of Employment Security, IL Department of Rehabilitation, Adult Education and Adult/Youth/Dislocated Worker Programs (BEST, Inc.). One big project, Pam said, is that the Core Partners needs to submit a Unified Plan that outlines how the local area will move forward and provide services to eligible individuals under the WIOA. Pam informed members that the State Plan is due in March.

Committee Reports

Regional Workforce Partnership Board – Northern Sub-committee

Cary informed members that the Northern Sub-committee of the Regional Workforce Partnership Board met and discussed the activities that were scheduled in conjunction with Manufacturing Month. He told members that about 500 freshman high school students started their day in Sterling and listened to a presentation that included videos about the manufacturing industry. Cary said that the students were then bussed to one of six manufacturing companies that participated in the event. From there, Cary said that students were taken to Sauk Valley College where about 25 manufacturers were set up and available

to tell the students what types of jobs and skills that were needed at their company. Overall, Cary said that the event went really well. He continued by saying that the employers in the manufacturing industry is interested in continuing to reach out to students. One misconception, Cary said is that the parents are discouraging the student from the manufacturing industry due to past history. Cary told members that a similar event is being planned in the spring for students at the 8th grade level.

Betty Steinert thanked the Cary and the manufacturing employers for sponsoring the event noting the positive comments that were received. Pam Furlan said she talked with a representative from the Illinois Manufacturing Association who commented that approximately 1000 students were involved with a manufacturing event during October between Lee, Whiteside, Stephenson and Ogle Counties.

Regional Workforce Partnership Board – Southern Sub-committee

Debbie Clausen provided the report for the Southern Sub-committee of the Regional Workforce Partnership Board. She said that the meeting minutes were included with the meeting materials. She added that she was not able to attend the Manufacturing Expo held on October 22 at IVCC. Debbie said that Agriculture was added to the list of new industry sectors.

Pam commented that she did get the information from Bill Norden on the ad sector and will be following up with the individual. Betty Steinert suggested to contact the schools and contract with FFAs.

Youth Council

Teresa Strum reported that the Youth Council met and discussed the career preparation/life skills program for the Safe School and learned about the LaSalle County Redeployment program offered through a grant for LaSalle County Probation Department. Teresa told members that staff visited with Highland Community College and Forreston High School to conduct labor market and career pathway information to students.

Business Liaison & Marketing

Linda Burt presented the Slate of Officers for 2015. She said that the current officers have agreed to serve one more term. The slate of officers include: Cary Robbins & Linda Burt, Co-Chairs, Debbie Clausen, Vice-Chair and Mary Boogemans, Secretary. Tom Pigati motioned to approve the Slate of Officers as presented. Motion was seconded by Jennifer Robbins and carried.

Oversight

Gerald Waszkowiak informed members that the Oversight Committee met prior to the NCI Works meeting and reviewed the First Quarter Performance Reports. He said that each of the performance measures are either being met or exceeded.

Gerald also told members that the Oversight Committee reviewed the programs that are scheduled for recertification in March 2015. He said that since NCI Works does not meet in January, the committee recommended recertifying the programs pending their submission by the appropriate community college.

Dr.Kanosky asked about the programs at Highland Community College. Pam informed him that the programs at Highland Community College are approved by the Local Workforce Investment Board in Local Workforce Investment Area #3. Dr. Kanosky requested that the programs from Highland Community College be provided to NCI Works members as an informational item.

Gerald Waszkowiak motioned to approve the First Quarter Performance Reports as presented, and approve Training Program Recertifications from IL Valley Community College and Sauk Valley Community College pending the community college submitting them for recertification. Motion was seconded by Tom Pigati and carried.

Other Business

Review and Approval of Trade Act Program Application & Plan Modification

Pam provided an overview of the Trade Act Program Application & Plan Modification for members. She said that the Trade Act is a separate funding source for individuals who are laid off due to a trade event. Kathy Day stated that the grant can always be amended if there are additional trade events in the workforce area. Pam commented that Robert Shaw has been certified as a trade event. Betty Steinert motioned to approve the Trade Act Program Application & Plan Modification as presented. Motion was seconded by Jean Millar and carried.

No Place Like Home (NPLH) Update

Pam Furlan reported that over 17,000 hits were received on the No Place Like Home webpage. She said that 20 businesses listed 49 job openings in addition to the 13 health care providers that have direct links to the webpage. Pam provided a brief overview of the No Place Like Home Webpage stating the employers are encouraged to post positions that pay at least \$15.00/hour. Pam suggested that members view the revised NCI Works website.

CME Update

Pam informed members that the November meeting for the Chief Manufacturing Executives group was cancelled. She said that letters are being sent to area businesses and educational communities in the 8-county area asking about any initiatives or projects that they have going on. Pam said that BEST, Inc. will serve as a clearinghouse for this type of information.

NCI Works Membership List

Linda and Cary disseminated the updated NCI Works Membership List to members.

Public Comments

Randy Freeman was introduced to members. Randy will be replacing Joe Panzica on NCI Works and BEST, Inc. Board of Directors.

Linda reminded members that the next meeting will be March 24, 2015 at Timber Creek Golf Course. She said this meeting will include the Annual Workforce Development Awards presentation and encouraged members to attend.

Adjournment

With there being no further business, Linda Burt motioned to adjourn the meeting. Motion was seconded and carried. Meeting adjourned at 6:40 p.m.

Jo Ann Johnson

Approved by:



Mary Boogemans
NCI Works Secretary