



Meeting Minutes Grow & Diversify Businesses & Jobs in Koochiching County

June 15, 2016 7:00am KEDA Boardroom

Stewards Present: Allen Rasmussen, Sue Collins, Shawn Mason, Roma Korzinski, and Paul Nevanen.

Stewards Absent: Ashley Korzinski, Melody Woods, Shannon Arnold.

Others Present: Mike Wellcome

- I. Minutes from Initial April 27th Meeting. Minutes were completed but not available for review.
- II. Chairman Nevanen welcomed Mike Wellcome. Wellcome provided an update on the progress of the other Driver teams as well as plans for an upcoming newspaper article and mass mailing of a 16-page tabloid to households and businesses in Koochiching County (8,000 copies). Mason questioned the cost of an additional 2,500 copies to place in the registration bags for the upcoming Falls All-Class Reunion. Discussion followed on finding a Champion for the Infrastructure Driver as well as looking at a new website host
- III. Team Logistics and Coordination. Nevanen noted the challenge of being able to schedule meetings with everyone's busy schedules, noting the need to re-schedule several times for a second meeting. Collins suggested returning to a regular monthly schedule. R Korzinski suggested meeting more frequently early on in this process. After further discussion, it was agreed to meet every two weeks and dates were selected into October. Also, that minutes should be forwarded to Wellcome.
- IV. Business Retention & Expansion (BR&E) Program/Grow Minnesota Visits. Nevanen suggested that looking at business retention and expansion would be a good initial goal for this Driver group. He noted he and Jenny Herman of the SBDC were in the midst of an on-line course through the University of Minnesota Extension Office. The course will provide a proven process and model for conducting business visits to understand challenges and opportunities these businesses face. The course ends in July so the timing would be good. He also noted the Chamber conducts its own version of business visits - Grow Minnesota. Mason gave further details on the program and added that the target will be for 12 business visits this year and they'll probably go beyond. Nevanen cautioned they wouldn't want to duplicate visits but looking county-wide could target 35-40 businesses starting later this year.
- V. Next Meeting - Review Newmark Industry Drivers & Target Industries list. Nevanen suggested that in addressing company attraction that we start with reviewing Newmark's Target Industries list. He further suggested inviting local people working in those industries to help educate our group on those industries. Collins questioned how to approach the many Newmark recommendations. Discussion followed on where to focus efforts first. Collins said she didn't want to spin our wheels on pursuing past efforts. R Korzinski felt the need to prioritize the recommendations and maybe focus on smaller scale projects. After further discussion it was agreed to have all Stewards begin reviewing the Newmark study recommendations (On the Voyage Forward Website

under Economic Adjustment Strategy - # 11 Recommendations and Implementation Strategy) prior to the next meeting and individually prioritize for discussion.

- VI. Other - Nevanen referenced a recent Minnesota Works report that showed 57 positions currently available in the International Falls area, including a variety of good-paying jobs. Discussion on this reality versus some who claim there are few job opportunities in the area.
- VII. Meeting Adjourned at 8:15.

Voyage Forward Vision

We are one community focused on the future, which values our citizens, environment, and unique culture. We are open to all ideas and value the input from our citizens. We understand to improve, we must look to the future and invest in community and economic development.

WHAT'S A STEWARD?

Stewards are ordinary people; people from all walks of life who care deeply about the community. Stewards are leaders who cross boundaries, take an integrated approach and build coalitions for action. They have 360-degree vision, recognizing the interdependencies between the economy, the environment and social equity. Stewards operate at the center of tough issues, not on the edges. They are risk takers. They are passionate and energetic. They are people of vision.

VOYAGE FORWARD STEWARDS GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR WORKING TOGETHER:

- Have fun
- Check your ego at the door
- Put community first
- Remember we are all in the same boat
- Keep it positive
- Look for common ground
- Don't look back, keep looking forward
- Don't give up
- Listen and don't interrupt
- Be honest
- Principles before personalities
- Engage young people
- Stay on topic/respect other people's time
- Reach out to all the County's communities
- There will be disagreements. That is OK

Voyage Forward Vision

We are one community focused on the future, which values our citizens, environment, and unique culture. We are open to all ideas and value the input from our citizens. We understand to improve, we must look to the future and invest in community and economic development.