



**VOYAGE FORWARD COALITION  
JULY 7, 2016 9:00 RAINY RIVER COMMUNITY COLLEGE  
MEETING MINUTES**

**STEWARDS PRESENT:** Mike Wellcome, Allyssa Hackenmuller. Sheila Demenge, Myrna Meadows, Tammy Riley, Paul Nevenan, Ward Merrill, Doug Skrief, Travis Glowasky, Sherril Gautreaux

**I. WELCOME AND CHAMPION UPDATE**

**a. Pressing Issues or Barriers**

Each Driver Champion presented an update on their Driver.

- 1) Ward Merrill – Attractive Koochiching County. This Driver has had a number of meetings; the last meeting was held in Big Falls. Ben Leonard, MNHS, was able to attend the last meeting. The group is focusing on two major issues – uniform signage and blight. A group from I’Falls is taking initiatives to schedule neighborhood clean-up days.
- 2) Paul Nevanen – Grow & Diversify Businesses and Jobs. This Driver has a good committed group focused on rolling out the BRE program. Nevanen and Herman are taking a UofM on-line course in BRE.
- 3) Sherril Gautreaux – Tourism & Outdoor Recreation. This Driver reports progress on forming a local chapter of the Voyageur’s ATV Club whose goal is to connect communities with safe, legal, marked ATV trails. Pete Schultz has taken the lead on this initiative and has held meetings in I’Falls and Kabetogama. Another initiative is effective internet site representation for area attractions and businesses. A seminar on the topic will be held sometime in August. It will be hosted by I’Falls Chamber and CVB.
- 4) Travis Glowasky – Cross Border Initiatives. This Driver helped to initiate recent seminars along with the 2 Chambers of Commerce on the Nexus Program and customs and immigrations procedures involved in crossing the international border. The group plans to host another seminar this year. Discussions regarding the immigration checkpoint located at Bohman’s Landing have been initiated. There are numerous challenges associated with the site.
- 5) Tammy Riley – Skilled Workforce and Talent Development. This Driver has begun developing a survey to be distributed to area businesses to determine workforce needs. Discussions on funding sources for the survey. This Driver is also working on an accurate business list with e-mail and phone #'s.
- 6) Mike Wellcome – Economic Development Framework. The Driver presented the Framework to the KEDA board. Wellcome has met with Paul Nevanen to formulate the process for moving forward with the Economic Development Framework. A lengthier discussion with the KEDA board will take place on 7/12 @ 8:00 am.

**II. FUNDING**

Drivers were asked to put together a budget for immediate needs (6 months) and longer term needs (one year) and send to Mike. Mike will consolidate for discussion at our next meeting.

**III. DISCUSS PROCESS FOR SELECTING AT-LARGE MEMBERS**

We will open up the selection of at-large members to the entire county and ask interested parties to submit a letter of interest explaining why they are interested, their pertinent skills and their ability to commit the required time to serve on the board. The two at-large members in greater Koochiching County must live outside of the 56649 and 56668 zip codes. The applications must be submitted by August 5.

**IV. WEBSITE**

The contract with Big Fish Digital for website management expires in October. The coalition needs to decide whether to renew or to choose another host. The coalition needs to think about the website in terms of its purpose and how we want it to “age”. We will need to decide who the website administrator will be.

**V. TABLOID**

The tabloid should be published next week. The coalition thanks Rob Davenport for his hard work on the project.

**VI. NEXT MEETING DATE**

The next Coalition meeting will be August 9 at RRCC room SC114. Items on the agenda will include budgets, at-large appointments, pressing issues and barriers, selection of a Coordinator and how the Coalition will communicate with the Voyage Forward champions.

**VII. ADJOURN.**

The group adjourned at 11:30.