

**VOYAGE FORWARD COALITION
MEETING MINUTES
JANUARY 10, 2017 1:30
RANIER COMMUNITY HALL**

STEWARDS PRESENT: Mike Wellcome, Pete Schultz, Myrna Meadows, Ward Merrill, Travis Glowasky, Sherril Gautreaux, Alyssa Hackenmueller, Doug Skrief
Absent: Tammy Riley, Shelia DeMenge, Paul Nevanen

I. WELCOME

- a. To approve the agenda.

A motion was made by Merrill; seconded by Glowasky and carried unanimously to approve the agenda.

- b. To approve the minutes of the previous Coalition Driver meeting.

A spelling error in section II needs to be corrected.

A motion was made by Merrill; seconded by Meadows and carried unanimously to approve the minutes of the 12/06/16 meeting pending corrections.

II. CHAMPION UPDATES

Quality of Life – The group met recently with the Backus Board to discuss providing space for more youth activities. The group is encouraged to look at facilities in Grand Rapids and Brainerd as examples and ideas. Wellcome requested a report on Koochiching Moms for inclusion in an upcoming VF press release.

Beautify Koochiching County – The group will meet on 2/8/2017 and hope to have a nice turnout. Merrill met with MNHS member during the Grand Mound presentation and was able to discuss the by-way signage initiative and received useful advice and guidance.

Cross Border Initiative – This group is drafting a letter to send to each border city to support OARS – Outlying Area Reporting Stations. Wellcome and a member of the Cross-Border Initiative will bring the letter to each city’s council meeting and make a presentation. CBC Radio interviewed members of the Cross Border Initiative. The recording can be accessed through a link on the VF website.

Workforce Development – The group will meet in February to analyze the workforce survey results. The response rate was above average with 93 out of 250 businesses responding. Kudos to the team for a great effort in the workforce analysis.

Grow and Diversify Business – No one present to represent this Driver.

Tourism – CVB made its annual presentation to each represented city and the county and reinforced the efforts of Voyage Forward Tourism driver and the Cross Border Initiative. The group issued a press release for local newspapers on its recent activities. The group met with a member of the Polar Polers to discuss the Tilson Creek Ski Trail project/boardwalk project which would allow off-winter activities to occur.

Attract and Retain Businesses - As part of this group, the Border Young Professional will host a kick-off meeting at Lenard's on 1/26 from 5-7.

Economic Development/Marketing Partnership – As part of creating a single message and brand, the cities of Littlefork, Ranier, Northome and Big Falls have agreed to put the Voyage Forward logo on their cities' letterhead and website. The next item is to create a single message for the Voyage Forward region.

III. QUARTERLY MEETING

The group discussed the format of quarterly meetings to be held in each Voyage Forward community. The agenda would be tailored to engage that specific community. We will work with the community leader to determine a meaningful topic of interest. We will ask the community to also present to the Coalition to strategize and coordinate resources. Alyssa will reach out to each community leader to begin the process. The coalition will continue to meet monthly.

IV. BUDGET UPDATE

A check for \$500 was received from Border Bank in addition to \$1000 from TruStar and \$500 from Bremer Bank. The VF Coalition has a balance of \$1239.56

V. MARKETING

On the website, funders and stewards will be recognized. Wellcome donated \$133.60 to purchase Voyage Forward Window clings which can be sold for funding opportunities for a suggested donation of \$50. Any checks should be made out to Backus/Voyage Forward since Backus is our fiscal agent.

VI. SECRETARY/TREASURER ROLE

A draft job description was presented and amended to satisfy the duties required of the Secretary/Treasurer.

VII. STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN

A first draft of the strategic action plan was presented. Alyssa, Tammy and Shelia will review the draft, work on it further and present it at the next meeting.

VIII. OPEN DISCUSSION

At the next meeting, we will begin to discuss 501(c) (3) viability.

IX. NEXT MEETING DATE

The next Coalition meeting will be February 14 @ 1:30 pm @ Backus.

X. ADJOURN.

The group adjourned at 3:00.