

**VOYAGE FORWARD COALITION
MEETING MINUTES
MARCH 1, 2017 10:00
BACKUS COMMUNITY CENTER**

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

I. WELCOME

- a. To approve the agenda.

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

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

A spelling error in section III needs to be corrected.

A motion was made by Skrief; seconded by Meadows and carried unanimously to approve the minutes of the 01/10/2017 meeting pending corrections.

- c. Budget.

Gautreaux presented the budget report with a total balance of \$1739.65 emphasizing that VF has received \$3500 in donations since 10/2016; expenses totaled \$1760.35 mostly associated with website development and purchase of Survey Monkey subscription

II. UNDERAGE ALCOHOL USE AMONG STUDENT – BETH SLATINSKI

Beth Slatinski made a presentation on her role as P&I coordinator for the I’Falls school district which aims to reduce underage alcohol use through a 5 year grant. The program uses an approach called “positive community norms” which aims to improve community health with positive celebration. There will be a program kick-off on April 25 with a motivational speaker on positive behaviors.

As a part of this program Beth has organized a youth group called “Spirit of the Borderland” with the mission of community involvement. She will begin interviews of students in 6th to 12th grades asking them what community means to them. The campaign is called “together we are strong”. Beth would like to collaborate with Voyage Forward and believes it would be a positive link to youth community involvement. Coalition members thanked Beth for her presentation and appreciated her interest in collaborating with VF. Members of the coalition group will attend program kick-off and see where it fits into Voyage Forward.

III. CHAMPION UPDATES

Cross Border Initiative – The group drafted a letter seeking support of the use of modern technology with OARS – Outlying Area Reporting Stations which was presented to Kooch Co Board. Kooch Co.

Board agreed to advance the letter to our Federal representatives. The letter will also be forwarded to Ranier and l'Falls city councils seeking their support.

Quality of Life – The group continues to meet regarding an activity center for youth activities. The Koochiching Mom's Facebook page continues to be effective with 533 members.

Workforce Development – A subcommittee is currently analyzing the survey data with a goal of June/July for a final report.

Tourism – Heart of the Continent Partnership and Arrowhead Association have an upcoming workshop and will include a presentation on Google Maps. The group championed the Tilson Creek boardwalk project for the Polar Polers. The Polar Polers are awaiting their 501c3 designation. The Polers feel that the VF brand has benefited its grant and donation seeking efforts. Schultz attended a 2/27/17 meeting regarding the ATV taskforce which is identifying trails. A trail from Ericsburg to l'Falls that is suitable needs to be identified. He spoke about a border-to-border off-road vehicle initiative which has identified routes in southern Kooch County. A north-south feeder trail needs to be identified

Beautify Koochiching County – A co-champion, Janelle Feller, has been identified. The group has ideas on blight and county-wide cleanup. Roadside plantings in Northome were discussed. One member discussed walking tours that are being developed.

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

Attract and Retain Businesses - No one present to represent this Driver.

Economic Development/Marketing Partnership –The group is working on creating a single message for the Voyage Forward region and will meet tomorrow.

IV. QUARTERLY MEETING

Since Alysa has resigned from the Coalition (sad to see her go) Wellcome will reach out to each community to discuss meaningful topics for a meeting in each Voyage Forward community.

V. STRATEGIC PLANNING

Riley distributed a draft of the strategic planning document. Riley, Gautreaux, and Wellcome will work on the document and present it at the next meeting.

VI. MARKETING

The window clings are available for a suggested donation of \$50. A check for \$50 from NEMOJT for a window cling was received.

VII. PROS AND CONS OF BECOMING A NON-PROFIT CORPORATION

Meadows distributed a document outlining the pros and cons of becoming a non-profit corporation for discussion with the group. She discussed the advantages, disadvantages and alternatives to the non-profit status. In addition, Skrief distributed excerpts from a handbook for starting a successful not-for-profit. He emphasized page 8 which outlines the "stages of development during start-up". Bullet #1 states that organizations can continue with programs and activities as long as revenues do not exceed \$25,000 per year and the organization does not employ anyone. Thanks to Myrna and Doug for compiling this information for the group.

VIII. OPEN DISCUSSION

There are 3 open at-large positions open with Alysa Hackenmueller's resignation. The group would like a member from a zip code other than 56649 or 56668.

IX. NEXT MEETING DATE

The next Coalition meeting will be March 28 @ 10:00 am @ Backus.

X. ADJOURN.

The group adjourned at 12:00.