

Develop a Skilled, Trained and Educated Workforce that Meets the Needs of the Area

**Meeting Minutes from
August 31, 2017 | 3:00 p.m. Rainy River Community College | Room SC 114
Minutes Recorder: Tammy**

The July minutes were reviewed and accepted.

Welcome Dr. Roxanne Kelly, Rainy River Community College Provost. Bill Maki has asked Roxanne to attend future meetings in his place. Thank you to Bill for his 1.5 years of service.

The Workforce Development Team continues to focus on Determining the Skills of the Existing Workforce. At this time, no existing surveys related to identifying skills from the perspective of individuals in the labor force have been identified.

Additional follow-up with APEX (Area Partnerships for Economic Expansion) resulted in a phone conference with Brian Hanson, President & CEO and Ian Vincent, Senior Business Developer.

APEX will be conducting an assessment of the NE MN Region to determine existing skills gaps. Skills data is needed for site selectors interested in developing a business in our region. Koochiching County will be included in the areas surveyed. Data collected will be shared with economic development agencies and educational institutions.

APEX will be collecting Request for Proposals to select a professional organization to develop and administer the survey. The RFP will go out in the next 45-60 days. APEX anticipates administration of the survey to begin Nov. 2017 with final results by Sept. 2018.

Target audience for the survey will be individuals in the labor force and members of the business community. APEX wants to reach at least 50-100 participants from each county. APEX and IRRRB will select the survey participants.

Potential survey administration methods include electronic, direct calls and direct mailings. APEX will assist in developing survey questions and input from others will be accepted.

Projected budget for the project is \$100,000 with funds from APEX, IRRRB and other entities.

Voyage Forward Workforce Development participation in this project is welcomed and our committee will be included in the entire process. We can submit ideas for the project to Brian. APEX will send regular updates. Brian or Ian is open to speaking with our committee in person.

Committee questions and comments regarding APEX Skills Gap Assessment. Committee members present support working with APEX and are interested in learning more about the project.

Next Steps:

- Contact APEX/Brian Hanson and request a telepresence meeting to discuss and review the following topics;
 - Survey Administration: What are the components of the Request for Proposals? Will RFP include details about survey delivery, survey questions, data collection and how survey results will be shared?
 - Survey Delivery: Suggested partnering with MN Power and North Star Electric to mail surveys and incentives.
 - Survey Questions: Need to look at what we want to gain from this survey and how it correlates to the business needs survey.
 - Survey Data Collection: What is an appropriate sample size? Koochiching County has about 6,000 people in the labor force. Committee feels 50-100 participants is not a valid sample.
 - Survey Funding: Committee would like to see more than 100 survey participants. Is there a cost for additional participants?

Next Meeting: A Doodle request will be sent to committee members to select the next meeting date.

Stewards Present: Roxanne Kelly, Kevin Grover, Jean Evens, and Tammy Riley