Minutes
West Michigan Prosperity Alliance Steering Committee
August 18, 2014
10:00 a.m.
Location: Muskegon Community College

I. CALL TO ORDER:
John Weiss called the 18th meeting to order at 11:00 am.

Members Present: John Weiss, Executive Director, GVMC
Roger Safford, Region Engineer, State of Michigan, DOT
Jim Sandy, President, Mecosta County Development Cooperation
Deborah Groeneveld, Exec Director, MI Works! Muskegon-Oceana
Bill Raymond, Executive Director, Ottawa County Michigan Works!
Jacob Maas, Executive Director, Kent-Allegan Michigan Works!
Dave Bee, Director, WMRPC
Erin Kuhn, Program Manager, WMSRDC
Simone Jonaitis, Executive Director, GVSU-Center for Adult/Continuing Students
Dan Rinsema-Sybenga, Dean, Muskegon Community College
Valerie Byrnes Barry County Economic Development
Jim Fisher, Padnos Recycling/Talent 2025
Paul Griffith, Executive Director Michigan Works! West Central
Mike O’Connor, Director of Adult Education, Zeeland
Kathy Maclean, Ludington/Scottville CofC/MCGA
Ed Garner, President, Muskegon Area First

Members Excused: Steve Bulthuis, Doug Wood, Fiona Hert, Linda Brand, Rick Chapla,
Kathleen Sullivan, Kevin Stotts, Bruce Adair and Andy Johnston

II. INTRODUCTIONS:
Dr. Dale Nesbary, President of Muskegon Community College, introduced himself and spoke about the Health Center and Art and Music Department expansion that will be constructed at the current location and the new downtown location for M.C.C., and added that a $24 million bond approval will pay for the new location. The college received $4.6 million grant from the State of Michigan for the science building.

III. APPROVAL OF AGENDA:
Motion by Jacob Maas, seconded by Erin Kuhn to approve the agenda as presented. The motion carried on a voice vote.

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:
Motion by Deborah Groeneveld, seconded by Jacob Maas, to approve the minutes of July 31, 2014. The motion carried on a voice vote.
V. PRESENTATION OF REGIONAL AREA

Bob Lukens, Community Development Director for Muskegon County gave a presentation about the history and growth of Muskegon County.

John Weiss reported that the general session will take in early October. The top six projects will give a brief fifteen minute presentation and touch on common bullet points. There will be a clicker system for voting that will take the six projects down to three. They will start with demographic questions. What is most important will be for the vote to be on environment, talent and infrastructure. John stated that the applications for next year’s RPI are due by November 1st, and the group will need to vote on the total plan to submit for next year’s application. There will be a 1½ hour meeting followed by the Steering Committee meeting. We must have all the requirements for this year’s application completed before the submittal of next year’s application.

Paul Griffith made the suggestion to give a preview of the projects before the meeting and to direct them to the website.

Jim Fisher we need to send an invitation to say what the outcome of the meeting will be. He suggested giving the presenters five minutes to present, and ten minutes for a question and answer session. Erin Kuhn stated that the State needs to be told that the region is behind the projects. Jacob Maas added that we would say we are going to use the leftover funds from the first RPI year as start-up/seed money for the projects.

Paul Griffith stated that the projects should be ranked 1-6 and if they cannot do one of the 1-3 they move to number four.

Jim Weiss stated that we need to tell the State that this is a key project for our region and ask them to participate. He also suggested that for next year’s grant, the start-up needs to be written in from the State and the philanthropic agencies that will donate.

WMSRDC will be working up the presentation/questions for the meeting.

VI. PLAN/PROJECT DISCUSSION – DAVE BEE, ERIN KUHN

The plan/project is nearly complete, with a description of the organizations involved. They also stated what the definition of prosperity is, and gave two goals: one for alliance and one for communities. There will be a list of projects and their criteria given, and they will be ranked into three tiers. The focus will be on the top six in tier one. Letters will then be sent to tier two and three telling them the group supports them and telling them about the connection they have to other subcommittees.
VII. COMMITTEE PRESENTATIONS:

Ed Garner reported that the base camp is being used. He also added that for the public communications, and application strategy at the last meeting was discussed and is on the website.

VIII. OTHER BUSINESS

Jim Sandy stated that they need to try to sell this as a committee, and giving a track record of other collaborations, such as the Strategic Alliance and Talent 2025. Erin Kuhn stated that we need to be able to answer “Why the committee should get behind the strategic design project, and asked how it will affect them”. This question should be given to the presenters to answer.

It was also mentioned that supports letter should be sent from the RPI Committee is the projects are applying for grants.

IX. OPEN DISCUSSION OF COLLABORATION/COLLABORATION EFFORTS

The group recognized MDOT for their collaboration/reorganization. The group discussed the Section 107 Adult Education changes with Kent ISD as the fiscal agent for Region 4 Adult Education dollars.

X. ANY NEWS FOR THE GOOD OF THE GROUP

The ribbon cutting for new Tanger Outlet Mall in Wyoming, Michigan was discussed.

XI. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will take place October 10th, with 10:00a.m.-12:00p.m. for the large general session group, and 12:00p.m.-1:30p.m. for the RPI Steering Committee meeting.

XII. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 12:18 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Deborah Groeneveld