



Visions Northwest Regional Economic Development Group
A Division of the Wisconsin Business Innovation Corporation

MEETING MINUTES
VISIONS NORTHWEST REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GROUP
WITC Hayward – Room 4
July 12, 2017

1. Meeting called to order at 10:05 AM by Chairman Kelly Klein.
2. **Roll Call/Introductions:** Scottie Sandstrom – Representing Bayfield County, John Richards – Representing Burnett County, Kelly Klein – Representing Iron County, Dale Heikkinen – Representing Price County (ITV), Don Semler – Representing Sawyer County, Joel Zimmerman – Representing Washburn County, Mari Kay-Nabozny – Representing NWWIB, Dale Kupczyk – Representing Economic Development Organizations, Geri Dresen – Representing Chambers of Commerce, Leo Naumann – Representing Private Industry (Jeff Foster Trucking), Jenice Meyer (for Renee Wachter) – Representing Education (NorthWERD Group)

Members Absent: Mike Bebeau – Representing Private Industry (Xcel Energy), John Will – Representing Education (WITC), Andy Albarado – Representing Rusk County, Becky Haase – Enbridge

Others Present: Marie Steenlage – WEDC, Thomas Michels – Department of Workforce Development, Jim Miller – Outreach Representative – Congressman Duffy, Mary Ann Lippert – Governor Walker's Northern Office, Jason Laumann – NWRPC, Clem Larson – NWRPC, Crystal Rohde – Visions Northwest Administrator

Vacant Seats: Ashland County, Douglas County, Taylor County – Tribal Representative

3. **Approval of May 10th, 2017 Meeting Minutes**
A motion to approve the March 8th, 2017 meeting minutes was made by Dale K.; a second was made by Mari K.N. Motion carried unanimously.
4. **Visions Northwest Administrator's Report**
Crystal summarized the handout in the packet highlighting the coordination of the RI&E Sessions and Wood Collaborative meetings over the past few months.
5. **Presentation: Northwest Wisconsin Infrastructure Capacity Analysis**
Crystal gave a brief description of the Capacity Building project that was produced from a \$50,000 WEDC/\$10,000 NWRPC grant awarded in 2015. The project includes an analysis of the natural gas, sewer/water, and broadband capacity throughout the 10-county region as well as a map server that accompanies the analysis.

Jason Laumann, NWRPC gave a presentation to the board members summarizing the analysis and discussing the many barriers that were encountered during the data collection process. Members questioned some of the content in the analysis. Jason and Clem emphasized that the analysis was produced to the best of the organization's ability with the data that was available.

Unfortunately, due to technical difficulties with WITC's equipment, the map server was not able to be shown during the presentation.

Any comments or corrections to the analysis can be directed to Crystal Rohde at crohde@nwrpc.com or map related corrections to Clem Larson, GIS Specialist at clarson@nwrpc.com or call 715.635.2197.

6. Board Memberships and Terms

Crystal referred to the handout highlighting the members who had terms expire this month. She corresponded directly with each member prior to the meeting to inquire whether or not they wished to stay on the board moving forward. Members who are county appointed will need to be reappointed by their respective county board as soon as possible. Updated terms are as follows:

Douglas County: Currently vacant until county appointment is made

Rusk County: Andy Albardo – expires 2020 (waiting on county appointment to be made)

Sawyer County: Don Semler – expires 2020 – Sawyer County appointed June, 2017

Economic Development Rep: Dale Kupczyk – expires 2017

Private Industry, Enbridge: Becky Haase – expires 2020

With Ken Maki leaving the board, the role of treasurer/secretary in the executive committee is now vacant. It was discussed that elections should occur for the board at the next meeting in September.

Scottie Sandstrom noted that a representative from Lac du Flambeau had mentioned to him that Brent McFarland had resigned from Lac du Flambeau Business Development recently. Crystal will work with the executive committee members to find a replacement for the tribal representation on the board.

7. Career Cruising Inspire - Update

Crystal told the board that she has worked to form an advisory committee which will meet on Monday, July 17th to discuss branding, work based learning activities, deployment in potential pilot regions, and sustainability of the platform. Visions Northwest intends to partner with Northwest Wisconsin Workforce Investment Board as the administrative entity to oversee the deployment. There has been discussion about adding five additional counties from the Grow North Region to the Visions Northwest deployment as well. Visions Northwest will likely be seeking funding from WEDC to cover costs associated with the deployment. Questions remain regarding sustainability after the initial funding has been expended.

8. 2017 RisE Sessions: Follow-Up

The 2017 sessions came to a close in June in Ladysmith. Crystal noted that Shell Lake had ~40 attendees, Hurley had ~25 attendees, and Ladysmith had ~45 attendees. All of the sessions have received very positive feedback and attendees have expressed much appreciation for the discussion and material presented. Kelly Klein's office produced a fantastic infographic to summarize the feedback from the three young professional panels. The website has been updated with all of the materials from the sessions including the presentation, handouts, young professional panel bios, and panel discussion. Materials can be accessed at: <http://www.visionsnorthwest.org/rise-sessions>

As more information comes available from the study presented at the sessions, Crystal will share it with attendees, put it in the newsletter, and update the website. With the sponsorships received this year, the sessions will have some funds remaining in the budget for future endeavors.

9. Wood Industry Group Collaborative

Kelly Klein updated the members on the wood products collaborative, noting that the group will be doing a SOAR: Strengths, Opportunities, Aspirations, Results strategic planning exercise at the next meeting to be held on July 26, 2017 and will be facilitated by Jason Laumann with NWRPC. This planning exercise will help the collaborative put an organized framework together as it moves forward with strategic planning, projects, and funding proposals. The collaborative has also been in conversation with Mary Ann Lippert regarding the upcoming Governor's Northern Community and Economic Development Summit and hosting a starter session focused on the wood products industry.

10. Around the Table – Other Business

Mary Ann Lippert was excited to announce the addition of "Community" to the title of the Governor's Northern Economic and Community Development Summit taking place in October in Trego, WI. She mentioned that if Visions Northwest or other organizations/partnerships wanted to utilize meeting space prior to the starter sessions to let her know so she can assist in coordination of that. She also explained that it is the goal of the summit this year to involve the target audience in the planning on what summit includes instead of state officials coming in and decided what to focus on. Her first planning meeting will be taking place on Thursday, July 20th – a handout requesting cabinet members was distributed and is due back to Mary Ann by Monday, July 17th.

Jim Miller announced that there will be a congressional field hearing that Sean Duffy plans to attend on July 21st at Lac Courte Oreilles regarding NAHASDA.

Scottie Sandstrom highlighted the upcoming Business on Stage to be held on July 25th, 2017 featuring three art businesses. For more information, visit: <http://www.businessonstage.org/>

Jenice Meyer updated the members on NorthWERD and the recent meeting they held to refocus efforts and align with NWWIB and Visions Northwest initiatives. They will reconvene as a group again in October.

Leo Naumann gave a brief update on Jeff Foster Trucking saying that 40 dedicated drivers are to be hired to bring Aspen out of Colorado (2 trucks/day) as well as 100 truckloads/week out of Canada.

Marie Steenlage said that although the state budget has not been approved, WEDC is still business as usual for the most part. Feel free to contact Marie regarding any projects or with any questions.

Mari Kay-Nabozny told the group that Andrea Huggenvik, Sector and Strategies Coordinator will be leaving NWWIB at the end of the week to take a new job in the Wausau area. Her job has been posted and they will be working to fill her position as soon as possible.

11. Confirm Next Meeting Date

The next Visions Northwest meeting will take place on September 13th, 2017 at WITC Hayward at 10:00 AM.

12. Adjourn

A motion to adjourn the meeting at 11:59 AM was made by Joel Z.; with a second by Leo N.

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