

Meeting Notes

Date: 4-21-09, 9 a.m.

Location: Room D/E, Rock County Job Center

RE: CORD Steering Committee Meeting

The following CORD Steering Team members and others were present: Bob Borremans (presiding), Mary Fanning-Penny, Mary Frederick, James Otterstein, Josh Smith, Carrie Hermanson, Jim Stickels, Bud Gayhart, Janine Peterson, Gregg Bosak (recording) and Gary Sedlacek and Henry Sanders.

Following introductions, Gary Sedlacek, Small Business Consultant with The Biz Coach, LLC, Janesville spoke about his services. He was with Hormel for about 40 years, coming to Beloit in 1979 as Plant Controller. His love of small business involved him in SCORE (helping to start the Beloit chapter). He also started Arrow Industries (producer of palettes, crates, skids, etc.) where he ran the company for 19 years, increasing from one to 19 employees. He started The Biz Coach last October and currently has had many area manufacturers as his clients. He uses a hands-on approach to business consulting, working with them personally, utilizing a "walk-through" process and speaking about the "break-even" analysis to help ensure success. Most of his clients come from referrals. He described the various clients he is working with, types of businesses, and outcomes. Bob related that Gary's activities tie in with some of the activities that James and Bud are initiating, and when and where possible, they might work in coordination.

Henry Sanders, Executive Director of Propel Wisconsin Innovation, told of his background, which included working for Representative Tammy Baldwin, the Wisconsin Housing and Economic Development Authority (WHEDA), the Madison Chamber of Commerce, and several others. He is also the founder and president of the Madison Area Growth Network (MAGNET), which works to attract and retain skilled young people in the Madison area. Propel is designed to help entrepreneurial clients "cut the red tape," while directing people to their web site. Henry mentioned the possibility of a 5-6 hour June dislocated worker workshop at BTC, featuring a keynote speaker/breakout sessions. Following discussion and input from James and Bud, they agreed to coordinate efforts as much as possible. Bud spoke of the Wisconsin Entrepreneur's Network (WEN), which has struggled to get established in many areas (UW-Whitewater and BTC are members). Henry's efforts might coincide well with an application James's group has developed for a federal grant application. James shared his thoughts on a "flowchart/blueprint" he developed as he was listening should the \$700,000 grant being applied for be approved. If not, James felt portions could still be implemented. James mentioned that the Job Center would have a large role in getting individuals identified and participating. Carrie mentioned that another good source to involve would be the Wisconsin Women Entrepreneur group.

Bob summarized the meeting with Larry Molnar on April 13 (minutes included), and the session in Chicago where he was able to speak with Ed Montgomery (Obama appointee for the Department of Labor Review Team for the transition) and Gay Gilbert, Workforce Investment Act administrator. It was determined that Bob should invite Ed to Janesville, but only after our plans/blueprint has some "substance" to it. Janine mentioned that Gail Graham has spoken to Larry Squire, Mary Willmer-Sheedy, Larry Barton and several other local financial leaders regarding moving forward with the financial plans, especially in the foreclosure mediation and banks/credit unions sector, where there has already been much positive movement.

Bob reviewed the tie-in to the four major areas Larry and the group identified in the December meeting:

- on-line project (with Monster)
- financial (which Janine described earlier)
- housing (addressing foreclosures, payments, etc., which could be combined with the financial section)
- community-based education/schools/training (use of existing materials, tools, facilities and creating more short-term, flexible, certificate-type training opportunities)

Larry's concern of GM bankruptcy was mentioned, with the need to move forward before that happens. It appears we have done what is necessary to this point, with no further action possible until GM's future is determined. The State is aware of our interest should the equipment/facilities become available. Mary F. will be retiring, leaving the plant on June 25, but between she and John Pearce they will try to remain active and/or keep us informed of what is occurring.

Bud mentioned that he spoke to co-worker Deanne Casey who was at the conference in Michigan, and learned they have a Project 60 program that allows free education to those 60 years and older. The group cautioned that attention needed to be paid to class capacity and avoiding displacing "paying" students.

Bob mentioned that the Center for Automotive Research (CAR) website will have a full presentation from the conference. Mary spoke about the long history CAR has had with the Janesville GM plant, which could work to our advantage. Bob added that the only disappointing aspect of the conference was it should have focused more on the retaining of skilled persons rather than all workers.

Bob mentioned that Workforce Development has entered into a contract with Monster.com whereby anyone can place a resume on site, employers within a 100 mile radius can get jobs posted, etc. It is a one-year license agreement.

Bob spoke of a contact he had with Minot, North Dakota, seeking cooperation in contacting dislocated workers, letting them know of the opportunities in their state. Their state has more than 10,000 jobs to fill. As a point of reference, Wisconsin has about 13,000. Bud had spoken with Sarah Johnson, Talent Marketing Coordinator for the North Dakota Department of Commerce. Two sites that provide further information include www.ExperienceND.com and www.FindJobsND.com. Discussion followed on how involved the SWWDB/Bob and CORD group should be promoting these jobs. Bob and Josh indicated that one of the roles of the Job Center is to make persons aware of all jobs available. James cautioned that we needed to be aware of the political ramifications, taking talent away from the state. Bob mentioned the North Dakota people were well aware of the problems we would encounter with this request. The CORD group agreed that we could make information available, but as to whether we should co-sponsor any events with them or provide locations, it may not be appropriate, e.g., we should limit our overall support and involvement based on the request or type of activity.

Mary Frederick mentioned that with all of the negative press regarding the GM situation and economy, positive press would be welcome. Bob mentioned several initiatives currently underway and being planned which will hopefully make that a reality. Bob also mentioned that the SWWDB has received \$1.7 million in stimulus money to be used for the Summer Youth Employment program and programs for adults, youth and dislocated workers covering the six-county area, with 70% designated for training.

Bob reviewed the "Blueprint for Transition: Action Matrix" and the group concurred that we should designate the next meeting be devoted entirely to reviewing and completing that document, with assignments for tasks and responsibilities. The meeting concluded at 10:55 a.m.