

Meeting Notes

Date: 12-23-09, 9 a.m.

Location: Room HS, Rock County Job Center

RE: CORD Steering Committee Meeting

The following CORD Steering Team members were present: Bob Borremans (presiding), Jim Stickels, Mary Fanning-Penny, Eric Kuznacic, Josh Smith, Lisa Furseth, Mary Buelow, Gail Graham, Mary Fredrick, John Dohner, Jr. and Gregg Bosak (recording)

Following introductions, Bob reviewed the process that led to the probable Dr. Ed Montgomery visit. Larry Molnar was speaking at a meeting when Dr. Montgomery walked in and heard Larry extolling the work of CORD and how advanced we were in attempting to address the unemployment situation. As a result, Dr. Montgomery's office located the letter we had sent through Congressman's Ryan office requesting a visit. Dr. Montgomery seemed especially interested in the Digital Nation and financial/foreclosure mitigation efforts. The result is that it appears very likely that he will come to Rock County. Bob wanted to be sure we were well-prepared for his visit.

Eric Kuznacic distributed some background information on Dr. Montgomery. It included a brief biographical sketch, and his involvement in assisting workers/programs in Kokomo, Indiana and Flint, Michigan.

Bob indicated that Dr. Montgomery's office is seeking new ideas and almost all requests are being accepted, so we need to be prepared. Bob said his perspective on how we might present to Dr. Montgomery when he arrives might consist of five main segments:

1. CORD's initiatives
2. Economic impact of the GM closing and Economic Development efforts, including the new 5.0 program
3. Political aspect of inviting (but limiting 'speeches') of legislators/dignitaries
4. Involving impacted workers to share their concerns—perhaps a town hall type of meeting?
5. Media—time for them to interview and ask questions.

Lisa questioned what our outcome should be—what do we leave him with as our request? Josh thought awareness was a major point but also the needs of the impacted workers was very important too. He felt we needed to tie it back to the workers. Bob mentioned that a 'selling point' is that Rock County could be a 'demonstration' project that could be utilized by other communities. Jim voiced concern that we need to include an 'ask' to help build capacities of 'overstretched' services. Mary said the message we're trying to impart is that we're different, show how we've adapted and changed.

Bob said that Larry Molnar has identified four stages of economic distress that will impact any recovery:

1. Closure of the production facility
2. Loss of benefits
3. Collapse of the supplier industries
4. Collapse of the real estate market.

All agreed that we're just coming into phase two and that will impact a large number of people in Rock County in this coming year.

Lisa mentioned that we also have hit a 'capacity wall.' We just need to do what we all do best and give Montgomery a prioritized list of what we seek for funding. Josh felt our niche was the human aspect of things versus the economic portion. Gail said the 5.0 project seems well on its way to raising their funding goal of \$1 million to deal with the economic portion—that CORD deals best with the human aspects. Lisa said we need to start and wrap up the presentation with a core group of stakeholders delivering a united, cohesive message.

Bob said he was going to meet with James to discuss Rock County 5.0 involvement. Mary Fredrick asked why Dr. Montgomery is coming here. Bob explained it was due several factors: 1. Rep. Ryan's letter; 2. We're far ahead of other communities in similar situations; 3. We're isolated—a 'self-contained' area different from most. Bob likened the main components of CORD and its proposals to a four-legged stool, comprised of the United Way, workforce development, Monster, and media. Three solid proposals that have evolved from this process revolve around the Digital Nation, foreclosures, and funding issues for training.

To assist in determining where we are compared to last year, the Priority List developed last year (December, 2008) will be sent to all Steering Team members. Lisa indicated we needed to look ahead and not just what our current needs are. Mary Fredrick mentioned that both FreddieMac and FannieMae laws need to be changed to help the unemployed deal with refinancing and foreclosure situations. Josh said we needed to come up with a Montgomery presentation that is concise and packaged well.

Bob thought we should involve Larry Molnar in the next CORD meeting set for Tuesday, January 5th. Bob will also speak to Larry to see where we are with the current or newly-planned proposals. Jim mentioned that he is currently working with UW-Parkside on a literacy proposal and they had done some work on capacity building. He will seek resources on capacity building from them. Lisa felt we needed more information on what is happening with the young people/secondary schools. Contact has been made mainly through the superintendents and both Janesville and Beloit had changes over the past year. The SWWDB staff will call them to make them aware and invite their participation.

Gail indicated we needed to identify who we want to speak at the Montgomery event. All agreed we have four solid proposal ideas::

1. Digital Nation
2. Foreclosure
3. Funding for training/how to assist limited skill workers
4. Building capacity.

The next meeting is set for January 5th. CORD Steering Team members should come prepared to discuss who should be speaking at the Montgomery event and what aspects should be included. Gregg distributed information regarding the January 15th Service Provider Summit, which evolved from a CORD Steering Team direction, to be held at the Job Center from 9-11:45 a.m. It will be a media event, plus unveil and highlight CORD's initiatives, including the new interactive Matrix for Transition. Gregg is seeking facilitators for the second portion of the meeting when subgroups will convene based on their type of service (i.e., financial, child care, health care, etc.) Gregg will contact individuals on CORD that he feels are well-versed in a particular service. The meeting ended at 10:30 a.m.