

## Meeting Notes

**Date:** 9-13-11, 9 a.m.

**Location:** Room H, Rock County Job Center

**RE:** CORD Steering Committee Meeting

The following CORD Steering Team members were present: Bob Borremans (presiding), Janine Peterson, Carrie Hermanson, Yuri Rashkin, Steve Huth, Russ Podzilni, Sharon Kennedy, Steve Kincaid, Mary Frederick, Helen Forbeck, James Otterstein, Linda Fair, Georgia Lieber, Mary Buelow, Linda Ward and Gregg Bosak (recording)

Following introductions, Bob Borremans indicated he has spoken at least quarterly with Teno Villareal, and with a new Director on board for the Office of Recovery for Auto Communities and Workers (Executive Director Jay Williams), Teno has not yet had a chance to speak extensively with him. Williams' background is more extensive in city government. Teno indicated he did not see any major change of direction. It was mentioned perhaps we could attempt to have Mr. Williams come to Rock County.

Next the *Blueprint for Transition: Action Matrix* was briefly reviewed. It was decided that each individual on the CORD committee would review this and either send changes/updates to Gregg Bosak or bring those to the next meeting.

Helen Forbeck mentioned she had heard there were state labor dollars available. James Otterstein indicated these funds, handled through the Department of Family and Child Services, were not a real source of revenue with no long-term or start-up dollars included. Sharon Kennedy mentioned the state has suggested what we should do but has placed no dollars behind it. It is a project possibility that CAP will be exploring. Bob mentioned that DWD did pledge some support, but is not sure where that money will come from. Discretionary funding was reduced from 15% to 5% with the state holding the other 10% until Congress makes a decision on amounts. However, the money is not being anticipated.

Steve Huth mentioned Dr. Clyde Hornberger of Lehigh Career and Technical Institute would be coming to Janesville this weekend to speak about this related topic. All are invited.

James indicated that there was a survey completed of over 100 companies in the Rock County area and the outlook for hiring is lean. Those most 'at risk' are individuals lacking basic skills. Randall Upton of the Beloit Chamber is attempting to organize efforts for a Beloit Skills Center to be located at the Eclipse Center. It would serve low income, economically disadvantaged persons who possess multiple barriers to employment. Training would focus on specific skills for specific jobs in the area. Since no funds have been allocated to this, Randall will attempt to mobilize a process to locate, solicit and hopefully obtain funds for this project. It is also hoped that with the proposed American Jobs Act, the Skills Center might coordinate activities that evolve from this act. Efforts would help local employers take advantage of tax credits and other incentives for businesses that hire and expand their workforce or increase wages for existing workers.

The question was asked how the SWWDB's Wanted Analytics software was being utilized. Bob mentioned it regionalized all postings in our area. It doesn't really get into the skills sets but more in job titles. Sharon mentioned that BTC uses it. Eric Kuznacic has more details on it. He can be reached at 741-3502 or e-mail [e.kuznacic@swwdb.org](mailto:e.kuznacic@swwdb.org). It was recommended that perhaps at the next meeting he could demo it.

Georgia Lieber mentioned her Computer Literacy committee has submitted several grants. Their group is a collaboration of many entities, each offering a different way of teaching. They are now attempting to determine the best way to bring a continuum. They are waiting on hearing about potential funding. Mary B. indicated they're working with a less-motivated population, and they need unique methods to get them involved. Sharon mentioned that the libraries conducted a survey of manufacturers to help them define what they needed. Entry-level skills were important. Even high

school students know how to text but may lack computer skills. James mentioned that employers are tired of being over-surveyed, and better ways to assess needs should be considered. He indicated we need to build a system to bring these survey needs together to cut down on those numbers of contacts.

Bob mentioned the Career Pathways model—the *Pathways to Prosperity* report as an important initiative leading to increased technology education. Led by Michael Underwood, President of Velocity Learning Systems in Madison ([www.velocitymsn.com](http://www.velocitymsn.com)), the report includes initiatives on ways to better connect kids in the classroom to realistic opportunities for future meaningful work. Steve Huth mentioned Project Lead The Way ([www.PLTW.org](http://www.PLTW.org)) is another method/organization leading to excellence in teaching and in the classroom.

Georgia indicated that the GED is now going electric—another reason for basic computer skills.

Mary Frederick asked how many businesses conduct on-site training. James indicated in larger businesses 10-15% of their budget seems to be an average. Much is OJT but it varies by the company and industry. James indicated in the current economy this figure has lessened. Bob indicated a problem is getting people to take advantage of their training resources available. .

Next hiring problems were discussed, much centered around welding. Sharon indicated problems with United Alloy and how they phrased an ad seeking welders. James felt it is a capacity issue, along with a physical location to accommodate trainees. Resources are not available. Georgia indicated private sector support is needed.

Yuri asked where we are headed with this group. Bob indicated Washington D.C. is still interested in assisting, but we need to tell them what we desire. As a starting point, we need to look at the Matrix and make updates/changes. Bob is willing to engage Washington and the University of Michigan (Molnar) with key initiatives, human services, etc. but group guidance is needed. Steve asked if we have any current numbers on plant dislocations, where they are, etc. Mary F. indicated it is sketchy at best. Mary B. indicated three years ago when CORD organized we had a clearer focus—we've moved past that. We're now looking at more diverse workers. It is a constant battle—who pays? George indicated she felt our push should be to get people employed, even though that may not be the long-term solution. Mary F. felt CORD might want to consider connecting with small businesses to help them with training. We need to update the Matrix to help guide us to our future activities. Everyone should work on that and send in prior or bring to the next meeting.

The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, December 6. The meeting adjourned at 10:35 a.m.