

SUMMARY OF INFORMATION FROM INDIVIDUAL GROUPS AT THE CORD SERVICE PROVIDER SUMMIT

Held on Friday, January 15, 2010

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT/LEGISLATIVE GROUP

BUSINESS/ORGANIZATIONAL SUMMARIES

Chamber of Commerce (325 + members/investors)

- Managing the Economy is the Challenge and Priority #1
- Workforce Supply is Straining Health & Human Services
- Emerging Opportunities & Optimism--Rock County 5.0 Is a Positive
- No Single Solution Exists—Need Continued Creativity, Value-Added, etc.

Greater Beloit Economic Development Corporation (70 + members/investors)

- Rock County 5.0—Welcomed Communication & Collaboration Enhancements
- Members' Surveys Indicate Tepid or Cautious Future—Short-Term Opportunities for Economic Activity are Linked to Inventory Build-Up Activities

Family Services of Rock/Walworth County (500+ Families)

- 11 Locations in 7 Cities—Strained Capacities & Resources (especially Bilingual Services)
- Creative Solutions—360 Degrees, Including But Not Limited To Entrepreneurship & Customized/Targeted Constituency Groups

Veterans Services

- Increased Training Emphasis Targeted for and By Veterans, Including Those Dislocated and/or Returning from Deployment Assignments
- Increased Business Start-Up Assistance
- 50% Increase in Demand for Client Services
- Older Vets Are Lacking Income

UW-Whitewater Small Business Development Center

- Offers 360 Degree Business Services to Both Existing & New Firms
- Tight Economic Conditions—Declining Numbers of Clients for New Start-Up
- Increased Demand From Existing Businesses Facing Financial Problems
- Future Potential Pent-Up Demand & Opportunity Exists
- E-Hub Program Starts in February/March 2010

Congressman Ryan's Office

- Need to Identify \$ with a Legislative Match
- Common Themes—Grant Assistance, Grant Research and Connecting/Directing Constituents to Resources

Mercy Health System (60 + facilities in Southcentral WI/Northeast Illinois)

- Increased Need for Health Services--especially for employees/employers without insurance
- Increased Medicaid Clients—Problematic Due to Low Cost Reimbursement
- Continued Growth & Investment--\$60MM in Rock & Walworth Facilities; Filling Niche Needs & Increasing Job Opportunities

Economic Development (Rock 5.0)

- Integrated Public/Private with Increased Emphasis on Private Engagement
- Basic Platform—Collaboration, Communication & Connections
- Implementation Focused & Targeted Strategies
- Right-Sized Deliverables & Outcomes

COLLABORATION/PARTNERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

Health Care Services (Healthnet)—collaborate with competitors, potential nationwide model

- Populations Not Being Served (Federal Regulations Were An Obstacle)
- Staffing/Facility (capacity)
- Negotiated Pilot Project (est. 2 ¾ years ago) 325-350 new patients monthly
 - Healthnet Clients Accepted at Janesville CHS and Beloit HS
 - Increase in Primary Care, Decrease in ER Activity, decrease in Lost Leader \$

Vets/BIT Connections & Communications

- Testimonials
- Connect/Direct
- 3 Extra Staff Are Needed
- Need Mentors (Peer & Professional)
- Targeted Outreach

Head Start

- 360 Degrees (Social)
- Decrease in Services Available to Parents/Need More Staff to Address
- Resource Directory
- Low Income Challenges

- Increased Need for Childcare (hours & operation)(sick/ill coverage)(FMLA process/bilingual)
- Skills Pushed to Later Hours
- 4-3-Rock County; 2-bilingual; 1-Walworth, rural vs. urban issues
- Biz—Bilingual Services/Info; Micro loans
- GBEDC—Staffing issues, outreach, RLF changes (fed regs)

NEEDS/GAPS

- Targeted/Customized Services (energizing needs)
- Increased & Enhanced Communications
- Increased Staffing (bilingual)
- Collaboration Interests (require vision, leadership, staffing)
- Increased Resources & Enhanced Flexibility

FINANCIAL GROUP

OVERALL CONCERNS

- Foreclosure Moratorium
- Foreclosure Counseling
- Rock County Mediation
- Public Awareness of Need for Immediate Contact
- Resource for 'Sold' Loans
- Budget Counseling
- Pre-emptive Letters

ISSUES

- 'Sold' Loans
 - Contact Lists
 - Knowing Who Owns the Loan
 - Getting Borrowers in Quickly
 - Communication
- Scam Artists

HUMAN ISSUES

- Trauma of Financial Stress
 - Mental Health--Impact on Empl.
- Neighborhood Impact

NEEDS

- Mental Counseling Services
 - Could We Get Professionals to Offer Services?
- Money in Motion
 - On-Line
 - In Community
- Funding
- Payday Lender Issues
- Scams—Education
 - Billboards
 - Websites
 - Get Info to **Them**
 - Newsletters
 - Make Available Around County

NEXT STEPS

- Convene Group of Credit Union/Bankers in Rock County
- Focus on Needs/Information Sharing
- Grants

HUMAN SERVICES/OTHER GROUP

Present

- Cheryl, Rock/Walworth Head Start
- James Ivy, New Zion Baptist Church
- Donna Hays, 1st Choice Women's Health Center
- Deb, Rock Co. Health Dept.
- Michelle, City of Beloit Transit
- Rebecca, Beloit Community Health Center
- Carrie, Mercy Health Case Manager
- Cindy, AFL-CIO LETC (Labor Education & Training Center)
- Julie, AFL-CIO LETC
- Crusita, YWCA Immigrant Outreach
- Kelly, Rock County Human Services
- Diana, Dept. Vocational Rehabilitation
- Amy, Dept. Workforce Development
- Mike, City of Janesville Transit
- Janine, United Way of North Rock Co., First Call, Rock Responds

SUCCESS STORIES

- Head Start--Fatherhood Initiative, Early Childhood Education/Wellness, Parental Leadership—all free services
- Zion Baptist—Referral/Liaison to Other Services

- 1st Choice Women's Health—Free Reproductive Health, Pregnancy Awareness, Referrals to Health Dept., Wisconsin Well Women's Program (cancer screenings), Literacy/Family Practice Education
- Health Department—Pre-Natal/Post-Partum Services, Immunizations, Referrals to Other Agencies
- Beloit Transit—Beloit/Janesville Express, Transportation Independence Education
- Beloit Community Health Care—Screenings for Community Health Programs, Sliding Scale Fees. Free/Discounted Prescriptions, Convenient Care (Beloit), Urgent Care (Janesville)
- Mercy Health—Financial Counselors (Screening for Community Health Services), Community Care Applications (For Past Billings/Services)
- AFL-CIO—Try to Bring National Resources to Local Organization, Transitioning Auto Workers Into Students; Java & Jobs (Peer-to-Peer Networking)
- YWCA—Info/Referral/Navigation System/Case Management
- Rock County Human Services: Serving 15,000+ Families; Implemented Badgercare Program, Adding Staff
- DVR—Serve High School Age and Older, Training & Work Experiences, OJT, Workers' Comp., Case Management, Assessments
- DWD—JobCenterofWisconsin.com, Job Center Resource Room, Career Readiness Certificate (Work Keys)
- Janesville Transit—Beloit-Janesville Express, Reduced-rate Tokens
- United Way—First Call (Information/Referral), Rock Responds

IDENTIFIED GAPS IN SERVICES

- \$/More Staff
- Waiting List for Badgercare Program (eligibility-income-based)
- Need to Increase Awareness of Programs
- Extended Hours of Transit Service (Evenings/Weekends)
- Outreach/Services for 50-65 Age Group (How to Transition)
- Income/Restrictions for Eviction/Foreclosure Abatement Services-Age/Family
 - Limits of Service Levels (\$550)
 - Limits on Amount of Help (No. Months) Received
- Gap in Emergency Funds (Evictions, Homelessness)
 - Utility Cutoffs Causes Homelessness
 - Rent, Health, Utility, Transportation Assistance (Bus Tokens, Gas, \$)
- Access to ADOA, Mental Health Services—All Age Groups
 - Capacity Building
 - Case Management
- 2nd/3rd Shift Child Care
- Community Awareness of Infant/Child Mental Health Issues
- Lack of Knowledge of Depth/Breadth of Job Search Process

- Need for More Bilingual Support (Staff & Services)
- ER 'Frequent Flyers'—Need for Education About Alternate Programs/Services
- Access to Health Care Services—Lack of Staff Exacerbates Issues
 - Negative Experiences Drive 'Customers' Away From Proper Services
- Exhaustion of UI Benefits Will Strain All Providers
 - DV, Abuse, AODA will Escalate
- Staff Turnover Due to Stress

NEXT STEPS AND POTENTIAL COLLABORATIONS

- All Agencies Refer Clients to Other Services
 - Learn Where Services Lie, Appropriate Agencies to Refer To
- Pamphlets/Marketing Materials Available at Central Locations
- Continued Communications Among Agencies
- Awareness of Service Provider Consortia

EDUCATION/LITERACY/COMPUTERS GROUP

SUCCESS

- Literacy Connection—Some Stimulus Funds, Helped With Staffing; More Volunteers
- Head Start—ARRA Funding; Building on How to Access and Navigate Social Services System
- Stateline Literacy—More Adults Willing to Come Forward for Literacy Services; GED Prep Classes in Spanish—Nearly Double the Amount Anticipated (60); Additional Growth in Small Group Adult Basic Education Classes; Greater Awareness About the Foundational Support Services Like Families/Children/Literacy
- People/Groups Coming Together Like Never Before
- More Coordination/Information About Resources
- Shift in Thinking About Education, Both Postsecondary (UW-Rock) and Under (Middle School)
- More Tendency Toward Independent Learning From Education to Finding Resources

GAPS IN SERVICES

- Parents Want Free Tutoring for Kids But It Is Hard to Meet the Needs for Adults via Literacy Councils
- Social/Emotional Needs of Kids as They Experience Family Stress
- Domestic Violence On the Rise
- Caseload Is Up to 500 Per Case Worker at the County
- Computer Skill Level Is Far Lower Than Where Business & Education Need It To Be (Or Think of Where It Is)

- People Don't Know Where To Begin; First Call Needs More Priority/Recognition
- More Kids Are Not Being Enrolled In Early Learning Programs/Staying Home With Unemployed Parents
- Infrastructure of Daycare at Risk—Adults Wanting to Learn Have to Bring Kids With Them
- Funding To Go Back to School (Time Limits Make It Impossible to Complete Certificate or Associate Degree)
- Public Schools Are Cutting More Services

COLLABORATIONS

- Literacy Council Might Provide Volunteers to Sit At The Job Center/Library and Help Adults Use Computers for Job Searches
- Childcare Providers Linking To Education Providers/Libraries for Time-Limited Childcare (2 hours max.)
- Libraries Encouraging Parents (via Headstart, Literacy Council, etc.) To Attend Story Times
- Is Transportation An Issue to Getting People There?; Can Transportation System Connect to Social Service Providers
- Jail/Juvenile Detention—Connect to Literacy for Instruction
- Connect Child Tutees to Beloit College Community Tutoring Service
- BTC/UW-Rock/Whitewater/Beloit College Connecting College Students to Social Service Providers That Need Tutors
- DIAL—Drop In And Learn (Literacy Network [formerly Madison Literacy Council] Has This Program)—Short-Term Literacy Lessons Planned by Literacy Staff
- Family Resource Center
- Literacy Councils Going Over to Headstart to Work With Parents
- The Great Dividend Project in Milwaukee That Ties Economic Benefit with the Number of Residents Receiving a 2- or 4-Year Degree
- Train Parents to Expect College-Bound Children To Help Kids With Homework

WHAT IT TAKES TO ADDRESS THE GAPS

- Partner With Business Community More Consistently—Monthly Have a Business 'Meet' With a Provider—Have Them Invest In Their Future Employees
- Employees Get Time Off To Go to Area Schools to Encourage Students in Various Fields. ABC Example with Junior Achievement
- Used Computers Donated To Social Service Providers Where They Can Use Them While Their Kids Are Being Served—Rock County General Services Has a Spring Auction That Gets Rid of Computers
- Literacy Council Could Conduct a 'Log & Learn' Computer Class At Headstart or Library
- Literacy Councils Offer Tutor Sessions Just for Job-Seekers Using 'Log & Learn' for 'Low Computer Literate' Adults

- Donated/Used Laptops Could Allow 'Computer' Volunteers Recruited via Literacy Councils to Have Mobile Computer Services at Various Service Providers Where Adults Are Already At
- Job Trainers/Literacy/Education Providers Need to Know How Much Computer Skills Are Really Needed To Do New Jobs
- On-Line Applications Are the First Computer Competency Test
- The Need for IT Volunteers for All Non-Profit and Social Service Agencies
- Extend the Time Period From Any Governmental Funding Source That Dislocated Workers Who Become Students Can Be Enrolled in College to Earn a Credential
- In Those Areas of the Country Where Unemployment Is Much Higher, Create a Package of Wrap-Around Support Services That Address Financial Assistance for Housing, Child Care, Food Stamps, Government Training Vouchers, Pell Grant, etc. So Student Can Attend College Full-Time and Meet Expenses.

FOOD, HOUSING GROUP

TRENDS/CONCERNS

- No Jobs, especially for those without H.S. Diploma or GED; hearing concerns from clients with regard to the sheer numbers of applicants applying for one Job.
- Feeling of hopelessness among clientele, as well as the service providers.
- Bump of Already "Displaced" individuals is occurring; so those whom would have already been considered the hardest to employ are edged out by those who are dislocated and potentially, overqualified.
- Stimulus Bubble / one-time special grants – service providers are reluctant to hire or add capacity, as the funding provided by the stimulus is a one-time shot / short-term assistance.
- The and increasingly difficult "performance measures" tied to one-time grants and stimulus dollars makes it even more challenging to serve those considered, most in need.
- Many service providers say that they do have clients who are working; however, the employment is not family sustaining.
- Agencies are already so lean— it is increasingly difficult to meet the rising need level.
- Earthquake in Haiti may impact the charitable giving of typical or regular donors.
- The waiting list for Section 8 is growing, and already stands at 2.5 years; the City of Janesville does not have foreclosure assistance. Although certain organizations may still be capable of providing rent assistance, one month is not enough – and the assistance only serves as a band-aid.
- Of course, the level of queries and requests for service are increasing across the board. For example, ECHO meets 40-45 orders per day and sees two new families a day.
- The communities and various service providers lack "system navigator" positions.
- The need for food is easier to meet than the need for affordable housing (more expensive); clients' poor credit scores may impact their ability to find suitable housing, yet they still pay expensive monthly rent for substandard situations.

- There are clients living without heat or power. Power and Light bills make housing impossible. Those receiving assistance cannot be without power; those without are considered to live in a substandard dwelling.
- The dire economic situation is considered a contributor to domestic violence; in the past year, 59 people were murdered as result of DV Trauma in WI— four occurred in Rock County. In addition to physical violence, the stress of the “times” is also manifested in emotional and psychological abuse.
- Anxiety/Depression is off the charts – especially among pregnant women concerned about their future, and that of their family.
- Increase ‘Crimes of Poverty’(i.e. client didn’t reinstate license, drive w/o insurance)
- Service providers are seeing a huge increase in the number of clientele without insurance, as well as an increase in those unwilling or unable to pay \$10 co-pays associated with the available local programs (i.e. Community Health Systems).

GAPS IN SERVICE

- Emergency/Supportive/Transitional Housing options are limited—Furnace Replacement, Repair—graduated eligibility would be good—help cover those just above eligibility line
- Access to affordable, accessible Medical/Dental Care; clients use ER for acute care. Individuals then forego preventative care and treatment for life threatening / chronic illnesses. The same is true for Mental Health/AODA issues. Thus, instead of controlling what could be controlled (i.e. not receiving regular Psychotropic drugs) clients are in “crisis” all the time.
- When clients are asked to check “yes” for barriers / concerns – almost all check yes. There isn’t enough staff time or resources to meet the high need levels. A system navigator would be ideal.
- Concerns exist over growing waiting list(s) and referral process – just because a referral is offered, does not mean the need is met. Medical for adults with No Minor Children— BadgerCare + Core Plan has Waiting List

SUCCESS

- Some success for economic sufficiency thru Edgerton’s programming.
- While most programs cite more stringent restrictions on funding, WIC has been afforded some leniency with regard to qualifiers – so those unable to access services in the past, may now be eligible.
- Beloit/Janesville Community Health Systems offer sliding fee scale services for mental health screenings, physical and dental health. Psych/Counsel assessments are offered at both locations. Dental services are offered in Beloit.
- Despite dire straits, most clients are still extremely grateful.
- ARRA Grant thru HITF/Homeless Intervention – collaboration is occurring

PROACTIVE/CREATIVE COMMUNITY SOLUTIONS

- Solicit or write grant to participate in best practices summit for communities in comparable situations that have been successful – evaluate the effectiveness of those practices and whether or not they’d be applicable in our community.
- Avoid duplication. Identify all the organizations that create “referral or community resource guides” and ask them to stop. Pool resources into one, comprehensive system and do not abandon it. Proposal could include a “bilingual, system navigator” to assist clients in the referral / information process. Remember to include provisions for updates and maintenance, as well as accessibility (hard copies / online versions / translations / etc.).
- Create awareness / education among service providers. Host an educational summit or info session so service providers may provide informed referrals on new programming, grants, available services, etc. Host a similar session for those in need of services, provide food and child care to ensure attendance.
- Could the Janesville Access Channel run spots featuring available resources? What could be done to beef up advertising / marketing of available programming? Obviously, the most in-need clientele may not have subscriptions to the paper, so creative networking (in congregations and schools, at events, etc.) and communication must occur.
- Could a proposal allow dislocated workers to serve in a volunteer capacity to earn experience and a paycheck, similar to a “transitional job” in driver industries?
- More could be done to utilize interns to conserve resources and retirees as job coaches.
- Would it be possible to develop a computer program, that upon checking “yes” to particular needs / barriers – appropriate community referrals and resources would pop up? Similar to, but more sophisticated than First Call? –Or- could the client’s input generate a flag or notification to a particular agency for follow-up?
- Private Sector / Business Trainings could / should be conducted in the community (with Doctors, Grocery Stores, Retail, etc.) on the “faces of poverty” to generate some understanding and empathy. So often, clients are humiliated and do not access the services they need, as embarrassment served as a deterrent. Initiate a campaign to create awareness about Rock Responds (the Craig’s List for our Community) as a way to become engaged and involved in giving back to the community. Roll out the opportunity to private sector and persons of influence.
- Initiate ways to better recognize those doing a nice job – evade provider burn-out.

OVERALL CONCLUSIONS/CONSENSUS OF MAJOR FACTORS

NEEDS/GAPS

- Most organizations are being overwhelmed by the increase in clients and needs for their services (capacity issues)
- In many cases, there is a wait for services

- There needs to be increased/enhanced communications between many agencies (including bilingual services)
- Marketing of individual programs needs to reach those in need of particular services
- In many cases, staffing is inadequate to handle the increased service workloads
- The trauma of financial stress has caused both economic and human/social needs and problems
- In certain programs, outdated/inflexible/unfair regulations create inaccessibility for those who have legitimate needs
- Exhaustion of Unemployment Benefits (approaching fast for many) will cause an already overloaded system to be strained even further
- The overload on organizations and the system has caused staff stresses and increased turnover and often feelings of hopelessness
- Young persons/children are also having increased social/emotional needs
- The stigma of the Stimulus monies being a one-time grant has decreased its effectiveness
- A strong emphasis on education/literacy/computer skills is needed by all training/employment/job placement agencies, as well as from business leaders, local and state government, media, etc.
- A large, unrecognized gap exists between what employers need for job skills and what potential employees actually possess in the way of literacy and computer skills.

OPPORTUNITIES/SUCSESSES

- Rock 5.0 Project has established a formal bridge between the private and public sectors to re-position/revitalize the County's economy
- Innovative new programs such as 360 Degree Business Services, E-Hub and others assist current and potential small business opportunities
- Healthcare opportunities continue to be a positive growth area for the near future, along with collaborative opportunities
- Potential grants and projects can be proposed and supported through local legislative contacts, along with possible matching funds
- The Financial Group (banking, CUs, courts) has initiated a program to address mitigating foreclosures and bankruptcies and plans to continue to meet to address these and related issues
- A number of social free or reduced-rate services continue to be offered to those in need
- Increased collaborations between various organizations such as schools, libraries, literacy, etc. helps to assuage increased load placed on basic services (literacy, adult basic education, computer literacy, etc.)
- Linkages such as childcare and education/libraries allow for limited-time access to necessary services for adults, especially use of a computer with a provider to assist them
- Transportation services have linked to social service providers to assist those in need

- Tutoring opportunities between various organizations has been explored, with the need for continuous communication between service providers
- Programs in other locations are being investigated as potential prototypes for implementation in Rock County (e.g., DIAL, Great Divide, etc.)
- The concept of initiating a campaign promoting Rock Responds to allow those interested (including private sector representation) to become engaged and involved in the community is a possible action
- Recognize those who are doing excellent work to help abate provider burn-out