

**PRIVATE SECTOR EMPLOYER COMMITTEE  
MEETING MINUTES  
October 5, 2009**

The Private Sector Employer Committee meeting was called to order at 4:36 by Chairman Louie Sekula.

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Jim Andreoni, DeAnna Carlson, Vicki Carlson (by phone), Debbie Clausen, Lonnie Doan, Pam Furlan, Linda Hessenberger, Mike Phalen, Jim Quesse, Louie Sekula, Lynn Wagner,

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Tim Farraher, Deb Madsen, Jean Millar, Mike Phalen, Gerald Waszkowiak

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Karen Keller

**Approval of August 31, 2009 Meeting Minutes**

Lynn Wagner motioned to approve the August 31, 2009 Meeting Minutes. Motion was seconded by Debbie Clausen and carried.

**Business Meeting- Review Goals and Objectives**

Pam Furlan asked members if there were any changes made to the goals and objectives sheet she dispersed at the last meeting. She told the group that Sauk Valley Community College will be doing a Work in the Real World (WITRW) Program this year on November 12, 2009, with an expected attendance of 125. She said the program will have a “green” theme this year and the speaker that attended the Employers Conference will speak on “green” jobs. She said the program will help teach youth about green jobs and suggested our group form sub-committees either for WITRW Program or a “Green” sub-committee where we look at different types of green jobs and how industries can go green.

Lonnie Doan suggested the committee pick a few projects to focus on, bring in the sub-committees or focus groups and let them handle it. He said the Private Sector Employer committee needs to determine how to implement the “green” industry to companies. Jim Andreoni and Louie Sekula suggested the committee actually find manufacturers that are interested in going in this direction. Pam stated that in Phase 1 data will be collected from manufacturers asking them to identify the challenges of their business (such as what they are doing to survive the economy) and Phase 2 will involve getting a facilitator to speak to companies on how to keep their businesses afloat in the current economy and potentially show them how to restructure their business. She stated that down the road, when and if the economy stabilizes, we will then be able to take a look at new businesses or established businesses that want to expand their business.

DeAnna Carlson told members she recently attended a conference at the University of Illinois. Dr. Floyd Rose gave a presentation about green renewable energy processes and she has a list of colleges the organization is working with. She suggested that IVCC possibly contact the university and be a liaison between the 4 counties.

Debbie Clausen and Louie Sekula suggested that the event at IVCC will need to address these issues now before it is too late and suggested working on both phases at the same time and both groups meeting somewhere in the middle.

Jim Quesse said there are global issues in every manufacturing firm and within that realm there are increasing green initiatives. How fast the sub-committees work together will depend on the government standpoint and the needs of the people.

Louie explained to the members that any answer to the manufacturing issue has to sustain the company for years to come, not just for the time being. He said that companies need to buy into the solution themselves and presented an example of this explaining that Del Monte needs two windmills in the summer and only one in winter.

Vicki Carlson (via telephone) said that a few of the manufacturers in the Lee County area are trying to implement green ideas into their plants. She stated others will need guidance and knowledge on renewable energy stated the need to focus more on the economic side than on the workforce side.

Pam welcomed suggestions as to who to put on the green initiative list she has developed. Louie said that recyclers should be on the list. Jim Andreoni suggested contacting AmerenIP to see who their largest customers, although he was not sure that would be public knowledge. DeAnna mentioned Jim Conness as a potential candidate for solar panel (geo-thermal) installation because there are no installers in this area.

Debbie Clausen stated that IVCC did not consider “green” as high growth. Jim mentioned having a friend that used to work construction holding signs and is now working on wind turbines.

### **Manufacturing Council**

Pam Furlan said that plan to have a Manufacturing Council is still moving forward, although; she had heard that the first request for proposal (RFP) sent to the Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO) was not accepted. She said that the DCEO wanted specific project ideas and we presented them with a “big picture” adding that a second RFP was resubmitted. She also stated that if we had a committee that could develop ideas for the DCEO proposal, we would have a better chance for grants.

She said DCEO may have some technical assistance money available through the ARRA. She said this money can provide information to manufacturers on how to restructure, retool and reorganize their business and head towards the “green” occupations.

Pam said that Illinois Valley Community College (IVCC), Sauk Valley Community College, Business Employment Skills Team (BEST) and NCI Works will be sponsoring a Manufacturing Conference/Summit. She said the sponsorship funds will be used to acquire a facilitator to run focus groups. She said the idea for the summit is to find out what issues are affecting the manufacturing companies in this area. She mentioned that Mike Phalen suggested “mock interviews” at a prior meeting and teachers have been saying that the focus definitely needs to be on interview skills.

### **Update on Recruitment of Private Sector Members**

Pam updated members with names of potential NCI Works members. She said she has some good candidates. Members shared some additional names with Pam.

### **Other Business**

Pam said she sent the Executive Committee information on a nursing project from NIU. She said they are asking them to support a nursing baccalaureate program at IVCC. Lynn Wagner stated all of it would not be available at IVCC and there would be travel involved.

Pam informed told members that Congresswoman Debbie Halvorson would like to meet with some youth program employee students and Board members in the BEST Peru office after an event on October 17. Pam will keep members informed.

### **Public Comments**

None

### **Adjournment**

With there being no further business, Lonnie Doan motioned to adjourn. Motion was seconded by Lynn Wagner and carried. Meeting adjourned at 5:39 p.m.

Karen Keller