

# **Southwest Michigan RPI Collaborative Committee**

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March 1, 2018 Meeting Minutes

**Committee Members Present:** Vince Carahaly, Michael Evans, Shane Kissak, Deb Miller (phone), Zack Miller, Richard Remus, Tom Richardson

**Committee Members Absent:** Jackie Bibb, Jill Bland, Bridgette Jones, Ken Jones, Joanna Johnson, Pat Karr, Bob Miller, David Reid, Barbara Rose, Brian Sanada Jon Start, Rachel Wade

**Also Present:** John Egelhaaf, Lee Adams, Rebecca Harvey

## **Call to Order**

Carahaly called the meeting to order at 2:30 p.m.

## **Introduction of Members**

Introductions of Committee members and guests were made.

## **Approval of Agenda**

It was noted that a quorum of the Committee was not present. The Committee members present agreed to move forward with the agenda as presented.

## **Approval of Minutes – *February 1, 2018***

It was noted that a quorum of the Committee was not present. The Committee members present agreed to postpone action on the February 1, 2018 minutes to the April Committee meeting.

## **Citizen Comments**

No citizen comments were offered.

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## Monthly Financial Report

### 2018 Grant Application/Work Plan

Egelhaaf distributed and provided an overview of the 2018 Financial Report for the RPI – Region 8. He noted that the report reflects a revised budget for 2018 and the financial report through the end of January, 2018.

Egelhaaf explained that the 2018 Grant Application had requested a grant amount of \$250,000, which was then used to develop the proposed 2018 Budget and Work Plan. He stated that the State has recently informed the Region that the Grant Award for 2018 will be \$180,897, so the proposed budget and work plan have been revised accordingly.

In a review of the revised 2018 Budget and Work Plan, Egelhaaf noted the following:

: the revised budget and work plan were developed using the same quarterly format as the original application;

: the revised budget reflects actual 2017 rollover funds (vs. estimated rollover funds) and the actual grant award of \$180,897 (vs. grant application of \$250,000);

: the 2018 grant award is approximately 72% of the grant application request; accordingly, the revised 2018 budget is approximately 83% of the proposed 2018 budget;

: most adjustments made to the work plan can be found in ‘Staffing Expenses’; specifically in SWMPC and SMPC expenses;

: no changes have been made to the project budget or the dashboard/website budget.

It was noted that a quorum of the Committee was not present and so action on the revised 2018 Budget/Work Plan could not occur today. The Committee members present agreed that, instead, the matter would be presented to the Executive Committee for approval prior to the next meeting.

### 2018 Area of Focus

#### *a. Review of Updated Survey Results:*

Adams noted that the survey had originally run in January, 2018 and the results from the 230 respondents had been presented at the February Committee meeting. As a result of the Committee discussion in February, it was determined that a re-run of the survey until February 23 would be held with a focus on increasing participation among the demographics not well-

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represented in the January results. Adams stated that the re-run of the survey resulted in an additional 935 responses, for a total survey response of 1165.

He reminded that the survey was executed for the purpose of identifying how the general populous of the Region defines ‘prosperity’, with the results of the survey to then be used to inform the focus issue for 2018.

Using a power point presentation, he provided the following summary of results:

- *Demographics* – respondents were generally older (between the ages of 35-64); female; married; well-educated; with family incomes > \$100,000; a home owner; employed full time; lived in Kalamazoo County, and white.
- *Prosperity Opinions* – ‘prosperity’ was defined mostly in terms of economics; Areas of Focus were ranked 1 – Education, 2 – Business Investment, 3 – Infrastructure, and 4 – Attractiveness of the Region.

*b. Discuss/Categorize Areas of Focus:*

Don Edgerly, Administrator with the Upjohn Institute, was present and joined Adams in a review of the survey results with respect to key issues identified within each Area of Focus and to facilitate the Committee’s selection of the 2018 Area of Focus through a categorization of each key issue as an ‘Own’, ‘Support’, or ‘Endorse’ issue.

The categories were defined as follows:

Own: key issue lacks leadership and/or resources; RPI would champion and lead effort to improve conditions (*drive the bus*)

Support: other partners are providing some leadership and resources on this key issue; RPI would provide monetary and non-monetary resources to help alleviate conditions (*supply gas for the bus*)

Endorse: adequate leadership and resources exist to improve conditions on this key issue; RPI recognizes as priority but does not warrant RPI resources (*get on the bus*)

Adams/Edgerly explained that an analysis of the survey results revealed the following ranking of issues within each Area of Focus:

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## **Infrastructure (3<sup>rd</sup> Ranked Area of Focus):**

- 1- Roads
- 2- Energy
- 3- Internet (ranking varied based on County of respondent)

The Committee agreed that the 3 top ranking issues should be categorized as ‘Endorse’. It was specifically noted that no issues were identified as an ‘Own’.

## **Business Investment (2<sup>nd</sup> Ranked Area of Focus):**

- 1- Wages (survey revealed a relationship to education of respondent)
- 2- New Businesses
- 3- Access to Jobs (survey revealed a relationship to education of respondent)

The Committee agreed that issues 1 and 2 should be categorized as ‘Endorse’; issue 3 was categorized as ‘Support’ due to opportunities to address gaps and work in partnerships. It was specifically noted that no issues were identified as an ‘Own’.

## **Education (1<sup>st</sup> Ranked Area of Focus):**

- 1- Training and Internships
- 2- Educational Opportunities
- 3- K-12 Schools

The Committee agreed that issue 1 should be categorized as an ‘Own’ due to opportunities to address gaps; a level of support currently being provided; and a strong ability to impact conditions. It was noted that issue 2 could be a ‘Support’ or an ‘Own, with recognition that issues 1 and 2 may have elements that are connected. Issue 3 was noted as an ‘Endorse’.

In further discussion, the Committee found noteworthy that ‘training and internships’ was a clear preference across the board and by a wide margin . . . being an even more popular choice than the issue of ‘roads’.

## **Attractiveness of the Region**

- 1- Housing
- 2- Retaining College Grads
- 3- Environment

The Committee agreed that issue 1 should be categorized as a ‘Support’ due to opportunities to influence the issue outside of the role of developer. The Committee recognized that issue 2 is

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inherently related to the issue of ‘Training and Internships’ and could be similarly categorized as an ‘Own’. Issue 3 was noted as an ‘Endorse’.

In summary of the Committee discussion and categorization of the key issues identified through the survey, it was noted that two issues were identified as an ‘Own’:

- training and internships/apprenticeships (also to include retention of college grads)
- educational opportunities

It was agreed that the next steps in this process would include:

- RPI staff will define the 2 identified issues
- RPI staff will identify local, state, and federal partners and experts on the issues
- Representation from identified resources will be invited to the next Committee meeting to discuss: where are the gaps; where are the challenges; what is currently happening in the Region on the issue; how can the RPI assist
- RPI Committee will refine and select issue area
- RPI Committee will develop framework for 2018 Area of Focus

In continued discussion of the ‘next steps’, it was agreed that the Committee should also work to identify how the RPI can recognize and work with those issues that were categorized as ‘Support’ or ‘Endorse’.

## Committee Member Comments

No Committee member comments were offered.

## Adjournment

There being no further items for consideration, the meeting was adjourned at 4:04 p.m.

*Next Meeting: May 3, 2018 at 2:30 p.m. – W.E. Upjohn Institute, Kalamazoo*