

**SECRETARIAL NOTES  
PROSPERITY EASTERN IOWA (PEI)**

**DATE:** November 25, 2024

**TIME:** 9:30 a.m.

**PLACE:** ECIA In-Person/Zoom Meeting  
7600 Commerce Park, Dubuque, Iowa

**VOTING  
PRESENT (8):  
MEMBERS**

=Present

- Donna Boss, Delaware County Economic Development (DCED)
- Maggie Sommers, Delaware County Tourism  
(alternate for Donna Boss)
- Angela Rheingans, DeWitt Chamber & Development Company (DCDC)
- Jacque Rahe-VC, Dyersville Economic Development Corporation (DEDC)
- Cindy Oberbroeckling, Dyersville Workforce Development  
(alternate for Jacque Rahe)
- Derek Lumsden-C, Jones Co. Economic Development Corp. (JCEDC)
- Kelley Brown, Jackson County Economic Alliance (JCEA)
- Dale Mescher, Cascade Economic Development Corporation (CEDC)
- Jill Connors, City of Dubuque Economic Development
- Linda Beck, Tipton Economic Development
- Brian Wagner, City of Tipton
- Nick Hockenberry, Greater Dubuque Development (GDDC)
- Andy Solkovich—Grow Clinton

**OTHERS PRESENT:**

- Marie Ware, Grant Wood Loop (City of Dubuque)
- Teresa Weinschenk, Grant Wood Loop (City of Bellevue)
- Dan McDonald, Greater Dubuque Development Corp. (GDDC)
- Greg Willging, Northeast Iowa Community College (NICC)
- Victor Ochoa, IowaWorks
- Amy Lasack, NICC
- Mike Steines, Jackson County BOS
- Jeff Beneke – Iowa STEM Council
- Steph Sagers, Maquoketa Art Experience
- Michelle Turner—Limestone Bluff RC&D
- Kiley Miller—Alliant Energy

**STAFF PRESENT:**

- Katie Steffensmeier, Community Outreach & ED Coordinator
- Holly McPherson, Director of HR and Program Development
- Dawn Danielson, Development Coordinator
- Sarah Berning, Administrative/Special Programs Assistant
- Tricia Wagner, Grant Writer and Program Development Coordinator
- Chandra Ravada, Executive Director
- Jennifer Walker, Special Programs

## **Call to Order/Introductions**

Meeting called to order at 9:30 a.m. Introductions of board members and staff followed.

## **Review/Approval of Agenda for November 20<sup>th</sup> Meeting**

Motion by Brown, second by Solkovich to approve the agenda for the November 20<sup>th</sup> meeting. Motion passed unanimously.

## **Review/Approval of Secretarial Notes**

Motion by Brown, second by Rahe to approve the Secretarial Notes from July 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2024. The motion passed unanimously.

## **Strategic Plan Discussion—Derek Lumsden**

Chair Lumsden initiated discussion of strategic plan. Today's discussion was to Identify/expand affordable/multi-shift daycare and enhance workforce systems to better align with employer skills needs. These are goals 2 and 3. These were noted on pages 5 through 7 in the enclosure.

**A) Goal number 2: Identify/expand affordable multi-shift daycare:** Lumsden opened the floor up to board members and asked what they are working on.

All three action items were discussed:

Expand affordability for daycare providers and parents by working with State and Federal Legislators for funding, certification requirements and DHS enforcement criteria.

Jackson County Update: Brown spoke of the rural childcare grant. Brown said 72% of the working population will be retiring in the next 15 years in Jackson County. Brown stated the importance of having childcare in order to attract and keep talent in the area.

Dubuque County update: Rahe commented on the opening of a new childcare center and details of its capacity, renovations, and hours of operation and the need for filling a second shift for workers in the area. This was due to obtaining the CCDI grant. Challenges of this project was discussed and throughout the process was discussed. 1.75 million was raised out of a possible 3.5 million of the grant. We ended up with a 17,500 square foot facility and the challenges of staffing the center. The center has 13 classroom and have capacity for 252 children. Hours of operation are 5:30am to 6pm. Flexibility for additional infant rooms is possible, if needed. Rate increases and wages were discussed.

Clinton County: Soklovich updated by noting that he is trying to identifying funding opportunities by asking employers if whether they would like to offer an on-site childcare facility. Supporting private sector. Providers are getting by the skin of their teeth. Diapers, wipes, building expenses. Soklovich noted the high rates of childcare and the high turnover.

**B) Goal 3: Workforce systems to better align with employer skills needs:**

Discussed all three action items:

Timeline was discussed and creating a list was discussed. The idea was to create a list from all counties/areas and compile them to see where gaps exist and what PEI should be focusing on going forward. This creation of a list will be put on as an action item for the March 2025 meeting. Discussion on all actions resulted in a consensus by the board that the need to bring more people into the area is vital for growth and for filling job vacancies. Greg Wilging noted the ebb and flow of hiring and discussed the role artificial intelligence will play going forward and how to skill-up workers in order to adjust with the changes in manufacturing. Discussion on how to collect data and finding ways to streamline data. There is a need for data such as product cycle and product lines. The collection of Macro data was discussed. CRM data collection with a regional mindset was discussed.

**Idea sharing, Other Business, Events**

Past events: Steffensmeier noted past trainings and events such as the PDI training in Marshalltown and the NREDA conference in Omaha.

Upcoming events: Steffensmeier noted an upcoming training from the USDA.

**Other Business**

Next meeting will be Monday, January 27, 2025 to be held virtually.

**Adjourn**

Lumsden adjourned the meeting at 11:55 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Katie Steffensmeier  
Community Outreach and Economic Development Coordinator