

CAMWC Community Outreach Committee

June 18, 2008

Maxfield's Restaurant

Members Present: Robin Whitmore, Don Burns, Steve Foster, Jeff Knox,
Carolyn Bennett, Chelsey Foster, and Sheral Simon

Members Absent: Franz Mogdis and Terri Romel

Staff/Guests Present: Diane Hazlewood, Phil Wilson, Janet Bloomfield,
Tom Batchelder, and Diana Jones

Meeting Summary

The meeting was called to order at 5:35 pm by Steve Foster.

Approval of the Minutes

MOTION WAS MADE AND SUPPORTED TO APPROVE THE FEBRUARY 20, 2008, MINUTES. Motion carried unanimously.

Public Comment

There was no public comment.

21st Century Project

Brad R. Watts and George A. Erickcek, economists from the Upjohn Institute, were introduced and given the floor to present the labor market profile that had been completed for the Central Area Michigan Works! region.

The major findings of the profile are:

- From 2000 to 2007, the CAMWC region—Gratiot, Ionia, Isabella, and Montcalm counties—experienced a modest decline in employment and a steady rise in unemployment.
- During this time period, employment in manufacturing dropped by 35.8 percent in the region, a loss of 5,540 jobs. The loss of these jobs triggered a round of additional job reductions in retail trade and other consumer services due to the loss of earned income.
- Despite these current losses in manufacturing, the four-county area maintains an above-average concentration in manufacturing. In 2006, manufacturing still accounted for 11.2 percent of all the region's nonfarm jobs and 18 percent of its total earnings compared to 8.4 percent and 12 percent, respectively, nationwide.
- The region is not an island. Except for Isabella County, the regional economy is dependant upon workers commuting to jobs outside the region and bringing their earnings back into the region. Additionally, the region's businesses are affected by the growth or decline of the economies in the greater Grand Rapids and Lansing areas. Typically, between 1 and 5

percent of employment growth or decline in one of these neighboring urban regions will be replicated in the CAMWC region.

- The CAMWC region's workforce is less educated than the state's or nation's workforce as a whole. In 2000, only 14.3 percent of its residents 25 years or older completed at least a four-year bachelor's degree, compared to 21.8 percent, statewide, and 24.4 for the nation. This is not unusual for a rural region with a strong manufacturing legacy; however, it still puts it at a disadvantage in attracting knowledge-based activities. Additionally, it is a bit surprising given the presence of Central Michigan University. A large state university is a rare asset for a rural region and one that currently appears to be underutilized for attracting and retaining high-skill workers.
- Although highly dependent on manufacturing in general, the region's manufacturing sector is well diversified.
- New manufacturing jobs are being created at a rapid pace—over 1,000 per quarter during the past five years; however, layoffs and closures are occurring at an even faster rate, creating a small net-loss.
- Younger generations hold manufacturing-sector jobs at a much lower rate than the baby-boomer generation (age 45 to 54 in 2006). The largest number of workers age 25 to 34 and age 35 to 44 are in the health care sector.
- Between 2004 and 2014, the fastest growing occupations are expected to be primarily in high-skill fields such as computer software engineers, database administrators, educators, and physical therapists. However, the greatest number of openings is expected to be primarily in occupations such as cashier and retail sales. Health care occupations are found among both the fastest growing fields and those expected to offer the greatest number of openings.
- Manufacturing-related occupations are expected to experience almost no growth between 2004 and 2014 in terms of absolute number; however, there is expected to be a demand for nearly 300 workers per year to replace those who are retiring or exiting the field.

Update on CAMW Keep on Learning

Bloomfield shared that a meeting had been scheduled for June 26th, 2:00 pm, at the Ionia Service Center. Kate Tykocki would be sharing their information at the meeting. Members were encouraged to join the meeting. Bloomfield indicated she would email the information out to all members the following day.

Next Steps

The Committee discussed the elements of the presentation and how informative it was. There was discussion about what should be the next steps to support the manufacturing industry. It was recommended the manufacturing industry could use the Gratiot Health Care Consortium practices as a model. Staff recommended members should send action step recommendations to the staff, and the staff would prepare a document detailing action and timelines for presentation at the WIB meeting.

Dream It, Do It Campaign

Reactions and Next Steps - The presentation offered many suggestions on what might be done. A template for working with the manufacturing industry could incorporate some of the ideas.

Involvement of the EAG, establishing pre-engineering programming in the K-12 system – The Committee feels this should be part of an overall strategy and would ask for the EAG to wait for a complete strategy to be prepared.

WIB Membership Needed

There are two openings for private sector members, Ionia and Isabella Counties. There have been several prospective Ionia County members that have not worked out. It was suggested if an Ionia County representative cannot be found, then Bloomfield would discuss with the CAMWC Board about giving that slot to another county. The Board needs to be operating at full capacity. There were questions about the type of member for Isabella County. Discussion followed.

Other Business

- **Michigan Works! for People Conference** – The conference is in September and will be held in Detroit. WIB members that are interested in attending should inform staff no later than the July Board meeting.
- **No August Committee Meeting** – As of this meeting, an August Committee meeting is not being scheduled.
- **WIB Meeting** – The next WIB meeting is July 16, 2008, at 5:30 pm.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned by consensus at 8:35 p.m.