

BUTLER COUNTY MANUFACTURING CONSORTIUM

Minutes for February 18, 2009

Jim Ferguson welcomed everyone, immediately followed by introductions.
Copies of the January '09 minutes were emailed prior. Accepted as written.

Jim Ferguson reported we have \$1055.00 remaining in the Treasury. Just a reminder to please submit your annual dues if you have not submitted them yet.

Jim introduced Ken Raybuck, who will be the new WIB Manufacturing and IT Coordinator.

Previous Business

1. Training -
 - A. Shared Training – Mary Salony shared that the RFQ's for the Shared Training subjects have gone out. Welding, HR Law, Strategic Business/ Customer Service, Going Green
 - B. Tuition Reimbursement – is available for more company specific training. Anyone interested in training, please see Mary or Ken for an application.
 - C. IT Consortium- meets the 1st Tuesday of the month at the Armstrong Educational Trust. It is not just for IT companies, but also to help IT departments of other businesses.
 - D. BC3 Welding program – BC3 has submitted an RFQ for the shared training grant. They have the instructors for the class, but are in need of facility space.

2. **2008-2009 Grant Update**
 - A. Mary Salony reported that some of the Industry Partnership funds have been released so far (\$10,800 released for Butler County). Have received \$50,000 of the expected \$175,000 for Tri-County training.

 - B. Outreach to Schools
 - 1) Job Shadow program - have a good list from businesses, however we need more students interested in the manufacturing business opportunities.
 - * Jim talked about the possibility of providing an incentive for students to participate with manufacturing based job shadows, such as a \$10.00 gas cards. Students would need to complete a short paper that would need to be submitted to the home school coordinator (ie. guidance counselor).
 - * Comments: Rich from TRACO commented that he was not supportive of the incentive idea. Kids should have the desire and interest to participate if they are truly interested.
 - * Members questioned why the kids are not signing up for manufacturers? Has there been any feedback from the schools? Some schools may not be participating with Junior Achievement programs and may not have participated in the job shadow program because of this? Bad timing with counselors needing to do testing and scheduling?
 - * How much promotion was done? - This program was promoted at the Educators and Employers group, at which all the guidance counselors participate with. This was the first year for JA job shadow in Butler Co.
 - * It was suggested to promote manufacturing as STEM, not so much manufacturing.

 - 2) Educator in the Workplace – concern was raised that unless we get superintendent support, this program may not be as successful as it could be.

 - 3) School visitations – Jim visited Cornell High School in Pittsburgh and was very impressed with the way they organized their career day. There was a keynote speaker who address all the students in an auditorium for approx. 15 minutes. Then students were released to go into classrooms that were clustered by industries. Presenters did 3 40 minute presentations and was done before lunch.
 - * Seneca Valley and Mars use a similar format
 - * Jim would like to suggest format the same format to the H.S. Employer & Educators group.

C. Kids on Campus /BC3 – do we want to continue to sponsor the manufacturing camps? Information was sent out prior for members to review. The main question members had - will handouts be sent to students so the flyers make it home?

- 1) The \$2350 that was suggested by BC3 was voted upon and approved by members present.
 - \$1000 for tuition subsidy for 2 classes, 8 students each
 - \$ 100 for additional small kits for small groups (5 @\$20 each)
 - \$ 750 for 3 Lego Mindstorm computer-aided robots (\$250 each)
 - \$ 500 for banner advertising camps to be used at all events

Image

1. **BCMC Website** – draft of text for proposed training pages was emailed prior and discussed at meeting. Members approved the concept of the training pages. In general, text was also approved, with Mary Salony and Lisa Campbell wanting to make some minor changes to their respective training areas. Rich S. suggested using the money still in the BCMC treasury to pay for creation of the pages. Will also ask MediaFrogg to monitor usage of pages.
2. **Radio** – Kristen Bastaja and Dawn Berezney from Junior Achievement were on February's show to promote Job Shadowing. Does the Consortium want to continue radio show and commercials when current contract runs out? Mary McFarland from Butler Business Matters suggested looking at what type of response have the spots generated so far? Who is target market of radio station? Older adults or youth? Peggy Weckerly shared that when they survey attendees at job fairs, the radio is consistently the lowest rated source. Members voted upon this issue and decided NOT to renew WISR radio show or commercials.
3. **Butler Business Matters** – Members discussed and voted on continuing Butler Business Matters print ads. Current contract ends in April. Members voted on and approved purchasing 6 months of advertising at \$440 per month. Members also suggested other ways of using the ad space including focusing on action and what the BCMC has accomplished or plans to do; promoting website more, including next meeting date & time... We will work on adding these improvements to the BCMC print ads.
4. **Misc** - Peggy Weckerly shared that the CareerLink has a listing of names and emails that information blasts can go directly to registered users of CareerLink.

Growth

1. Non profit status – paperwork is done, but not back yet – still continuing.
2. "The Source" concept – The Source promotes manufacturing capabilities of a specific geographic area specific (ie. Erie/Meadville). Discussed in previous meetings using same concept to promote our Tri-County manufacturing capabilities. There are much larger websites, that do mfg. capability promotion, or posting for quotes. At this time, members agreed that we do not have enough interest or manpower to proceed with this concept. Jim did share the idea with Slippery Rock's entrepreneurial group and they may have an interest in looking into it.
3. CareerLink has published their 2nd edition of business trends in our Tri-County area.

Current / New Business

1. BCMC welcomes Ken Rayback, our new Manufacturing and IT WIB Coordinator (replacing Lori Harvey). Ken spoke about his background in banking and the CDC Board. Today is his first day on the job and is looking forward to getting to know the manufacturers and being a part of growing and strengthening our Consortium.

2. Business Partners – Jim brought up the idea of having business partners being permitted to join the consortium in return for better buying power to consortium members (i.e. discounted rates). For example, companies such as Grainger and Safety Solutions, temp. agencies, etc.. may give larger companies discounted rates. However smaller companies often do not get such discounts. If those companies were allowed access to the consortium, they could then provide those same discounts to both the larger and smaller companies.
 - a) We would have to structure their participation of course, as our meetings must continue to be about the issues affecting manufacturing. For example, they would not be permitted to do any “sales pitch”; would charge them for membership, and they must be offer a discount to all members. Members were supportive of the idea.
 - b) Comments: Bruce Curry felt it would be a good way to stay on top of new and emerging products; Don Neff also liked the idea of discounts being available to smaller companies, who wouldn't normally be eligible for such pricing. Rich Schellinger noted that the Chamber of Commerce may also have purchasing arrangements worked out for discounts. This however, should not affect the BCMC's ability to do likewise. Mary Salony shared that other IP's around the state have done the same thing, and leveraged the power of the consortium to provide discounts. Perhaps we could even pursue this idea from the Tri-County perspective? Harrisburg is pushing for more and more of a regional focus, not just per county.
 - c) Action: need to accurately define and distinguish differences between member, resource partners and business partners. Mary will try to access other consortiums to see how they are dealing with business partners.
3. BC3's new Associate Degree in Robotics – the degree will focus on smart technologies, electrical and embedded systems. Butler, Beaver and Westmoreland Community Colleges will begin to offer the certificate program in the fall of 2009.
 - a) CMU's Lawrenceville Robotics Center will host a breakfast kick-off meeting. They were the recipient of grant monies to develop programs to get into high schools to promote STEM programs. The Associates degree will also articulate into Carnegie Mellon University, Robert Morris University, and Pitt.

What's In It For Manufacturing

1. PennTap – PA Technology Assistance Program – Patrick Coulson from the CDC referred this technology assistance program, which is sponsored by Penn State Univ. Jim will ask if they could come to a future BCMC meeting to discuss how they could be utilized by members.
2. At future meetings, would like to have guest speakers to address legislation, law and learning issues.
 - a) Medrad's legal counsel will be at next meeting to discuss the Employee Free Choice Act (ie. Card Check)
 - b) Brian Ellis or a representative will try to attend our meetings to give regular updates.
 - c) New government regulations will be impacting manufacturing. Need to understand how these new regulations will affect us.
 - d) Will have a guest speaker at next meeting to discuss federal government contracting.
3. Representative Christiana, from Beaver County will be at Penn State University's Beaver Co. branch campus for their Job Fair.

**Next meeting will be *Wednesday March 18th, 2009*
at 8:00 am at the Butler CDC.**