

# **BUTLER COUNTY MANUFACTURING CONSORTIUM**

## **MINUTES July 26, 2006**

### **Present**

Jim Ferguson and Chuck Guiste – *Penn United Technology*; Doug Bartosh – *Unimach Mfg*; Neil Ashbaugh – *Oberg Industries, Inc.*; Diana McCormish – *JSP*; Fred Hensel – *TSI*; Bill Cully – *United Plate Glass*; Jennifer VanGorder – *ATS, Inc.*; Mark Balentine – *AstenJohnson*; Terri Lee Bowser – *CID Associates*; Mea Scholl – *Integrated Quality Systems*; Carl Bemben – *TCWIB*; Peggy Weckerly – *PA CareerLink Butler County*; Lisa Campbell and Scott Campbell – *Butler County Community College*.

*Minutes* of the June 28, 2006, meeting were reviewed and approved. ***BCMC Treasury*** has \$950 with paid memberships from Oberg, Penn United, CID, Catalyst Connection, Sonneborn, Unimach and JSP.

### **Previous Business**

***Grant and Training Updates:*** Carl said nine are in the management course, and it is too far along for more enrollments. The HR class is awaiting final state approval and IUP will probably be providing it from Sept. 8-Nov 10. The Tri-County Mfg Consortium applied for a \$95K industry partnership grant to include a \$15K fall pilot in Armstrong for the basic work skills program. Butler requested \$5000 for advertising; money for the Clearview Mall Mfg Showcase; \$3000 for geographic small lunch get-together to increase membership; \$8000 for billboards to rotate around the county to promote mfg and the consortium (get the word out that mfg is a quality profession!); \$2000 for continued website development. No grant application has yet been submitted for lean manufacturing.

***Website Development:*** The website should be operational this week, and Carl will e-mail when it is. The prototype can be accessed at [www.butlercountymfg.org](http://www.butlercountymfg.org). Use Username *agadmin* and Password *ag123* to view it. Jim emphasized that the mission, goals and other content can be changed at any time. Links appear for each member company's website. Three logos were considered, and the group concurred with a more dynamic design that the company will have to change on the website.

### **Current Business**

Jim asked how many companies present are hooked into NAM since it provides a wealth of information. He suggested that the group may want to throw out current issues confronting member companies so that the group could discuss and possibly offer support and solutions. All agreed to have this included as an item on the monthly agenda. Chuck urged everyone to be aware of the national scene as it may or may not impact manufacturing. Since Dave Frengel is representing mfg as a whole in Washington, he should be invited to speak at a future meeting. Jim has asked Diane Mintus Sheets,

Executive Director of Community Development Corporation, to speak at next month's meeting, and Terri will ask Scott Docherty, CDC Board President, to attend also.

### **New Business**

Monthly recruitment lunches will rotate geographically and include Consortium members from those areas as hosts with Jim. It will improve sharing of information and discussion of needs and encourage BCMC membership. Cranberry area isn't well represented yet in BCMC, but Clayton from Woodward and Mark can assist with that as will the CareerLink which is targeting that area for their Business Services Team contacts.

### **Butler County Community College**

Lisa Campbell started in January as Director of Business & Industry Training at BC3. The college wants to meet the BCMC needs by having the companies identify their training needs so that customized courses can be developed using either BC3 faculty or area consultants. She and Scott Campbell, Director of Professional Education Certificate Programs, are a "workforce development package". She said that WEDnet <http://www.wednetpa.com/> has now opened monies for which consortia can apply since a portion of each area's grant will be set aside for them. There is a timeline extension to include a group application, but she would need to receive it ASAP for this year. While this training is for staff and front line supervisors, small companies with higher level titles can be pre-qualified for the training. Lisa wants to work with companies up front and early as opposed to just prior to the grant deadline.

Scott is working to meet the needs for continuing education locally as it applies to professionals in various fields. They can condense training such as HR management for the newly promoted to 30-45 hrs instead of them having to take courses without direct job impact. He has talked with Jim, Chuck and Neil about foundation training like the NAM curriculum. They could possibly develop a program in "manufacturing technology" to include soft skills, safety, basic computer, and some knowledge about lean mfg and different types of mfg. Since such courses are non-credit, they don't have to go through academic red tape, which then enables them to be available more quickly.

Lisa stressed that BC3 is one resource partner, but that they can help with resources. Chuck led discussion about the need for change in industry training. Certificate programs are important for lowest level workers, but the return on investment isn't measured, and often the training doesn't correlate with the skills needed. It would open a pool of applicants if they could be pre-qualified for entry level work so that they aren't turned away when they apply. For training to be real, Jim says they spend a lot of money since current training isn't *customized* for manufacturing. Chuck suggested that a small group of members meet and create a short survey to send to manufacturers to determine what they need. Chuck, Neil, Mark, and Doug will work on this and provide updates at meetings on their progress. Creative presentation is also critical in the training – when and how the course is offered is as important as the subject since the instructor may need to train on site or train for different shifts. Travel and class time cost companies money. Lisa confirmed that BC3 can do this, even using a company instructor if that's the best instructor for the course. Lisa wants to have BCMC identify what is needed so they can

prepare students before they apply for work. Manufacturers are having problems finding qualified workers, and BC3 wants to be proactive by working together. Manufacturing has changed, but people still perceive it as the old dirty working conditions and plant environment of years ago. Manufacturing is now clean and is one of the few fields to offer a job, skill development and career opportunities without prior college or other training. That message needs to be promoted in schools and at events. A four-year degree has no job guarantee. High school counselors need to visit companies to see reality. Jim supports the 2+2+2 program of training. He sees *manufacturing technology* as the name change from just manufacturing since it makes it more attractive to the public. The career ladder is a retention tool, as has been proven in their company's apprenticeship program. Many of the younger workers demonstrate problems with work ethics and attendance. AstenJohnson has a performance based model which has led to perfect attendance with 82% of their workers. They earn personal days based upon attendance. Quarterly reviews monitor a worker's progress, and those who fall below standard are put into probation at a lower pay rate.

**Next meeting:**

**Wednesday, August 23 2006, at 7:30 AM at the CareerLink\*.**

**Diane Minus Sheets and Scott Docherty from Community Development Corporation are scheduled to be at this meeting.**

**Note:**

**The group decided to *change November's BCMC date to November 15<sup>th</sup> and possibly plan an informal luncheon on December 15<sup>th</sup>.***

**\*PA CareerLink Butler County is located at 112 Hollywood Drive, Butler, on the first floor of the Pullman Commerce Center.**