

**WASHINGTON COUNTY
WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD MEETING
Washington County Workforce Center
Woodbury, MN
February 21, 2018**

Members Present

Sharon Blomgren	Tom Colosimo	Christine Dressel
Christopher Eng	Susie Evans	Jennifer Hassebroek
Stan Karwoski	Michelle Kemper	Mike Lang
Ann Lindquist	Lee Miller	Steve Moeller
	Lori Tapani	

Workforce Center Staff Present

Tina Dudzinski	Rachel O'Connell	Karen Ritter
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Guests

Adesewa Adesiji, DEED
Jeff Klemmer, EXIT Realty Springside
Michael Slezak, DEED
Molly O'Rourke, Washington County
Tim O'Neill, DEED
Christine Osorio, District 622
Suzanne Peterson, Washington County Library
Robert Rutscher, GED Testing Service
Keith Ryskoski, Washington County Library
Chris Sorenson, Washington County
Laurie Staiger, Woodbury Area Chamber of Commerce
Khadija Zeig, American Nursing & Technical Institute

WDB Members Not Present

Lee Ann Cox	Peg Killen	Beth Mathiason
Lee Okerstrom		Wayne Sarappo

1. Call to Order and Introductions – Vice-Chair, Chris Dressel

Vice-Chair Chris Dressel called the meeting to order; members, partners and guests introduced themselves.

2. Adopt Agenda – Chris Dressel

A Motion was made to switch the order of Agenda items four and five. It was seconded and the Motion carried.

3. Approve January Minutes – Chris Dressel

A Motion was made to adopt the January 17, 2018 minutes, it was seconded, and the Motion was approved.

4. Show Your Library Card – Keith Ryskoski, Suzanne Peterson, Washington County Library

Suzanne Peterson: “Show Your Library Card” is part of the libraries’ strategic plan to cultivate partnerships. The library will partner with businesses and organizations that agree to offer discounts on goods and services when patrons show their library cards.

The benefits to the business include attracting new customers, increasing sales, and raising awareness of the business in the community. For the Library, this encourages economic development in the county, establishes new business relationships, increases the use of library services, and connects the card with monetary value.

Interested businesses can apply to participate. The Library will publicize the campaign and special deals will be offered each season. A number of libraries throughout the country have similar programs.

The Library is currently partnering with the Workforce Center by participating in Job Fairs, the “Better Together Grant”, hosting Workforce Center workshops, and by cross training on resources between Library and Workforce Center staff.

Workforce Development Board members made suggestions on how the Library can partner with other agencies:

Laurie Staiger: The Woodbury Chamber of Commerce could promote this through their website and newsletter.

Khadija Zeig: Reach out to the schools.

Sharon Blomgren: St. Paul College and Century College Community Education would be good contacts.

Susie Evans: Getting a library card is a big event for their ESL students and a good way for them to connect with the community and decrease isolation.

Jeff Klemmer: The library card gives access to the Reference U.S.A database and RB Digital, a benefit to business.

Chris Dressel: In promoting this service to small business, the Library can also share the resources they have to help develop their business.

Keith Ryskoski, Library Director: We have the resources to help people find solutions to the challenges they face. For example, Lynda.com (on-line training) can be accessed free through your library card. The County Board just authorized purchase of virtual reality equipment. The library is not just a place to go, but will come out into the community and has access to every library in the United States and the world.

5. State of the County – 2018 – Molly O’Rourke, Washington County Administrator

Washington County was created in 1849 before Minnesota was a state. It is a long narrow county, the fifth smallest in geography and fifth largest in population.

The population doubled in size from 1980 to 2010 and by 2014 is expected to grow by 90,000 people. The city of Woodbury at 68,000 is roughly the size of St. Cloud and if it grows as projected, will be the size of Duluth in 2040.

The non-white population is at 14% and will be over 20% by 2040. Diversity in our organization is important to be reflective and responsive to the people we are serving. The population is also aging which has an impact on services, transportation and safety net services with more vulnerable adults.

Job growth continues with 5,000 small businesses and 18,000 businesses with a single owner which is a potential for more growth.

This is a very healthy county with a physically active community and adult smoking in decline. The County's Public Health Department was accredited, something only 117 counties out of over 3,000 in the country have received.

The Residential Survey showed Washington County residents believe they have a high quality of life in Washington County and they enjoy the parks and open space. Some concerns were about travel – better bike trails, public transportation, and distracted driving. Residents felt health and the environment has improved and government services were important.

Washington County's vision is "A great place to live, work, and play...today and tomorrow" The Mission is "Providing quality services through responsible leadership, innovation, and the cooperation of dedicated people" The goals are broad because the County provides broad services including providing the safety net, criminal justice system, and public works. There are 1,200 employees with a budget of \$200 million.

Washington County has increased its investment in roads. The Transit Needs Study examined transit between the cities within the county to meet the needs of seniors, veterans, and low income people.

In the past, the County's role was to provide the quality of life base and left economic development to the cities. The Washington County Community Development Agency now plays a regional role and hired Chris Eng as Economic Development director. The "Open to Business" program helps small business with supportive financing, technical assistance and help with the legislative process.

Washington County is required by state law to process solid waste before it goes to a landfill. The County is working on developing refuse derived fuel to be shipped to Xcel for electricity. Landfills of the past were thought to be state-of-the-art but weren't adequate. The county is completely dependent on groundwater and it's important to protect it for our children and grandchildren.

There are over 22,000 acres set aside for parks, much of it is open space. Many amenities are provided such as trails and the recent improvement to the swim pond at Lake Elmo.

Public safety initiatives include the opioid addiction crisis. The numbers are not large but the use of opioids leading to heroin use is much more deadly. The County has joined others in a lawsuit to stop over distribution by drug companies and recover costs. For example, 1.5 million pills were distributed to the Mille Lacs reservation alone.

Human trafficking exists in Washington County. Hotel and motel employees are being trained and the County Attorney and Sheriff speak publicly to educate people. The non-profit CAST (Citizens Against Sex Trafficking) is committed to stopping this <https://www.castmn.org/> *Jeff Klemmer* commented people with disabilities are seven times more likely to be abused.

For every tax dollar paid, only 22 cents goes to the County, cities take 26 cents, and schools 34 cents. The County has the second lowest costs per capita for employees and operating costs. The average tax is second lowest. The County has a strong fiscal position and is a multi-year winner of the Government Finance Officers Association awards. The AAA Bond Rating from both Standard & Poor and Moody's is something only 50 counties in the country have attained.

6. Action Team Reports

Skills Match Initiative – Steve Moeller: Anoka County is signing a letter of intent with high school students who are going to technical schools allowing industries to partner with them on jobs, scholarships, etc. The Gen Z program may adopt something similar.

Young Adult Program: Tina Dudzinski said the new Youth Program counselor, Sheng Xiong, will be starting on Monday.

7. Announcements

Michelle Kemper announced the Community Services Department will engage in strategic planning and be interviewing a consultant. Robert Crawford is on vacation but has announced he will be retiring in April from Washington County.

8. Motion to Adjourn – Vice Chair, Chris Dressel

A Motion was made to adjourn the meeting, it was seconded, and the Motion was approved.