

MICHIGAN WORKS! WEST CENTRAL  
WDB/LEO JOINT MEETING  
LUDINGTON CITY HALL  
WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 2, 2017

MINUTES

LEO Members Present

Andersen, Janet  
Byl, Larry  
Emig, Larry  
Ortwein, Chris  
Warba, Mark

WDB Members Present

Booyinga, Voni  
Cooper, David  
Eisler, David  
Fisk, Dena  
Griffin, Nancy  
Gustad, Eric  
Kosheba, Dan  
Marek, Ron  
Martin, Don  
Massy, Dan  
Merriam, David  
Schurkamp, Christine  
Splane, Rob  
Stark, Liz  
Thompson, Sheri  
Visser, William  
Vyse-Staszak, Janet

Others Present

Albanesi, Angie – Hope Network  
Bozeman, Jerri – Hope Network  
Daly, Jennifer – NCRESA

LEO Members Absent

Howard, Linda  
Walls, Karl  
Willett, Vern

WDB Members Absent

Ferguson, Tim  
Frey, Amy  
Pasley, Julia  
Roberts, Carla  
Romanowski, Cynthia  
Smith-Olson, Debbie  
Trucks, Mary

Michigan Works! West Central Staff

Bennett, Merri	Keene, Shelly
Eppley, Jonathan	Reed, Brigette
Griffith, Paul	Shoemaker, Connie

Johnson, Nate – 70 X 7  
Kuchnicki, Donald – Telamon Corporation  
Sprank, Angie – Offender Success Coordinator  
Sweigart, Lynda – Hope Network

Call to Order

LEO Chairperson, Larry Emig brought the joint meeting of the Workforce Development Board/Local Elected Officials to order at 12:43 p.m. at the Ludington City Hall. A quorum is present of both the LEO and the WDB.

Larry and Paul thanked Eric Gustad on behalf of those who went on the tour of the Consumers Pumped Storage Facility. All agreed it was mind-boggling and well worth the time. Larry stated that he'd had the opportunity to tour it before and it was absolutely phenomenal.

Larry also encouraged everyone to check out some of the many interesting places in Ludington before they head home.

### Introduction of Guests

Guests were introduced and welcomed.

### Welcome New WDB Member – Amy Frey, Plant Manager, Yoplait/General Mills

Paul explained that Amy was here for the tour but just before the meeting, she was called away unexpectedly. Amy did leave a new Yoplait product “Oui” for the Board members to enjoy.

### Action Items from the June 7, 2017 WDB/LEO Joint Meeting – Handout (*Action Item WDB Only*)

**David Eisler moved to accept the action items as printed; supported by Sheri Thompson; motion accepted unanimously by the WDB.**

### Consent Agenda (*Action Item*)

- ◇ Minutes of June 7, 2017 WDB/LEO Joint Meeting – Emailed Prior
- ◇ June Financial Report – Emailed Prior/Handout (Goldenrod)

**Liz Stark moved to accept the Consent Agenda as presented; supported by Nancy Griffin; motion accepted unanimously by both the LEO and the WDB. 12:48 p.m.**

## Showcase: Nate Johnson, 70 X 7 Muskegon County ReEntry Coordinator

Angie Sprank explained that she started working with Nate Johnson a couple years ago. He is a great asset to Offender Success and “once you hear his story you'll understand why.”

Nate explained that he works with a group called 70 X 7 in Muskegon. The primary focus is working with men and women returning home from prison but will work anyone who has a felon. The felony could be 20 years old or two weeks old. There are three primary focuses of what we do. Our philosophy is instead of trying to do a bunch of things okay we just want to do a few things really, really good. We work on employment, recovery, and education.

If anyone comes in and they want to get a job or get involved with the employment track, if they do not have a high school diploma or GED they have to be working on that. Once they obtain their GED then we will work with them and help them get back to work. They also work with people to get back into trades and those who want to go back to college we work with them as well.

70 X 7 has a group of retired professors and teachers that want to help. So anyone that goes back to school he will assign them a one-on-one teacher to help get their GED or help with any college courses they may have. With that and with the employment tract they work with Staffing Inc. and they have a program called Impact Employment. They have an Employment Specialist and one of his primary focuses is finding employers who will work with men and women who have felonies on their record. They have been such a huge blessing to us in finding employment for our folks and they have a recovery track which most of the participants are involved in with weekly accountability.

Our philosophy with recovery is not just an individual who has battled with addiction in whatever form, but we also do family recovery. When someone is addicted to drugs and alcohol the whole family is affected; whether it's the children, the spouse, whatever, we invite everyone to come out to a dinner or evening group and go through it as a family. Childcare is offered as well; eliminating any excuses as to why they cannot participate.

We do make the point that employment is not the cure there is a lot of internal issues that need to be dealt with that need to be discussed and taken care of first before getting to the place where they can keep a job. The majority of people who come to us have been on a cycle of defeat for a number of years and have had many jobs but don't know how to keep them. A lot of this stems from internal issues that are going on inside.

What brought Nate to this? He has lived through these issues as well. He spent 12½ years in the State Penitentiary on delivery of cocaine charges, armed robbery and felony firearm. Went in at the age of 19 and came home at the age of 32. He did 24 months on parole with the Department of Corrections. During that time, he personally came to a place where he placed his faith in Jesus Christ and even after doing that he was not miraculously delivered out of prison. He spent the next ten years in there and used this time to work through a lot of his own issues. So this time was used for renewing his mind to figure out what he wanted to do with the rest of his life. During that time, he had the opportunity for healing to take place in his life. He knew he had a strong passion to help men and women returning home and discovered that it irritated him to watch men continually come back to prison. They would do three years; get out and come back and that irritated him. He heard someone say that “when you find out what drives you up the wall, you'll discover that's the thing you were created to solve.” He realized that part of his calling in life was to help men and women win the war of “staying out.” He also realized that he had to live his own solution first if he wanted anyone to listen to him. He had to win that war first then he could tell others, “Look I found the way the out. Come on.”

After he came home, he got a job working at a car wash, he did it with a smile on his face, it was humbling, but he knew it would take small steps to get to where he wanted to be. He enrolled at Muskegon Community College and moved forward from there, this was 2013.

In that process and through a number of different circumstances had a school building offered to him and ended up planting a church a couple years later and planted 70 X 7, a prisoner reentry ministry, right inside the same building.

One of the philosophies is to go from the bottom up instead of the top down, so they primarily focus on people who have been there and done that and are living their own solution. They do peer-to-peer support, so when they talk about battling that war of addiction it's someone who has lived their own solution and have some insights on how to do this; it's the same principle with those who are coming home from prison, as well.

He and Angie work together on several other things as well, such as Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) Class that they co-facilitate. They go into the jail with the Technical Rule Violators who may have to spend 30 to 35 days in jail because of those violations; they go in together and are in agreement learning how to balance and combine the professional and experiential. Going into those classes he can say things that Angie would not feel comfortable saying. For instance, he can look at one of the guys there and tell him he's "full of crap" when he's trying to give him a lot of bull. Because he's been there, he can look them in the eye and tell him he's crazy. Angie cannot do that but he has been there.

By the time he gets done telling them that both his parents went to prison, both were heroin addicts; his dad also liked crack and his mother was not only addicted to heroin but also pills. He's been there so now all their excuses have been exposed. Nate was in the "system" from the age of 12 until he went to prison at the age of 19. He's learned how to read body language and gets this "Spider Sense" when people are just saying things and when their handshake doesn't match their smile. This adds a valuable asset when talking about reentry. In order for these men and women to be successful they need returning citizens to come and walk along side; as well as the professionals because there are certain things that they can pick up that cannot be learned any other way.

The first miniature conference will be done September 14<sup>th</sup> at 70 X 7; and is actually being taken care of by MDOC and Michigan Works! is also playing a part in it. Michael Johnson from the Detroit area is coming to speak, he spent 36 years in recovery, he's been incarcerated and inside of the recovery world, he has a lot of influence and has been a major player, especially in the State of Michigan. Annessia Freeman also from Detroit will be coming in as well; is 17 years clean; went back to college and is doing some wonderful things.

There will be different groups there; the Prosecutor's Office will come in and talk about the expungement process for those who qualify to have some of their charges expunged. At the end of the day the goal is to have given everyone hope; placing someone in front of them who are living their own solutions and who have been there. Who they can look at and say, "If he won the war of staying out then I can too." That offers them hope.

When Nate was in prison and he had to be part of certain classes, when it was individuals who hadn't been there it was kind of hard to try to relate. It's not that the information wasn't valuable but it didn't give hope and that is the biggest thing with those who are coming home is to give them hope, yes you can get out and stay out. The lot for those returning home is the cycle of defeat and constantly battling drugs.

Paul stated that 70 X 7 does not have to accept everyone; so those who apply go through a 30-minute interview. Nate explained growing up in the system, he's learned to "read" people and during that interview he can pick up and see where they're at. 70 X 7 is completely voluntary so no one – no judge – no parole officer – can say, "Go to 70 X 7." Nate can call the final shot in determining if they are allowed to go through their program.

During this interview, Nate is trying to see if the individual is "tired." "Has the street life worn you out yet?" "Have the drugs worn you out?" If that hasn't taken place, there's nothing he can do for them. There's nothing really that can be done until they reach that point. If they are not at that place

where they are not worn out, he tells them this program isn't for you. They cannot come in here with their pants hangin' down and showing up when you want to. That is not okay. They have not reached the place where they realize they cannot manage their own life but need someone to help them. When people are at a place where they realize they cannot do this anymore; then the revelation hits them and they find someone who is at the place where they want to be; and are willing to listen to what they did to get to this point where they want to be. They are willing to do whatever they're told to do and show up early. When they reach that point, things change. There will be those who cannot be helped. There will be criminals for here all the way to the end of the world. It is impossible to save everyone but it's looking for the ones that when they're ready, "we're here for you."

In follow up to a question from a Board member – the name of the organization comes from a Bible verse in Matthew 18:21 when Jesus' disciples asked him how many times do I have to forgive my brother and Jesus said, "70 X 7."

The organization was actually launched March 1, 2016 and last year 34 people were employed and to the present close to 100 people. After they leave the program and someone goes into a job, they have weekly accountability, so they come to either an afternoon or evening recovery group. 70 X 7 also has someone that communicates with the employers asking how the person is doing, how's work going? They also worked out with the employer that if one of them seems to be struggling they will contact 70 X 7 so one of the recovery coaches can reach out to them to come up with a solution. Most of the employers are understanding and are willing to give them some grace. But they also realize that if they are not performing and they need to fire them, it's okay; they do have to be accountable.

Their website is [70X7muskegon.org](http://70X7muskegon.org)

Paul asked about a basketball game that is coming up. Nate explained that they have organized a basketball game, which is a bit unconventional. This involves the prosecutor and police officers in

Muskegon County who have put a basketball team together to play against the parolees in Muskegon County. This is the third annual game. This is the last Saturday in July. There is also a Kids Basketball Camp – two days, part of the diversion program keeping the kids out of prison. This is all part of reconciliation issues because a lot of those who come back are mad at the police officer who arrested them, the judge that sent them to prison – all based on the lies we've all bought into. So this helps unravel the conflicted life.

Angie told the Boards that when she brought Nate into the jail class the next week all the guys came to her like five year olds on Christmas saying, “Miss Angie, remember we have to talk about this remember Nate said we have to have a purpose...” So she went to Nate and asked if he would attend every class because what he accomplished in that short period takes her weeks and sometimes never because she does not have that experiential piece.

Angie also explained that from working with Nate she approached Paul with the idea of our community co-chair for Offender Success being a returned citizen. Nate could not because of the conflict of interest but he put them in touch with Jahaun McKinley who is the community co-chair who is also a returned citizen who served close to 20 years in prison and now is the Plant Manager at a Cascade Engineering plant. His story is of great success like Nate's. So West Central Region 4 Offender Success is doing things that aren't being done anywhere else because we see what the relationship brings and if we want to be successful this is how it's done. Angie appreciates Michigan Works! being open to these things and bringing in Nate to let the Board members hear the real story. This is not just going on in Muskegon this is going on in the entire Region 4 for Offender Success.

There is now a mentoring program for women in Grand Rapids and Muskegon called CLEAR (Coalition of Leadership, Education, Accountability and Rehabilitation) in addition to the one for men.

NOTE: Nate Johnson & Angie Sprank left at 1:16 p.m.

Plans/Modifications Summary – Handout *Blue* (Action Item)

1. WIOA Statewide Activities Funding for Program year 2017 High Concentration of WIOA Eligible Youth (*Draft PI 17-XX*) – **Action – Signatures Required**

The Talent Investment Agency is allocating WIOA Statewide Activities funding to provide additional assistance to local areas that have a high concentration of WIOA eligible youth. Michigan Works! West Central has received a total allocation of \$3,199.

2. WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth Program Allocations for Allocation Year 2017 (*Draft PI 17-XX*) – **Action – Signatures Required**

Talent Investment Agency (TIA) has released the following funding amounts for the programs: Adult – \$399,888, Dislocated Worker – \$504,981, and Youth – \$486,547. Under WIOA, an unlimited amount of funds may be moved between Adult and Dislocated Worker programs with approval of the Boards and TIA.

3. One-Stop Operator – **No Action Required**

Michigan Works! West Central released the One-Stop Operator procurement on June 6, 2017. Bids were due June 30, 2017. We did not receive any bids for this procurement. The RFP will be re-released to attempt to solicit bidders. Michigan Works! West Central could make a request to the State to be the One-Stop Operator; however, the requirements to do so and the expense of ensuring a proper firewall is in place to meet the Federal requirements would be greater than re-releasing the RFP. Hope Network will continue to be the One-Stop Operator through their existing Contract until we can secure another entity through the bidding process.

4. Capacity Building and Professional Development (*Draft 17-XX*) – **Action – Signatures Required**

Capacity Building and Professional Development funds may be utilized for, but not limited to, supporting state and local partnerships; enhancing system capacity to provide opportunities for

individuals with barriers to employment to enter in-demand occupations, developing and improving local program performance and goals, and assisting ongoing system development and proficiency, including professional development and technical assistance. Michigan Works! West Central has received a total allocation of \$12,768.

5. WIOA Statewide Activities Funding for Michigan Works! Service Center (Draft 17-XX) –

***Action – Signatures Required***

Service center operations funds may be used in support of all activities to improve customer service, inform and educate the public about the service centers, and upgrade facilities. Michigan Works! West Central has received a total allocation of \$48,597.

6. Mason County Central Schools – Ludington Location Adult Education MOU – ***Action – Signature Required***

Effective September 1, 2017, Michigan Works! West Central will enter into an agreement with Mason County Central Schools to provide Adult Education and GED prep services at our new Ludington Service Center. (Until now, these services have only been available to Mason County residents at two locations in Scottville.) Services will be provided three half days a week at the Lakeshore Resource Network location.

7. Employment Service Plan (Draft PI-XX) – ***Action – Signatures Required***

This plan is for the delivery of Employment Services in each Workforce Service Center for Program Year 2017 with the funding amount of \$164,156. Employment Services are provided to job seekers and employers from each of the six Workforce Service Centers. Employment Services must be provided by merit based employees.

8. RESEA (Plan) (Draft PI 17-XX) – ***Action – Signatures Required***

RESEA, Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment program, provides additional services for persons identified by UIA as likely to exhaust Unemployment Insurance benefits.

RESEA is an extension of Employment Services. This Plan for CY 17 includes \$17,944 in funding for services to this population.

9. Fiscal Year (FY) 2017 – Partnership. Accountability. Training. Hope. (PATH) Program Plan Instructions (PI 16-16, Change 2) – *No Action Required*

This policy distributes additional TANF funding for \$43,063 bringing the total allocation up to \$1,069,873.

**Larry Byl moved to accept the WIOA Statewide Activities Funding for PY 2017; the WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth Allocations; the Capacity Building and Professional Development; the WIOA Statewide Activities Funding; the Memorandum of Understanding; the Employment Service Plan and the Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA) program as presented by Shelly Keene; supported by Janet Vyse-Staszak; motion accepted unanimously by both the LEO and the WDB.**

1:25 p.m.

#### June Program Reports – Handout

##### ◇ Enrollment/Expenditures Reports

Paul explained that all WIOA charts are a full Program Year ending June 30. The enrollment numbers are on the far right; they came together with the expenditures and the contract.

PATH is one quarter off from WIOA so this shows the end of the third quarter. There is a little concern that there may be excess funds left over. There is a new provision across the state that they will allow the MWAs now to carryover one quarter. Before they had to be down to zero, this being next to impossible because even being off a half percent could mean that we overspent \$10,000. This now allows the MWAs five quarters to spend the allocation. This will

then put pressure on the next year because some of the carryover obviously was spent in the first quarter.

NCRESA has three pots of money but the chart does not include Trade Act because this is a unique program; West Central is given “kind of” an allocation but it depends on the number of Trade Act Certifications and individuals who show up at our Centers. West Central has not had a Certification of a company physically located in our region for a number of years. However, particularly in Newaygo County, where people who live there but worked for an employer in Muskegon or Kent County where their employer experienced a layoff or closure, they can and do come to the Service Centers in our region if it is closer.

#### Offender Success Implementation Update & Procurement of Service Providers

Shelly explained that as of April 1, 2017 West Central took over services for all of Region 4 – a 13 county area. Things have gone very smooth; West Central did add another Accounting Specialist, Becky Campbell, to help Brigette and Beth because the amount of reimbursements and paperwork in the Fiscal Department has quadrupled.

On July 19<sup>th</sup> Shelly released seven separate RFPs for the Offender Success program; questions were due yesterday and 43 questions have been received. Hopefully, this means there is interest in the RFPs. Those questions and answers will be on the website hopefully by 3:30 Friday.

Paul reiterated that this is the first time West Central has bid for all 13 counties; the novation part in that West Central took all the Contracts – like 30 some contracts – from West Michigan Works! and moved them over to West Central; they all expire September 30, 2017. Obviously, some changes will be made in the contract language with the new Contracts.

All proposals are due August 16<sup>th</sup> and West Central staff will be reviewing them on August 23 and 24. The plan is to contact the award winners by the first part of September. All new Contracts have to be in place and ready to begin October 1<sup>st</sup>.

### Outreach Activities

#### ◇ Project Rising Tide

Merri explained that Project Rising Tide was launched just over a year ago to identify at risk communities; Ewart was identified by the Governor's Office for this region. Progress has been made in the two areas that were identified as main issues – Workforce Development and Housing. A Master Plan was developed to prioritize work needed to reach the intended goal and several of these steps include Michigan Works! Some communities are getting ready to graduate from the project and the Governor is anxious to announce a new list of communities, however, Ewart is not ready and more work needs to be done with this plan.

#### ◇ BSP Training

In late June, Jonathan completed his last Business Service Professional training module. He found the three-month training program to be very beneficial, besides the opportunity to meet and work with other Business Services professionals from across the state. The training allowed him to take part in exercises dealing with specific and common problems that employers encounter and then go through the process of finding solutions.

#### ◇ Oceana College Access Network

Merri sits on the leadership team created by the Oceana County Access Network. Along with community involvement the biggest thing Michigan Works! will help with is the “changing” definition of a college education. The last sentence of their mission statement says, “Help to alleviate poverty and ensures students of all ages pursue and complete education and training

beyond high school.” College is not for everyone so educating students about certificate programs, skilled trades and apprenticeships is important and something that fits nicely with what Michigan Works! can offer.

Mason County has also started a College Access Network and at the end of June posted the position for a coordinator. As of Friday, they had narrowed it down and were doing interviews; not sure if the position has been offered to anyone yet.

### Business Activity – Handouts

#### ◇ Job Fairs/Open House

Jonathan helped market a job fair for Tubelite in late June, which was held at the Michigan Works! Center in Reed City. About 130 people attended the event throughout the day. Tubelite offered jobs to 18 people up from the initial ten positions they were looking to fill. In addition, the HR representative said there were about 30 more candidates he planned to reach out to when more positions become available.

OnPoint Employment Solutions held two Job Fairs in July – one for Irwin Seating Company at the Fremont Service Center and another for Wolverine World Wide at their Big Rapids facility. Irwin Seating makes stadium and theater seats; they were looking to add about 40 production workers to their Grand Rapids facility; the event at Fremont only brought in four people and all were offered positions. Wolverine World Wide brought in 14 people to apply for up to 20 positions; of the 14 people, eight were offered positions.

Merri said that Workbox Staffing has held a couple additional job fairs at the Ludington Workforce Service Center trying to fill entry-level positions in manufacturing. Many of the employers Merri has worked with cannot find enough people to fill such positions except for higher paying companies.

Michigan Works! took part in the Harsco Rail Open House on July 15<sup>th</sup>; it was a huge success. More than 800 people attended. Michigan Works! and West Shore talked about training opportunities. It was extremely organized and people stood in line to take the tour.

◇ Job Postings/Employer Contacts

Between Jon, Merri and the Employment Specialists, there were over 135 job postings for June and July. Tracking employer contacts is being done statewide and between Jonathan, Merri and Hope Network staff, approximately 160 employers were contacted in June.

Merri is also beginning to contact employers concerning the Skilled Trades Training Funds.

NOTE: Chris Ortwein left at 1:48 p.m.

◇ Rapid Response

Paul explained that the Rapid Response meeting for the GEO was intentionally done at the very last minute hoping there would be some movement by the State of Michigan to purchase the facility or getting a federal contract.

Paul is confident that the facility will open again. This is over a \$100 million facility and is traded on the New York Stock Exchange; it cannot economically be repurposed as it is over 430,000 square feet with cells that can house 1,800 inmates and all the concrete and steel that involves. So it will open again, we just do not know when. The most likely would be this fall possibly with a federal contract. The official asking price for the facility is \$99 million. The actual prison occupancy rates continue to go down, as it is now about 42,000 when it used to be 55,000. MDOC Regional Manager, Don Martin stated it is actually under 40,000 at this point.

Jerri Bozeman, Hope Network, explained that she and Heidi Gillum, Career Development Specialist at the Baldwin Workforce Service Center, attended the Rapid Response for GEO. They went over the services offered by Michigan Works! and handed out the WIOA information to each one that attended. Heidi and Jerri met with a few after the meeting that were interested in

training; several were interested in Truck Driver training. Heidi stressed to them to come to the Center or call and set up an appointment. Pinnacle Truck Driving school put on a job fair at their location; Heidi attended and explained our services. The job fair was geared more for those from GEO but it was open to the public as well. Eight employers attended and Hope enrolled nine individuals for Truck Driver Training; four started on July 31<sup>st</sup> and the others will start in August.

One person from GEO has been hired by the Lake County Sheriff Department; a couple of them are interested in becoming RNs. Hope Network will do follow-up and continue to contact these individuals every four to six weeks but past practice has shown that it's not until the end of their employment benefits that they actually come for help.

Jonathan explained that after more than 30 years in business, the owners of "Let it Roll Auto" decided to retire after analyzing the rising costs associated with continuing to operate. Four employees were affected by this decision. Employment Services and Hope Network staff worked together to compile Rapid Response packets which were delivered in late June.

◇ Skilled Trades Training Fund (STTF)

Merri explained that the next application period is just around the corner for the Skilled Trades Training Fund; this can save companies thousands of dollars in trainings that they may already be doing; or if they are upgrading employee skills. The dates have not been announced but are expected to begin early or mid-September. The rules are different now and it is no longer "first come first served"; the awards are based on competitive scoring and only Michigan Works! can file the application on an employer's behalf. So far, 19 companies are interested and more are expected.

### Apprenticeship Plans Activity

Shelly explained that she, Merri and Jon met with West Michigan Works! who started a Medical Assistant apprenticeship program that they would like to see go nationwide to showcase their efforts in what has been accomplished. They also do other apprenticeship programs; they are starting to get a construction program and IT. This meeting was set up because Mercy Health contacted Merri because they have been a key player with West Michigan Works! in the medical apprenticeship and since there is a Mercy Health in West Central area they contacted Merri to see if we could replicate that program up here for Michigan Works! West Central and with West Shore Community College.

A lot of information was learned by all three of them; there is a lot of detail involved. One of the big pieces taken from this meeting is that if West Shore Community College is willing to go underneath the West Michigan Works! Medical Assistant Apprenticeship Standard, the process will be much quicker for this area to start the program. Instead of the Community Colleges in Region 4b holding the Standards, West Michigan Works! actually holds the Standard for this Apprenticeship program.

Merri and Shelly met with West Shore Community College but only met with one staff person, but it sounded like they may be very interested in going under the West Michigan Works! Standards. West Shore Community College is just starting their first Medical Assistant apprenticeship program this fall; they just added the curriculum as an option. At this point, obviously we do not have any success rates with the new program. After meeting with West Shore, Merri reached out to Mercy Health again. Mercy is very interested in working with the Medical Assistant Apprenticeship program but would like to wait a year until the first class graduates from West Shore Community College. It will be a little different than what West Michigan Works! has, just because of the enrollment nature. For example, for the cohort which will start in January, they started the recruiting process in April. They are anticipating 29 slots for the apprenticeship and they had 470 applicants of

which 27 happened to be from one of our six counties. There are lots of options for apprenticeships and would like to expand to other areas but starting with West Michigan being so gracious to hold our hand through it, we feel it would be a great starting point.

Paul explained that we do have Spectrum at the table with Christine Schurkamp and we have four Spectrum hospitals in our area.

Merri explained that as she and Jonathan move forward they will be looking for employers and will certainly make outreach effort for apprenticeships but they will not be pushing apprenticeships to employers that do not want them. But they do want to work with unions and other groups that are interested in using them to help with workforce needs. The idea is to educate people about them to be sure they are working with Lansing to create the apprenticeships that the employers really want.

Dan Kosheba asked about Community Colleges offering courses necessary for the apprenticeship programs. Merri said she had met with West Shore and is working on it.

NOTE: Jennifer Daly left at 2:00 p.m.

### Leadership Mecosta

Paul said there are only two community leadership programs in our six county region. There used to be one several years ago in Newaygo. He is only aware of one in Mecosta, which is operated through the Chamber of Commerce, and Osceola County has Osceola Leadership Summit. The reason this is being brought up, is that we have three Service Provider staff that now have this Certification, Jennifer Daly, Dawn Sizeland and Becky Campbell.

### Move to New Lakeshore Resource Network Facility – Handout

Paul informed the Boards that we are anticipating moving soon, in the beginning the move was to happen in April and of course when there is any kind of construction projects, things happen. We

hope the move will happen two weeks from Friday on the 18<sup>th</sup>. He invited anyone who would like to go to the Center and have a look around he is taking staff there to see the facility after the meeting. It is 99% done.

The draft letterhead for Ludington shows 10 partners. The address is 920 East Tinkham. West Central will be the first one to move since West Central will be the lead agency responsible for reception activities.

#### “College Ready” and “College Enrollment” Charts – Handout

This chart demonstrates the urgency of trying to raise the education level of the workforce. Paul has been involved in the College Access Network in Newaygo County for five years or more; they are now a Promise Zone; Baldwin is a Promise Zone and Merri is now involved in the Oceana College Access and hopefully the Mason County one as well.

The first chart is College Ready scores and there are many disclaimers in terms of where our K-12s stand. Of the twenty-one K-12s in the region, there are two school districts (Ludington and Chippewa Hills Schools) that are above the state average in all three areas.

The other chart shows high school graduates K-12 who enrolled in college within six months; again there are disclaimers. West Central does not have any K-12s who meet the National level. For the State of Michigan rate there are four K-12s that are above that rate.

A question was raised if the normally administered ACT test had been given instead of the new SAT, would the scores have been different.

#### Deborah Smith-Olson Reappointment to the State Community Corrections Board

Paul noted that Deborah Smith-Olson was reappointed to the State Community Corrections Board.

NOTE: Rob Splane left at 2:22 p.m.

### June State Unemployment Rate/County Ranking – Handouts

According to Gongwer News “Michigan achieved a milestone in terms of its monthly jobless rate in June with the seasonally adjusted rate falling to 3.8 percent, the lowest unemployment rate since August 2000.” However, the drop may be attributed to the state’s labor force shrinking.

June Unemployment Ranking showed a slight increase for each county in the West Central Region.

NOTE: Dan Kosheba left at 2:23 p.m.

### Bridge Article on Workplace Substance Abuse – Handout

According to the article in the Bridge, “Research indicates Michigan’s drug abuse problem is at an all-time high.” Some companies have decided to stop testing for drugs because they fear not being able to fill positions they desperately need.

### Resignation of Gary Castonia

Gary Castonia was appointed to the Mason County Board of Commissioners so therefore he has tendered his resignation from West Central’s LEO Board.

### Next Meeting October 4, 2017 – Wheatland Township Hall & Tour of Leprino Foods

The next WDB/LEO Joint meeting is Wednesday, October 4, 2017 at the Wheatland Township Hall; after the meeting, a tour of Leprino Foods will be provided for interested Board members.

## Round-the-Table

- » Warba, Mark, City of Big Rapids – looking for bids for the airport; August 19<sup>th</sup> is the deadline for construction of the city streets; and Dunham’s has announced they will be moving into what used to be “The Gate.”
- » Gustad, Eric, Consumers Energy – there is a renewed interest in renewable energy in the state causing lots of interest; if you get a call or have questions, feel free to contact him.
- » Byl, Larry, Oceana County Commissioner –The West Shore ESD which includes Mason, Lake and Oceana counties consolidated services to their Mason County building and sold their Oceana County building to Oceana County as the new Annex facility for the County government. Oceana made it through the “Electric Forest” with 40 to 50,000 people attending.
- » Anderson, Janet, Mason County Commissioner – recruiting for a new medical examiner with an August 14<sup>th</sup> deadline.
- » Eisler, David, Ferris State University – students are coming back and Ferris’ football team ranked number one in three computer polls and if Board members would like to attend a game give him a call and he’ll make room in their box.
- » Stark, Liz, Mason-Lake Adult Education – the partnership with Michigan Works! is working out very well. A new pilot program “Step up” working with West Shore Community College and Michigan Works! involves working with local employers.
- » Cooper, David, Whitehall Industries – the new building is coming along, lights are on and some machinery in place. This is a 110,000 square foot facility.

## Other Business

## Reserved for the Public

## Adjournment

**Meeting stands adjourned at 2:43 p.m.**