

GEAUGA COUNTY BUSINESS ADVISORY COUNCIL
Tuesday, November 17, 2020 8:00 AM
Zoom Meeting Minutes

1. Roll Call: Jennifer Felker, Kimm Leininger, Betsy Covington, Dave Petterson, John Epprecht, Becky Oliver, Margo Reda, Craig Sernik, John Stoddard, Rich Markwardt, Tamee Tucker, Chris Mitchell, Angela Spalsbury, David Enzerra, Greg Slemmons, Angie Ferguson
2. Motion to begin meeting at 8:02 a.m. made by Kim Leininger, seconded by Tamee Tucker
3. Pledge of Allegiance
4. Motion to approve the September 16, 2020, meeting minutes by Craig Sernik, seconded by John Stoddard
5. NEOEA Day Update - Geauga Growth Partners: Kimm Leininger and Betsy Covington - All of the businesses did an amazing job putting together information in a video for the virtual NEOEA Day. Companies stayed on for an HR/QA at the end of the meeting. The companies that participated were Troy Chemical, Great Lakes Cheese, Solon Manufacturing and Kineticco.
6. Ohio Means Jobs - Margo Reda and Craig Sernik sent out Ohio Economic Profile for Geauga County. This has information in it about what businesses are looking at for employees. (Jennifer Felker sent this to everyone on Monday November 16th)
 - a. 6.1% unemployment in Geauga County. Nation unemployment rates are at 7.7%. True unemployment rates are probably in low double digits. Worst month was April at 17.1% (at one point or another there were about 71,000 layoffs in Geauga County)
 - b. To date about 2% of our population in the state has tested positive for COVID.
 - c. 8% of them are hospitalized, about 50 new hospitalizations a day at Cleveland Clinic.
 - d. 2% fatality rate from COVID
 - e. Lucky we have not seen large mass layoffs, most are in retail and restaurants.
7. Jennifer Felker's question - What are the in-demand Jobs?
 - a. Craig Sernik: Every year Team NEO sends out an Aligning Opportunities Report; showing gaps of those in-demand jobs and what post secondary is doing. Healthcare, IT and Manufacturing are the top three in-demand jobs.
 - b. Kimm Leininger: Is there a recording that could be shared with our group? Betsy Covington and Angela Spalsbury are working together on a presentation for an upcoming meeting. Betsy Covington has a recording that can be shared with the group possibly in our meeting in January.
8. Youth Workforce Discussion-
 - a. Virtual Job Fair Software: Waiting for Ohio Means Jobs and Team NEO to roll out their

software. Plans are to work with the surrounding eight counties and by regions. However, this platform is limited. Events can only handle about 50 employers. For instance, if working with manufacturing, it would be closer to 100 or more companies, so that is not going to work with the region.

- i. Putting out a Request for quotes (RFQ) for software so that in the spring (early February hopefully) they can start to hold these virtual job fairs for students. They will be using the knowledge of other counties to assist with how the platform will work based on what counties have learned and are already implementing.
 - ii. Cuyahoga County is using Jobs Ohio money to assist with their platform, and if it goes well, the hope is that it will be rolled out statewide. This platform is helping with displaced workers.
- b. Discuss current Geauga workforce needs & benefits of job experience for youth: (ALL) -
- i. Betsy Covington - GGP has lots of amazing programming, entrepreneur, internship programs, career awareness and readiness programs. What is going to be easily accessible in schools? What would work and be easy for the schools?
 1. Tamee Tucker feels we need to have a deeper conversation. . . do some kind of program for juniors or seniors. Build a pool of employers who would be able to promote themselves with the school for their IC (iSTEM senior exploration experience) project for Seniors. How do we work around hours and other restrictions? Tamee Tucker wants to see if she has any seniors still looking for a project and may start with this small group as a test.
 2. Rich Markwardt with West Geauga has a Senior Search program. Newbury just became part of West Geauga and Covid has restricted the plans they had to do team building. About 25% of students have not set foot in school yet. Newbury has a high number of students off track for graduation. Working hard to give them the support they need. This program could help keep these students on track and gain the experience they need to help them graduate.
 - a. Betsy Covington wants to know what students would be candidates for the Alternative Pathway for graduation. Rich Markwardt wants to work with the counselors to see how many students would qualify for this for a small group pilot. David Calahan is the contact person.
 3. John Stoddard with Berkshire is interested in an internship as well. There are seniors who have filled their credits to graduate and need something to help fill their schedule and he feels this would be great!
 4. Angela Spalsbury is working on gathering this same information. She wanted to know if they would be going through the guidance counselors for these conversations. John Stoddard said start with him and he will bring it to the table.
 5. Jennifer Felker will work with Kim Leininger and Betsy Covington to get the information needed for the schools as to who they need to work with.
 - a. Chris Mitchell is offering his counselors as well to help. Michelle Rodowall could possibly present in the next meeting about how to work with Schools and Employers for senior projects.
- c. Leveraging OMJ Job Fair Software to fill the needs of the local businesses and match youth to these jobs: (ALL)-

9. COVID-19 Updates/Schools and businesses-

- a. John Epprech, with Great Lakes Cheese, is in the process of starting some new production lines. They had success with a job fair they did with GGP earlier this year. Since then, it has been more difficult to bring new employees on and train them. They are having absences and employees who have to quarantine. They feel lucky to be in the food industry during the holidays. They are challenged by not being able to run all the lines they would like on the shifts they want to. To help this, they have changed to a 24/7 format on 5 production lines. Employees work 4 days one week and 3 days the next. They are hoping this will attract more young people to manufacturing. Almost 200 new employees were hired this year. They will be working with Margo Reda again soon.
- b. Dave Patterson, with Patterson Fruit Farm, had a very strong fall (most business is seasonal and in the fall). They almost doubled their staff and cash registers to try and account for losses. Moved things outside the market to utilize the land so they could have social distancing and follow rules. Sales were way above a normal year. They have had three staff members get COVID. They made it through the fall strong and are looking to get through the holidays, then they will be good. They did not have to shut down during COVID.
- c. Jennifer Felker says the schools are facing the same issues as some of these businesses. With staff being quarantined, schools are having a lack of coverage. Superintendent meetings are being held weekly if not twice weekly. Looking at facing Red with warning this week and possibly Purple by next Thursday.
 - i. Jennifer Felker thanks all the schools for all of their hard work to get students back in school 5 days a week. Not all schools did this, and it took a lot of hard work to get our schools back in before we might have to go remote.
- d. John Stoddard with Berkshire has a low number of cases, second staff case was reported today. Has not had enough cases to warrant closing. If Geauga County goes Purple they will go remote and pause winter sports
- e. Rich Markwardt with West Geauga has 25% of students enrolled in virtual learning. He kept on additional staff this year, and lowered the number of students in each class. As of yesterday, seven cases reported for students and one was virtual, and 10 cases with staff total so far. Most of their cases were in the transportation department. In one day there were 15 employees in transpiration out on quarantine. Parents helped to make sure students got to school. Out of their cases, eight of the staff cases are back to work and had minor symptoms. As of now, they do not have on paper that they will go remote if the county goes Purple. They do have strict rules of outside access in the schools and implemented strict cleaning protocols. They are starting practice with winter sports and not starting games until at least January, leading to a postponement of winter sports. If there are no cases in staff and students, they might not close when the County goes Purple. Biggest threat to closing school is going to be lack of staff.
- f. Tamee Tucker with ISTEM has 10% of her students virtual, 10% five day return, the rest of the students have a blended learning. First case came this weekend. They are using all protocols needed to keep students socially distant, cleaning and wearing masks to try and keep everyone safe.
- g. Chris Mitchell with Auburn has students from three counties as well as adults. They have seen a spike in cases this week. Starting to have staff stay home if they have any symptoms to ensure they are safe. Another issue is that students are home on quarantine because they were around someone who had COVID. Other students can't make it because their home school is closed and there is no transportation. Working through virtual learning with these students. Auburn is working hard to stay open.

- h. Dave Enzerra with Lakeland CC had to switch to totally remote as of this week and will remain so through the end of this semester. Lakeland had planned to switch to remote only after Thanksgiving but moved it up.
- i. Health commissioners are anticipating that our Lake County numbers are around 300 a day and by the time we get to December we will be around 800 a day. At about 90% of hospital capacity.

10. FY21 Meeting Dates – All meetings will be held on Zoom starting at 8am

January 26, 2021

March 23, 2021

May 18, 2021

* Dec 2020 Virtual Zoom will expire in law for Public Meetings.

11. Motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:12 a.m. by John Stoddard, seconded by Becky Oliver