

**Columbia-Montour Area Business & Education Partnership
of the Tri-Chamber Foundation**

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Tri-Chamber Foundation

Monthly Meeting Minutes

1 February 2007, 8:00 a.m.

Central Columbia School District Administrative Building

Officers

Ed Edwards, Chairperson

Joseph Scopelliti, Vice Chairperson

Martie Geringer, Secretary

Joseph Scopelliti, Treasurer

Directors Present: Joe Kelly, Bloomsburg Area School District; Harry Mathias, Central Columbia School District; Joe Scopelliti, PPL Electric Utilities; Rudy Singh, Berwick Offray.

Others Present: Tracy Gillespie, Tri-Chamber Foundation Workforce Development Coordinator; Stephanie Kessler, Tri-Chamber Foundation Facilitator; Ken Roush, Tri-Chamber Foundation Strategic Plan Facilitator.

I. Welcome

The meeting was called to order at 8:05 a.m.

II. Approval of November 2006, December 2006, and January 2007 Meeting Minutes

Because there was not a quorum, this item was not voted on at this meeting.

III. Election of Officers for 2007

Because there was not a quorum, this item was not voted on at this meeting.

IV. Strategic Plan Recommendations

Mr. Roush distributed to directors in attendance a list of key observations and decisions the Tri-Chamber Foundation will need to make. The key observations Mr. Roush shared with the directors were:

- Vision and mission do not match
- Roles and responsibilities (of the Tri-Chamber Foundation and Partnership Steering Committee) are not clear
- Little use of resources other than Columbia-Montour AVTS for workforce development
- No processes to oversee programs
- More work now than staff can do
- Danville's participation is unknown
- Low attendance at meetings
- Tri-Chamber Foundation and the resources available are not well known in the area
- Focus now of most activities is high school students
- Work now is accomplished by two part-time staff and one subcommittee
- Some people want Tri-Chamber Foundation to be a one-stop

The decisions that Mr. Roush listed as ones that the Tri-Chamber Foundation needs to make in the near future are:

- What is the role of the directors and what should be the agenda for Tri-Chamber Foundation meetings?
- What is the scope of the Tri-Chamber Foundation?
- Should the Tri-Chamber Foundation be the single point of contact for businesses that need workforce development?
- Who has the primary responsibility for obtaining funds for projects that the Tri-Chamber Foundation is supporting?
- Goals for 2007-2009 need to be agreed to by the directors.
- Who will be the lead to ensure that the goals for 2007 get accomplished?

After Mr. Roush presented his list of key observations and decisions the Tri-Chamber Foundation needs to make, the directors engaged in discussion about this information. Mr. Mathias said there's a need to show chamber of commerce members exactly how the Tri-Chamber Foundation is involved and a resource they can use because of their chamber membership. Mr. Roush agreed, saying the organization needs to show that there is value added because of its work. It was also stated the Tri-Chamber Foundation needs to be more visible within the community, that its role needs to be better defined, that it needs to better show businesses and schools what benefit it is to them, that more "mom and pop" businesses need to be included in the Partnership (as they could greatly benefit from its services), and that other business and education partnerships should be examined to see what makes them successful (specifically, the business and education partnership in Milton was cited as one to look at). The Tri-Chamber Foundation will have to decide if it wants to continue to serve mainly K-12 students, or if it wants to expand more into the area of workforce development. Mr. Roush asked directors if maybe in the area of workforce development, the Tri-Chamber Foundation was overlapping services already offered by the chambers of commerce. Mr. Scopelliti said he would talk to members of the Milton business and education partnership to learn what structure their organization has in place and what the funding stream is like. Mr. Mathias said the role of the Tri-Chamber Foundation might just end up being to over the Columbia-Montour Area Business & Education Partnership and meet only two or four times a year. He also said that if the organization decides to go more into workforce education, it will need to get more chamber of commerce involvement.

It was asked that Tri-Chamber Foundation staff send out an e-mail to all directors and Partnership Steering Committee members to notify them that there will be a meeting on Thursday, March 1 to decide which of the following three things will be done: 1 – The Tri-Chamber Foundation will continue offering the programs it currently is and will also expand more into the area of workforce development; 2 – The Tri-Chamber Foundation will continue offering the programs it currently is and will not expand in to the area of workforce development; or 3 – The Tri-Chamber Foundation will disband. This meeting will be held from 8-10 a.m. at the Central Columbia School District administrative office. It was asked that the staff request RSVPs back by February 20. The only thing on this agenda will be to examine and make decisions concerning the strategic plan and the direction the Tri-Chamber Foundation will pursue.

V. School Counts Alcoa Grant Recommendations

Partnership staff reported that on 13 December 2006, the School Counts Subcommittee met and discussed possible ways to spend the \$8,000 grant from Alcoa. All of these funds are to be used for the School Counts program and must be spent by September 2007. At the 24 January 2007 Partnership Steering Committee meeting, the subcommittee shared its ideas with the rest of the committee. Mr. Chris Young made the motion to not exceed \$2,000 of the grant money on advertisement, and to spend the remaining \$6,000+ on student incentives during the 2007-2008 school year. Mr. Mark Hauck seconded this motion and it passed by an affirmative voice vote.

The recommendation to Tri-Chamber Foundation Directors is as follows: Approve spending the \$8,000 Alcoa grant on the School Counts program as follows: Do not exceed \$2,000 on advertising, and spend the remaining \$6,000+ on student incentives during the 2007-2008 school year.

Because there was not a quorum at the meeting, this recommendation could not be voted on. It was requested that Partnership staff send out an e-mail asking directors to electronically vote on this recommendation. Also, directors decided to have Partnership staff send out an e-mail to have directors electronically vote on approving the web site development program at Southern Columbia Area High School.

VI. Berwick Offray/Benton Foundry Student Job Opportunities

Due to time constraints, this topic was not discussed at this meeting.

VII. Staff Report

Mrs. Gillespie and Ms. Kessler gave the following staff report:

1. **WorkKeys Ad Hoc Committee** – This item was discussed at the 24 January 2007 Partnership Steering Committee meeting, and Diane Bubb from the CareerLink volunteered to serve on the ad hoc committee. Kate Lomax from CPWDC went over the WorkKeys program with Partnership Steering Committee members at its January meeting. Rachel Smith from CPWDC will be giving a presentation on WorkKeys at the Partnership's annual breakfast meeting in early May.

The entire ad hoc committee consists of Harry Mathias, Bill Forsythe, Steve Keifer, and Diane Bubb. The purpose of the ad hoc committee is to determine how the Tri-Chamber Foundation can best disseminate information about WorkKeys to local schools and businesses. Tri-Chamber Foundation staff would like some direction as to when this meeting should be set up and if one of the ad hoc committee members would like to set it up, or if one of the staff members should proceed with this.

2. **Annual Spring Breakfast** – The Partnership's annual membership breakfast meeting has been scheduled for Thursday, 3 May 2007 at Columbia-Montour Area Vocational-Technical School. More details will follow.
3. **Winter Newsletter** – A winter Partnership News is in the process of being completed. It is scheduled to go out in mid-February.
4. **School Counts** – Administrators at Williamsport High School has been talking with its local chamber of commerce about initiating School Counts. School Counts materials from the Columbia-Montour Area Business & Education Partnership's program were sent to Jessica Becker in the guidance department at Williamsport High School last week. School Counts is now becoming a regional effort, rather than just a local one.

VIII. Treasurer's Report

Mr. Scopelliti reported that the Tri-Chamber Foundation would be getting a \$665.00 grant from the Central Susquehanna Community Foundation to help pay for the cost of Mr. Roush's services in generating the strategic plan.

IX. New Business/Comments/Questions

There was no further business to come before the Foundation at this time, so the meeting was adjourned at 9:21 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Stephanie Kessler
Facilitator