

**Tri-Chamber Foundation
Monthly Meeting Minutes
31 July 2007
Bloomsburg Area School District Administrative Building**

*Tracy Gillespie, Co-Facilitator
Phone: (570) 784-8040, extension 3347
Fax: (570) 784-1401
E-mail: tgillespie@cmvt.us*

*Stephanie Kessler, Co-Facilitator
Phone: (570) 784-5000
Fax: (570) 387-8832
E-mail: skessler@bloomsd.k12.pa.us*

Minutes

Officers

*Joseph Kelly, Chairperson
Sally McGuire, Vice Chairperson
Joseph Scopelliti, Secretary/Treasurer*

Directors Present: Susan Adams, Columbia Mall; Ed Edwards, Columbia-Montour Chamber of Commerce; Tom Fletcher, Bloomsburg University; Joseph Kelly, Bloomsburg Area School District; Sally McGuire, Penn State Hazleton; Rudy Singh, Berwick Offray.

Others Present: Tracy Gillespie & Stephanie Kessler, Tri-Chamber Foundation Co-Facilitators.

Agenda Items: Welcome; Approval of 3 May 2007 and 21 June 2007 Meeting Minutes; Strategic Plan; RCEP Grant; Staff Report; Treasurer's Report; New Business/Comments/Questions.

I. Welcome

The meeting was called to order at 8:00 a.m.

Mr. Edwards reported that Jim Medalie from Kleerdex was appointed to fill the Tri-Chamber Foundation vacancy from the Columbia-Montour Chamber of Commerce. Ms. Kessler reported that Kate Lomax from the Central Pennsylvania Workforce Development Corporation had agreed to sit on the Tri-Chamber Foundation board as an ad hoc member.

II. Approval of Meeting Minutes

As there was not a quorum at the beginning of the meeting, the minutes of the 3 May 2007 and the 21 June 2007 meetings were not approved.

III. Strategic Plan

Directors reviewed the draft strategic plan created by Ken Roush and then discussed possible changes to that plan. Mr. Edwards suggested that the organization should start using the name "Tri-Chamber Foundation" all the time, in order to create consistency. The Business and Education Partnership Steering Committee could be called the Program Committee of the Tri-Chamber Foundation, he suggested. In addition to the Program Committee, directors agreed they would like to establish a Communications/Marketing Committee. Mr. Kelly said that at each Tri-Chamber Foundation meeting, there should be a status report on the strategic plan. By the end of August, directors said they would like a Communications/Marketing Committee to be created and that by the end of October, a communications plan should be established. Mr. Edwards said that for the next Tri-Chamber Foundation meeting, he would like staff members to have a master timeline of all the organization's activities that take place throughout the

year. Mr. Singh said the Tri-Chamber Foundation should start strictly using that name after all individuals associated with the organization were made aware of the name change and why it was being done. Mr. Edwards also suggested the group consider becoming refocused on school curricula. At the end of the discussion, it was decided that Tri-Chamber Foundation staff should make the changes to the draft strategic plan as indicated and then e-mail the plan to directors for review. After that, the plan will be sent to Mr. Roush.

IV. RCEP Grant

Ms. Kessler reported that the guidelines for the Regional Career Education Partnership (RCEP) grant had been distributed to the business and education partnerships in the Central Workforce Investment Board (WIB). Directors were provided with a copy of a portion of this grant, for their review. Directors decided that it would be most beneficial to use this grant to target non-college-bound high school students and administer the WorkKeys program to them. This would provide a natural tie-in with the Central Pennsylvania Workforce Development Corporation (CPWDC). Directors said that in writing the grant, it should be clear that local business and industry will benefit from this activity, and that a list of businesses that would use WorkKeys in their hiring practices should be included in the grant proposal. This activity could be measured by tracking the students who take the WorkKeys assessment and go through remediation and then take the assessment again afterwards. Directors decided that in the grant proposal, it should be mentioned that “up to ___ student from Columbia and Montour counties” would benefit from this program, rather than setting a limit per each individual high school.

V. Staff Report

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

- 1) **Newsletters** – The Summer 2007 “Partnership News” newsletters will be sent to members by the end of July. They will also be distributed to members of the Berwick Area Chamber of Commerce and the Columbia Montour Area Chamber of Commerce.
- 2) **Financial Program Through First Columbia Bank** – At the July 25 Partnership Steering Committee meeting, Mrs. Gillespie reported on a program being run through First Columbia Bank. The aim of this program is to help students, at all grade levels, better understand personal finance. Information about this program will be distributed to superintendents at their August 17 meeting. Mr. Fosythe said Central Columbia School District would be interested in this program. Mrs. Bittenbender said that Columbia County Farmers National Bank runs a similar program, as well. Mrs. Gillespie suggested that bank representatives with such programs meet with educators at some point to discuss the opportunities of these financial programs.
- 3) **Student in the Workplace Week 2007** – In the beginning of August, there will be a Student in the Workplace Week Subcommittee meeting to discuss plans for this year’s program.
- 4) **School Counts** – At the July 25 Partnership Steering Committee meeting, Mrs. Gillespie and Ms. Kessler reported that they are in need of individuals to volunteer their time to make School Counts presentations to the eight public high schools in Columbia and Montour counties. This will be done through new student orientations, parent nights, open houses, and during student lunch periods. Currently, the School Counts Subcommittee is comprised of Luanne Bittenbender, Mary Ann Christ, Tracy Gillespie, Tom Kapelewski, Stephanie Kessler, Lorraine Kreisler, Debbie Nevius, and Lou Sappe. Any Partnership Steering Committee member that would like to help with these presentations or help with setting up a booth is encourage to do so. In addition to recruiting volunteers to help with the presentations, any business that would like to donate a gift bag(s) to give out as door prizes at the various presentations is welcome to do so. Lastly, on July 18, Mrs. Gillespie and Ms. Kessler met with Mt. Carmel Superintendent Cheryl Latore about their district participating in School Counts starting this year.

- 5) **Superintendents' Meeting** – Mrs. Gillespie and Ms. Kessler will be addressing the eight local superintendents at their next meeting, which is scheduled for August 17 at Columbia-Montour AVTS. They will be introducing the Partnership and the Tri-Chamber Foundation to the new superintendents and highlighting some of the events that will be going on this year, with a focus on School Counts. At this time, they will also be providing the superintendents with a list of programs that might benefit their students. Some of these programs include the personal financing programs through local banks, internship opportunities at Benton Foundry and Berwick Offray and the plastics program through the Central Pennsylvania Workforce Development Corporation. If anyone has any further ideas about programs that should be added to this list, please let Mrs. Gillespie or Ms. Kessler know as soon as possible.

VI. Treasurer's Report

Mr. Scopelliti was not in attendance at the meeting, but had provided staff with the Treasurer's Report prior to the meeting. Directors were given a copy of this report, which showed that the organization had a balance of \$35,317.70, as of 30 July 2007.

VII. New Business/Comments/Questions

It was reported that the next meetings were scheduled for September 6, October 4, November 1, and December 6, all beginning at 12:00 p.m. at the CareerLink at Bloomsburg.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:00 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Stephanie Kessler
Co-Facilitator