MEETING MINUTES

Economics Center Research & Consulting Committee Meeting
January 9, 2014

Attendees:
Committee Members: Warren Falberg, Andy Benson and Kim Satzger.
Center Staff: Michael Jones, Julie Heath, Brad Evans and Lorrie Penner

Warren Falberg called the meeting to order.

Financial Update
Michael Jones presented the Research Budget in comparison to Actual for the time period, July 2013 through December 2013. The Research & Consulting division has a goal of $650,000 in revenue for FY 2014. At this time they are behind schedule for budget. This can be attributed to two main factors; 1.) Loss of Stephen Samuels as the Development officer in 2013 and, 2.) some work that was scheduled, but has been delayed by clients. Julie Heath also added that in comparison with last year, if no percentage of increase to the budget had taken place for FY14, the Research team would be right about on schedule.

New Director of Development, Brad Evans, joined the Center a couple of months after Mr. Samuels left the Center. He has already proven to be a valuable asset and an excellent replacement. He is gaining in productivity as he becomes acclimated to his position.

Recent Highlights
Michael Jones led the committee through an overview of recent Research Projects. They include;

  Propensity to Pay modeling – An MRSI project in which the research team looked at the probability of collecting on Medical bills. At the conclusion of the project the Center has been retained by the client to work on a retainer basis.

  Ohio State Bar Association – The project centered around an evaluation of the volunteer work of the Ohio State Bar Assoc. members. The work came about because of a referral from Center Board of Trustee member, Bill Robinson. The Center Research staff is planning on presenting this type of study to other types of associations as possible new business. (ie., Ohio Home Builders Association, Ohio Realtors Association, etc.)

  Warren Falberg recommended that Bill Robinson may also be asked to endorse the project to other prospective clients.

  STRIVE – a study of benefits and costs of the Preschool Promise program. This is a plan to expand preschool access to children from low and middle-income families in Greater Cincinnati. Strive approached the Center on the project. They are also looking for an ROI model.
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Julie and Michael are to talk more about the “Success by Six” United Way Program and how it may fit into the STRIVE study as well as how the Education side of the house is working with this program.

**Industrial Energy Users – Ohio** – A consulting job looking at SB58 – consumer benefit claims.

**Taxi Cab Consulting** – Westside cab approached the Economics Center to help position them into a successful application for more licenses.

**Port Authority** – using ES202 data for unemployment insurance data.

**Cincinnati Museum Center** – Economic Impact study.

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**Prospects and Proposals**

**Proposal:**
– Straight A Fund – although the first application did not receive an award, the Center intends to pursue these funds with another proposal. Thanks to Andy Benson in assisting.

**Prospects:**
- State of Ohio money - Center personnel have been trying to determine why Southern Ohio has less success with receiving State money for projects. Part of the situation seems to stem around the perception that businesses in SW Ohio don’t come to Columbus unless they need something, they are aloof and not connected.

Input into this discussion by Kim Satzger and Andy Benson reveals that Economic Regions are organized in northern Ohio and Dayton. These organizations work as a collective for all their member businesses and provide a united front with targeted projects and requests that make it easier for the State to approve. SW Ohio doesn’t have an Economic Development entity such as the ones in Northern Ohio. These Economic Development entities have elected officials and visit the State and Federal offices on a regular basis.


- Straight A Fund – a couple of ideas for this
  - connection to promising IT students and the IT Field. There is a recommendation to connect with Jim Scott at InterAlliance.
  - Graduates/where they land after graduation
  - Proposal with Great Oaks?
**Economic Outlook Forum**
The Center is planning on hosting a forum in the April/May timeframe. The event will include sharing data gathered on the region. The committee recommends the following:

- Event should be in Columbus
- Venue – use a hotel conference room in the capitol area
- Venue – COSI, the Center of Science and Industry may have space.
- Partner with the Ohio State Chamber
- Guidance and discussion with Greg Vehr
- Audience – should be Stakeholder Associations; Ohio Chamber, Board of Regents, Dept of Education, etc.
- Look for sponsors; financial / banking industry?

**Structure:**
- Keynote Speaker
- Overview of State Data
- Sessions by industry for the State

**Online Dashboard**
The Center is considering using the same data as in the forum to create an online tool in which the user could plug in their region and get stats. The committee agrees that this is an interesting concept worth exploring.

**Meetings Dates for 2014**
Thursday, March 13, 2014 at 12pm
Thursday, June 12, 2014 at 12pm
Thursday, October 2, 2014 at 12pm

All meeting to take place at:
Economics Center
225 Calhoun Street, Suite 370
Cincinnati, OH 45219

The meeting was adjourned.