

ADVISORY COMMITTEE AGENDA - WELDING

June 13, 2023

5:30 PM

VOC 152

I. CALL TO ORDER

5:30 pm

II. **PRESENT:** Don Shepherd, Steve Mahitha, Lance Ganieany, Doug Moore, Tamra Gilchrist

III. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** There were not enough voting members present for a quorum to approve the minutes. The minutes for this meeting and the previous one will be sent for electronic approval.

IV. INDUSTRY UPDATES

Doug stated that Western Fab has been busy. They need more employees, but the hiring pool is pretty low. They could easily bring on another six welders. A lot of the people who come in to apply are not willing to work. They want a light-duty job and there is a trend that work interferes with their life. In other areas, steel prices are very interesting and continue to fluctuate.

Don said they had quite the struggle during Covid shutdowns. There is a big backup related to the supply chain. They used to sell a lot of used equipment, but it is no longer available. The surcharges are insane and there is a shortage of CO2. Looking ahead to the summer, it is anticipated that there might also be a shortage of acetylene. Helium is a constant shortage as well as microchips. It takes months to fill some orders. In other areas, they need drivers. They expect to make big dollars, but new drivers make 30 grand a year less than other companies. They have a bunch of employees getting ready to retire and don't have anybody in line to move up to fill positions. They can't find workers and when they do, often people are not sticking around in their jobs as they are chasing larger salaries. We need to build a culture to get the younger generation to stick around. With the bigger companies, it gets lost. You won't make as much money with the

smaller companies, but you may have a better life in terms of stability, and care and concern from an employer who is more invested in the individual.

V. Education (LCC and K12) UPDATES

K12 Updates

Kelso: They have 130 students in the welding program. About 10% are interested and serious about wanting to learn to weld. The other students are on their phones. There is an epidemic and kids have changed. From K12 perspective, 99% of the kids have been raised on cell phones or I-Pads. Kids are not exposed to the trades and working environments like the older generation. The younger generation doesn't have a direction or know what they would like to be when they grow up. The instructors try to build this confidence and instill a work ethic which is a challenge.

LCC Updates

David shared that the new Vocational Building is on pause. The money got pulled from the state budget. LCC will continue to offer updates as more information becomes available. LCC's implementation of cooperative education is effective with the first group of students starting worksite learning this summer. They will start with a seminar course covering resumes, cover letters, appropriate work site behaviors, etc. and start the co-ops or internships in the Fall, both paid and unpaid.

With the growing enrollment, there will be an adjunct position opening for nights in the welding department. The schedule is approximately 3 hours 15 minutes, 4 days a week. This will be shared with the committee once launched.

Events are back! We just had the High School Welding Competition and the Try-a-trade for the first time since Covid. We would like to add a few more events next year with Industry participation.

The CTE class (Welding/Machining) class is wrapping up. It was a great success. The students had a wide gamut of skills. Some students had never been around welding before, but they learned a lot and seemed to enjoy it.

In discussing the next meeting day/time, it was asked if people would rather meet at an Industry, in a restaurant, or on Zoom. The members

thought that a restaurant would be a distraction because of the noise. Ideas will be explored before the meeting in the fall and options for dates will be sent to members.

Meeting Adjourned: 6:45 pm

PREPARED BY: Janis Wright

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