

Minutes of the Research, Economic Development, & Innovation Committee
University of Wisconsin System Board of Regents
UW-Platteville
April 6, 2017

Chairman Hall convened the meeting of the Research, Economic Development, and Innovation (REDI) Committee at 10:45 a.m. Regents Hall, Klein, Millner (ex officio), and Tyler were present.

a. Approval of the Minutes of the February 2, 2017, Meeting of the Research, Economic Development, and Innovation Committee

Chairman Hall asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the February 2, 2017, REDI Committee meeting. Motion was made by Regent Millner and seconded by Regent Tyler to approve the minutes as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

b. UW-Platteville: Partnering with Industry to Shape the 21st Century Workforce

UW-Platteville Chancellor Dennis Shields welcomed the REDI Committee to his campus and introduced Dr. Wayne Weber, Dean of the College of Business, Industry, Life Science and Agriculture, who provided an update on UW-Platteville's economic and business development initiatives and the collaborations that link students and faculty with outside partners. A video clip featured comments from Platteville Chamber of Commerce Executive Director Kathy Kopp, who said that the university is a major force for driving community growth and is the region's largest employer. Dr. Weber highlighted the extensive reach of UW-Platteville alumni across industries throughout Wisconsin. He noted that both Kohler and Kimberly-Clark have each hired more than 100 UW-Platteville Engineering graduates and Delta 3 Engineering has hired all of its 30+ professionals from the campus. Dr. Weber's co-presenters included Dan Dreesens and Bart Neis, who are Platteville alumni and founders of Delta 3, and alum Wayne Beyer who is an engineer at Kimberly-Clark. These two Wisconsin firms encouraged other employers to visit the campus to get to know professors and students and to speak to campus organizations about career opportunities in Wisconsin. Chairman Hall asked the Delta 3 presenters about the importance to employers of critical thinking and leadership skill development. Alumnus Bart Nice said that in his experience, UW-Platteville professors make a point of helping students to understand both how to learn and how to solve problems critically and creatively. Regent Millner thanked the presenters for highlighting the strength of the UW-Platteville Engineering program.

c. Update on Future Wisconsin Branding and Millennial Initiatives: "Think-Make-Happen"

Tricia Braun, WEDC's Chief Operating Officer, provided an update on the rollout of the state's new "Think-Make-Happen" initiative. This shared messaging program was developed with research generated through the Future Wisconsin collaborative of business, government, and

educational partners. Its unified message is designed to support the 70% of Wisconsin businesses that struggle to find qualified workers and report delaying expansions because they do not have the labor to grow their businesses.

Regent Millner asked about how the program will be implemented across the state. Tricia Braun mentioned that the program is available to employers and that it is building strong momentum through a partnership with the Young Professionals (YP) organizations in 25 cities across Wisconsin. These entities will celebrate YP Week across Wisconsin during the third week of April. Regent Hall commended WEDC for taking the lead with this program to attract and retain Millennials to support the growing need for talent to support state workforce needs. In response to a question from Regent Klein, co-presenter Kelly Lietz from WEDC mentioned that the website for the initiative is thinkmakehappen.com.

d. UW-Extension Report on Business Activity Research Leading to Economic and Workforce Insights for Wisconsin

Mark Lange, UW-Extension Executive Director, Business and Entrepreneurship Division, highlighted his organization's commitment to community and business development and to the Wisconsin Idea. He provided an update on business activity research initiatives that deliver broader and deeper competitive trend analysis to support the sustainable growth and success of start-ups and existing businesses across the state. Most notably, he highlighted the Business Dynamics Research Consortium. It has developed one of only two private databases that are following changes across the entire U.S. economy and providing a much better view inside the economy by employing innovative and focused "microdata" analysis. In response to a comment from Regent Tyler, Mark Lange pointed out that the data analysis will become available to small businesses later this year. He noted that the system is designed to provide customized service to help enhance the value of the Wisconsin economy one business at a time.

Chairman Hall adjourned the meeting of the Research, Economic Development, and Innovation (REDI) Committee at 12:17 p.m.