



MEETING MINUTES

Date/Time: Thursday, August 15 (3:30-5:00pm)
Hampton Inn Airport – 5200 28th St. SE, Grand Rapids

MISSION

Our mission is to provide Kent County hospitality-related businesses an opportunity to meet professionally with a common interest to better serve our industry and community while furthering the overall tourism landscape of our region.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

Welcome & Introductions: Kyle Holst – KCHA President-3:39pm

Approval of May 2019 Minutes-1st-Jane 2nd-Katrina

Approval of May 2019 Financials-1st-Jane 2nd -Elizabeth

Topic of Discussion: Employment issues in the Local Hospitality Industry

Panel moderated by Rachel Crowther with representatives from Talent and Economic Development Department of Michigan, Michigan Restaurant & Lodging Association, West Michigan Works.

West Michigan Works

Justin Smith, Business Solutions Representative
jsmith@westmichiganworks.org | 616.336.3708

- West Michigan Works handles the local workforce development in 7 counties. They assist job seekers as well as companies that are looking to hire employees. They have helped 42,000 job seekers and 3200 employers find employees for over 10,000 jobs.
- West Michigan Works also gathers job data to help figure out what the trends are and where the largest gaps are throughout the state.
- West Michigan Works also helps with recruitment and training. Last Year 252 employers applied and were awarded 10 million dollars to help train current employees, new employees and create apprenticeships.
- The current focus across the State is the trade fields that include manufacturing, construction and healthcare.
- West Michigan Works has programs that can help with consultations in finding ways to help retain employees and keep them engaged. You just need to reach out to W. MI Works.

Michigan Restaurant & Lodging Association

Will Korn, Member Value Manager
wkorn@mrla.org | 517.377.3921

Jake Osborn, Director of ProStart
josburn@mrla.org | 517.377.3924

- MRLA Education Foundation has the ProStart program is taught at the High School level. Once the student graduates they are directly able to be hired for culinary and hospitality arts. MRLA is looking to expand this program to the Hotel Industry.
- MRLA is working on strategies for student pathways to bring more of them into the Hospitality Industry. Apprenticeships are an important part of this pathway.
- The pipeline from High Schools is crucial to the future success of employment in our industry. Getting the word out and educating them about was options are available is key.
- Face to face interaction with students is also a key component to getting them to possibly choose the path to a job within the hospitality industry.

- Investing in the employees is extremely important in helping them to determine what career path do they have when starting at the line level and how can we help them stack up credentials that will allow them to move up in the industry to management positions.
- Knowing that a company is willing to invest time in them is extremely important in retention.
- Need to find ways to step outside of the box when it comes to hiring. Revamp recruiting procedures. Times have changed.
- How do we reach nontraditional employees?
- Hospitality industry needs to pull together. The industry as a whole is very competitive. Everyone is vying for the same people. As an industry we need to collaborate and find a way to work together.
- Appreciating our associates is also key in retention.
- Make the Hospitality Industry look attractive. Make it look positive not negative. Really show what opportunities for growth are out there.

Monthly Reports

- Experience Grand Rapids: Invitation went out for an educational opportunity in September prior to the KCHA meeting at the Courtyard downtown. WAVE Award nominations are now open.
- Certified Tourism Ambassador (CTA): Renewals are coming up.
- West Michigan Sports Commission: No report.
- Grand Rapids Diversity & Inclusion: Looking for 8-10 individuals to do an insight meeting into what hotels need.
- West Michigan Tourist Association: No report.
- Women in Leadership-Grand Rapids: August Event Social on the JDEK. It is free.
- Michigan Restaurant & Lodging Association: Since the merger the onboarding process is complete. Trade Show coming up October 15 & 16. Go to the website to get a discount code.
- Michigan Cares for Tourism: Still spots open. Register now.
- Grand Valley State University: Monday classes begin. Make sure to utilize the job boards to post openings.
- Ferris State University-Students start next week. Wine & Food Show and Alumni Event coming up.
- Michigan Hospitality Educators Alliance: Career Fair in Big Rapids. Holding it on Campus which is cheaper. Event is on Monday, November 4.
- Golf Outing: Next June. Date to be determined.

Upcoming Meetings & Events

- September 19 – KCHA Monthly Membership Meeting @ Courtyard Marriott (Active Shooter & Security Topics)
- September 24 – CTA @ Embassy Suites (8am-Noon)
- October 17 – KCHA Monthly Membership Meeting (Details TBA)
- October 23 – CTA @ Doubletree (8am-Noon)
- November 5 – CTA Holiday Mixer & 5 Year Celebration (FREE) @ Big E's – Embassy Suites (4:30-7pm)

Round Table Discussion

Adjournment-1st-Jane 2nd-Angela

Kent County Hospitality Association

PO Box 230092

Grand Rapids, MI 49523-0092

www.KentCountyHospitality.org