



CITY OF GRAND RAPIDS

Meeting Agenda Full Detail City Council Work Session

Monday, June 24, 2013

4:30 PM

CALL TO ORDER: Pursuant to due notice and call thereof a Special Meeting/Worksession of the Grand Rapids City Council will be held on Monday, June 24, 2013 at 4:30 p.m. in Conference Room 2A, 420 North Pokegama Avenue, Grand Rapids, Minnesota.

CALL OF ROLL: On a call of roll, the following members were present:

Discussion Items

1. 13-0378 Unemployment Rates

ADJOURN

Attest: Tom Pagel, City Administrator



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Legislation Details (With Text)

File #: 13-0378 **Version:** 1 **Name:** Unemployment Discussion
Type: Agenda Item **Status:** CC Worksession
File created: 6/18/2013 **In control:** City Council Work Session
On agenda: 6/24/2013 **Final action:** 6/24/2013
Title: Unemployment Rates

Sponsors:

Indexes:

Code sections:

Attachments:

Date	Ver.	Action By	Action	Result
6/24/2013	1	City Council Work Session	Received and Filed	

Unemployment Rates

Background Information:

Historically the Itasca County area, including the City of Grand Rapids, has experienced some of the higher unemployment rates in the State. The unemployment rate for Itasca County in July of 2012 was 7.6% while the State was 5.8%. These unemployment trends have existed for a minimum of ten years.

Recently, Council Member Zabinski and I attended a Local Government Affairs meeting at the Grand Rapids Area Chamber. What struck both of us was a local business person who stated: “My business has openings but I am not getting qualified people.” The business persons statement, combined with other great economic indicators like Magnetation being permitted for their new mine processing facility, Plant 4, which will add another 140 jobs, along with higher unemployment, perplexes us.

As a community we have great leadership, people, and programs to develop and cultivate a prepared, available workforce. There are great examples of collaboration such as workforce development between Itasca Community College, Minnesota Power, and UPM Blandin where paper making and power generation curriculum was developed and people were educated and trained. Our local school districts implemented all day, every day kindergarten, without dedicated funding six years prior to the State fully funding this activity because they recognized the long-term benefits of developing our children. The examples go on.

So how do unemployment rates stay high? How can we have a shortage of qualified workers? How can the City help to get a better understanding of the needs? Is there something the City can do in partnership with other entities to help improve the situation?

Would the City Council like City staff and Council Member Zabinski to pursue this topic further with other interested groups?

Staff Recommendation:

City staff is recommending pursuing this topic with other interested groups.

