

**Brainerd, MN
May 8, 2017**

Pursuant to due call and notice thereof, the Brainerd City Council met in a workshop to learn about, hear presentations and discuss Employee Recruitment and Retention Issues at 5:30 p.m. at the Police Department Training Room.

The following Council members were present: Pritschet, Bevans, Johnson, Badeaux, Lambert, Stunek, Hilgart and Mayor Menk. Also present were City Administrator Thoreen, Police Chief McQuiston, Finance Director Hillman, Parks Director Sailer, Fire Chief Holmes, City Planner Ostgarden, City Engineer Hulsether, Assistant City Engineer Sandy, and HR Coordinator Schubert.

The meeting opened with a brief supper and discussion of current issues.

Brainerd Lakes Area Economic Development Workforce Director Mike Bjerkness presented an overview of the employment situation in the area, citing the recovery from the recession of 6-7 years ago. He highlighted the challenge of an aging workforce, aggravated by the declining number of workers in the 25-64 year old age group. Other current or future complicating factors for local businesses and local government include affordable housing, transportation needs, and the lack of an immigrant workforce.

Regional Development Commission Executive Director Cheryal Hills presented the perspective from the five county area, citing a number of challenges closely aligned to Mr. Bjerkness' information. She noted that pending changes to the federal budget may well have a negative impact on the programs available to small businesses and local governments.

Brainerd City Human Resources Coordinator Kris Schubert displayed the coming challenges for the City and BPU regarding retirements within the next 2-3 years and the attendant recruitment challenges. She reviewed the surprisingly high number of new employees who have joined the respective staffs in the past 5 years. Retention of employees who may have other employment opportunities will be an additional challenge.

The Council discussed the topics presented by the HR Coordinator, gaining insights and ideas from department heads. Management's primary focus for coming months will be to develop:

1. Hiring process incentives
2. Streamlining of the hiring process
3. Further application of Continuous Improvement processes

Adjourn

The Chair adjourned the meeting at 7:30 p.m.

James M. Thoreen
City Administrator