

# Chamber Education Committee / Business Advisory Council Minutes

## January 28, 2025

Location Host: Tractor Supply Distribution Center 3001 Sterilite St SE Massillon, Ohio 44662

### Attendance

Emil Alecusan	Bryan Boatright	Debbie Busby	Joseph Chaddock	Lisa Dalpiaz
Chris DiLoreto	Shaun Eller	Dave Fischer	Mike Hearn	Rebecca Kuzma
Josh Lehman	Alex Logan	Stephen MacKenzie	Robert McBride	John Milan
Marci Muckleroy	Whitney Reinhart	John Richard	Derek Saylor	Michele Shaffer
Christine Taylor	Rachel VanDyke	Tom Venturella	Brittney Wells	Brett Yeagley
Matt Ziders	Melinda McNutt	Ralph Lee	Joel McKenzie	Austin Williams
Sam Kuchman	Lisa Talbert	Darin Haines		
Ryan Klusch	Aleisha Stout			

#### 1. Welcome and Call to Order

Dr. John Richard called the meeting to order at 12:06pm.

#### 2. Approval of agenda and November 26,2024 minutes

John Richard asked for approval of today's agenda, as well as the minutes from the November 26<sup>th</sup> meeting. Dave Fisher moved for approval, Shaun Eller seconded, and upon being put to a vote, the motion passed.

#### Special Guest introduction

John Richard introduced Stephen MacKenzie, who is now the President & CEO of the Stark Economic Development Board succeeding Ray Hexamer. Stephen expressed his gratitude for the opportunity to lead the SEDB. He highlighted the assets and partners in Stark County. Stephen emphasized the importance of community involvement and development and said he looks forward to meeting and working with everyone.

#### 3. Introductions: Christine Taylor, Stark Education Partnership

Christine asked all attendees to give their name, role and organization.

#### 4. Tractor Supply Distribution Center Welcome and Update on Current Events and Offerings – Joel McKenzie, Tractor Supply Distribution Center

Joel McKenzie stated that Tractor Supply Distribution is very proud of their partnership with the Stark County community and the continued growth that they have achieved. He stated that he was able to connect with the Education Partnership and to speak at a high

school and participate in local career days. Joel also said that Tractor Supply is on track to surpass Walmart with the total number of brick-and-mortar stores across the country.

**5. Presentation: Distribution & Logistics in Stark County- Joel McKenzie & Austin Williams, Tractor Supply Distribution Center, Ralph Lee, Kenan Advantage Group, and Darin Haines, Total Distribution, Inc.**

Joel McKenzie, HR Business Partner with Tractor Supply Company, highlighted the growth and success of Tractor Supply Distribution centers and new stores. The company offers robust tuition reimbursement and internal development programs to support employee growth. Joel also emphasized the company's mission and values, and the various career opportunities available within the organization.

Austin Williams, Operations manager at Tractor Supply Company, shared his experience and career progress within the company. He discussed the company's focus on community involvement and talent development. Tractor Supply's distribution center in Navarre, Ohio serves a wide area, including Michigan and North Carolina.

Sam Kuchman, Tractor Supply Operations Manager, stated that she was an hourly employee for TSC for about 9 months before entering the supervisor training program for another 9 months then received a call to come to Ohio and was promoted from lead to production manager and then to operations manager. Sam likes to talk to new employees about the growth plan that is available and the company's desire to promote from within.

Darin Haines, Chief Operating Officer at Total Distribution, presented an overview of the company and its core values. The company employs 1160 people in 75 facilities across Ohio, New Jersey, West Virginia, Virginia, North & South Carolina, Georgia and Florida and specializes in various storage and transportation services. Darin stated that TDI's focus in Stark County includes three facilities in Canton, Massillon, and Barberton that employ around 600 people. TDI's operations include merchant gas, special products, food, and energy divisions, serving various industries. Darin highlighted the company's emphases on the importance of management development and diversity, equity and inclusion, competitive compensation packages, tuition reimbursement, and an Employee Stock Ownership Plan.

Ralph Lee, Chief Human Resources Officer at Kenan Advantage, shared his journey from Cincinnati to Canton seven and a half years ago after receiving a phone call. Ralph has served on many councils and stated that KAG is committed to the community and it's thousands of employees in The United States, Canada and Mexico focusing on their four divisions which are Merchant Gas, Specialty Products, Food, and Energy. Ralph underscored KAG's diversity equity, mission, values, goals and MDP's – Management Development Partners program. He

welcomes the opportunity to speak with parents when kids need direction to consider a career path or internship. Ralph stated that KAG has an in-house school now and makes 50-60 offers a week for employment and hired 2000 drivers last year.

**6. Community Partner Update – Brittney Wells & Josh Lehman, Junior Achievement of North Central Ohio**

Josh Lehman, President of Leadership stated that he is excited about the growth JA has achieved in Stark County. A new program manager was hired to help support programming for the 30,000 students it serves. Josh highlighted the JA Inspire program which is a career exploration experience that collaborates with educators and employers with a hands-on approach.

Brittney Wells, Senior Director of Programs stated the JA Inspire program currently has 3800 students attending the event on March 6<sup>th</sup> at the Hall of Fame Village. The program is geared to helping young people understand what opportunities exist here in Stark and surrounding Counties with a carnival-like experience with a lot of fun things being offered.

**7. Adjourn & Tour of TSC Distribution Center 1:00-1:30.**

With there being no other business, John Richard requested a motion to adjourn, Shaun Eller made the motion, Joseph Chaddock seconded.