

August 15, 2023 Committee on Childcare in Minot

Committee on Childcare in Minot – August 15, 2023 AT 5:00 P.M.

Members Present:

Scott Burlingame, Amy Jenkins, Rianne Kuhn, Lisa Olson, Becca Oswill, Terry Schumalz, Harold Stewart, John Van Dyke

Members Absent:

Heather Cymbaluk, Keli Rosselli-Sullivan

Also Present:

Mikayla McWilliams (City Clerk)

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Scott Burlingame at 5:00 pm. The committee did a brief set of introductions due to new audience members. Chairman Burlingame then wanted to discuss some of the e-mails he received that shared the parent perspective.

The emails included situations as follows:

- Ali – She was a first-time mother who started to look for childcare 10 months prior to needing it. She contacted 16 daycares and none of them had an infant spot available. She ended up taking a year off from her job to stay home.
- Mary Beth – She feels in order to solve the shortage issues daycare providers must be paid a better wage with benefits.
- Nichole – She mentioned that her family was lucky to have another member of the family do the childcare. She believes the school system should offer preschool. Nichole would also like to see a better wage for providers/daycare employees.
- Desiree – She mentioned she just had her first child and is concerned about having more due to childcare costs and availability.

Rianne reiterated that she also knows of families who have decided to have less kids because of the issues with childcare availability and costs.

Terry Schumalz sees issues with hiring for the oil industry. There are logistical and emotional issues when settling families into the community. The traveling spouse usually has to postpone finding employment until the children are in a school setting or there is availability at a daycare. The community misses out on staffing the traveling spouse because of these issues. Terry believes it would take more commitment from outside the community to come work in the Minot area and he would like to see community partnerships within other industries to help solve some issues.

The committee discussed how operational expenses and staffing are more of an issue than finding space. Parents are wanting to work but cannot due to childcare issue. The committee also discussed what the end game is for the committee as a whole. First, they need to understand the problem by fact/information finding, possibly see if there can be discussion on community partnerships/collaborations, see if there is a way to lower the cost on starting up a daycare, etc. The committee would like to see if a resource packet could be provided to new daycare providers and to new members of the community by employers.

It was mentioned that maybe MACEDC could host a website/page as a reference site with the agreement they have with the City of Minot for workforce development. Could there be a partnership with the Small Business Association to help providers secure funding and present new providers with sample business plans? Another idea would be a possible mentor program through an entrepreneur system.

The next meeting is Wednesday, August 23, 2023, at 1:30 pm. This meeting will be a meeting to discuss innovative practices from other communities.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 5:36 pm.