

September 12, 2023 Committee on Childcare in Minot

Committee on Childcare in Minot – September 12, 2023 AT 4:30 P.M.

Members Present:

Scott Burlingame, Heather Cymbaluk, Rianne Kuhn, Shelbi Lawson, Lisa Olson, Becca Oswill, Terry Schumalz, Keli Rosselli-Sullivan, and John Van Dyke

Members Absent:

Amy Jenkins and Harold Stewart

Also Present:

Mikayla McWilliams (City Clerk)

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Scott Burlingame at 4:31 pm. The committee did brief introductions for the new committee member Shelbi Lawson. Alderman Burlingame then introduced Shannon Bugge-Turman from Odney to present the committee members the results of the employer and parent survey.

Shannon started the discussion with the basic statistics on the survey which include:

- Conducted July 17 thru August 1, 2023
- 177 Minot employers
 - 8,047 employees total
 - 74% had been in Minot for 20 years or longer
 - 72% had an annual revenue of \$500k or more
 - Represented a variety of sectors
- 101 Minot parents
 - 91% between the ages of 25 and 44
 - 88% had attended at least some college
 - 57% had a bachelor's degree or higher
 - 65% had lived in Minot for ten years or longer

She also discussed half (57%) of the responding Minot businesses/organizations indicated the greatest challenge they are currently facing is staffing/recruiting issues. Three out of four (77%) employers conduct exit interviews with departing employees to determine their reason for leaving. A lack of childcare was mentioned as a reason for leaving by 28%. Employers also had the following statistics due to the lack of childcare:

- 43% of employers have lost employees in the past year
- 41% have had applicants turn down job offers
- 36% have had employees who failed to return from maternity leave on time due in the past year

The survey asked questions such as:

- Are you currently looking for childcare? 36.67% yes and 63.33% No
- Have you had to quit or lost a job in the past year due to lack of childcare? 16.47% yes and 83.53% no
- In the past year, have you had to turn down any job offers due to lack of childcare? 37.06% yes and 72.94% no
- On a scale of one to five, with one being very easy and five being very hard is it to find daycare? Mean Rating was 4.41

The parent survey probably has around about a 10% trial and error. It was not a random survey and did not receive many results/responses. Full survey results were added after the meeting to the agenda.

The group discussed how a private and public collaboration would be a good scenario to look into for employers. The cost is high and space is not always available for an employer to be able to provide on-site childcare. Becca Oswill did mention the State of ND has increased all payment amounts to families in the Childcare Assistance Program. They might also be changing the income amounts for families to receive assistance in the next month or so. The survey did also state that 65% of employers were not aware of the Working Parents Child Care Relief pilot program offered by the state.

The committee also started the discussion on what is the City of Minot's role. Would it be to model what Watford City did or a grant program like West Fargo? MAGIC Fund is primarily used for primary sector businesses, which bring in new jobs into the Minot community. The committee will be looking into recommendations to the City Council.

John Van Dyke also presented to the committee some changes to the City of Minot Zoning Code. John would like to take the changes to the Planning Commission in November. A copy of the changes has been posted to the agenda and the group will discuss this more at the next meeting if there are more changes to be made. Parking and street traffic are the two main concerns for residents in the neighborhoods of at home daycares.

The next meeting is Tuesday, September 26, 2023, at 1:30 pm. This meeting will be to have more general discussion and a recommendation on the code changes.

There being no further business, the Rianne Kuhn motioned to adjourn the meeting adjourned at 5:23 pm and the motion carried unanimously.