



San Joaquin Valley Water Technology Cluster

February 7, 2002, 9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.
Central Valley Business Incubator
2555 Clovis Avenue
Clovis, CA 93612

I. Welcome and Introductions.

Co-chair Claude Laval welcomed the participants, and self-introductions were made.

II. Action Team Presentations and Discussion

The chair of each of the Action Teams presented the results of the group's activity since the last cluster meeting.

A. Workforce Preparation Action Team. Bob Early (Chair), Russ Densmore, Richard Meno, John Showalter, Ashley Swearengin, Denise Stelling, Sheri Abercrombie.

- Russ Densmore presented the summary of the January 30 committee meeting. Participants in the meeting included Mark Bell and Fred Mattern (American Welding Society); Rick Christl, Stan Neal, and Robert Fransen (FCC); Joe Russo and Jim Studebaker (Reedley College); Denise Stelling and Mike Kent (Fresno Valve); Robert Garcia (Laval Corp.); Bob Early (Grundfos); Willy Cash (Floway); Russ Densmore (AVK); and Ashley Swearengin (Futures Institute).
- Meeting Purpose
 - Determine if gaps exist between what is being taught in the welding programs and skills needed by water cluster companies.
 - If gaps exist, begin process for finding solutions.
- Summary
 - Students who complete the two-year welding programs at FCC or Reedley College will have the educational background and enough hands-on experience to satisfy entry level welding needs in the water cluster companies represented at the meeting.
 - Students completing only first-year of program do not have adequate background needed by cluster companies.
 - Few students actually complete the two-year program. Most go to work full-time after completing the first-year.

- At FCC 30% and at Reedley College 70% of the first-year welding students are taking all required core welding courses.
- Enrollment in welding classes has declined. Few high schools throughout the state offer welding classes. A few rural high schools offering Ag welding. Result is the lack of interest among high school grads to pursue welding as a career.
- Methods must be found to interest more high school graduates in welding as a career and keep community college welding students in the program through the full two-year program.
- Potential Solutions/Need to motivate students to stay in the program for two years.
 - Initiate intern programs to employ students part-time during the two-year program.
 - Utilize scholarship money from the AWS to encourage students to stay in the program for two years. AWS can also provide low cost student loans.
 - Possibly develop a compressed welding program modeled on the program at Carson City Junior College.
 - Investigate the recruiting program at College of the Canyons.

B. Technology Collaboration Action Team. Angelo Mazzei (Chair), Claude Laval, Ray Dunn, Nick Dvorak, David Zoldoske.

- Angelo Mazzei presented action team activities
 - President Welty has appointed David Zoldoske as interim director for the ICWT.
- A working group needs to be set up to move forward with the ICWT.
 - Claude Laval suggested that the current subcommittee serve as the interim board.
 - Angelo will organize interim board.
- Contacts with legislators are needed. Anyone with contact information should send it to Laura Ramos (laura_ramos@csufresno.edu)
 - Suggested contacts include Sarah Woolf, Bill Thomas (chair, budget committee). Patricia Geringer (legislative representative for Radanovich) will receive a copy of the legislative information packet.
 - A meeting with Senator Costa, John Harris, John Welty, and others is being arranged to discuss federal funding.
- The Taylor Group made a presentation on the preliminary structure of the ICWT. Copies of the architectural renderings were distributed.
 - They are creating plans for a building that says “technology, fabrication, and engineering are needed for daily living”.
 - World class building
 - Building will showcase landscape, water treatment, efficient use of water, hydraulics, etc.

C. Industry Advocacy Action Team. Sheila DeLany, Nick Dvorak, Ashley Swearengin, Don Thompson.

- Don Thompson presented Industry Advocacy activities.

- Areas of focus include expansion of the committee, business development, public relations, and advocacy.
 - Need to expand committee to create a marketing group
 - Public relations: media, presentations, web site, develop brochure, official logo and name.
 - Advocacy:
 - What agencies should the cluster work with?
 - Need face-to-face meetings with elected officials
 - Develop relationships with business organizations that will benefit from the cluster

III. Update on University Programs.

- Amy Chubb (UBC)
 - Job referrals to Workforce Connection are still needed from cluster companies.
 - Information on SBA Innovative Research grant is coming. She is working with Eduardo Torres to put a program together.
- Dan Clawson.
 - CALIFT attended an Ag show in Sinaloa, Mexico. Four cluster companies attended. Two of the companies plan to go back next year with their own booths.
 - CALIFT will host an international reception February 12 at 4 p.m.
- David Zoldoske
 - Need to form an interim board of directors for ICWT.
 - Met with University Farm Lab Committee regarding location for ICWT. No specific location selected yet.

IV. ICWT Interim Board.

- The Technology Collaboration Action Team plus Don Thompson will comprise the interim board of directors for the ICWT.

V. Wrap-Up/Next Steps.

- Possibly combine Advocacy and Technology teams. Advocacy team needs additional members for marketing.
- Juan Almanza (California Trade & Commerce) will have a delegation (20) from Turkey and 4 from Argentina coming to the Tulare Ag Show.

VI. Adjourn.

- The meeting adjourned at 10:50 a.m.

