

Northeast Minnesota Office of Job Training
WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD MEETING
Wednesday, January 25, 2017
Virginia Workforce Center – Virginia MN

Regularly scheduled meeting called to order by Chair Stone at 10:07 a.m.

WIB members present:

Bud Stone, Paul Carlson, Dave Debevec, Wade Fauth, Wayne Kangas, Lynn Krall, Jeff Lee, Terri Nystrom, Roland Root, Kelly Zink

Excused: Darik Carlson, Betsy Harmon, Kelsey Johnson, Bill Maki, Stan Paczynski, Allen Rasmussen, Todd Scaia, Roy Smith

Absent: Jason Quiggin

Guests: Julie Greenly and Tracy Chase, AEOA; Lorrie Janatopoulos, Iron Range Resources; Art Larsen, DEED

Staff: Michelle Ufford, Heath Boe, Renee' Marconett

Motion was made by Carlson, supported by Nystrom to approve the November 29, 2016 minutes as written; motion carried unanimously.

Chair Stone began meeting by introducing new WIB member Wade Fauth, Vice President of the Blandin Foundation.

Regional Planning Update

Ufford updated members the Northeast region is paired with the Duluth Workforce Development Board to ensure a regional workforce strategy is developed that coordinates the efforts of both workforce service areas. A handout outlining the eight goals established for the Regional Leadership approach was distributed for review and feedback. Board members were encouraged to attend the leadership committee meeting on January 31, 2017 at the Wilbert Café in Cotton.

Marnita's Table

One of the main goals of the regional work plan being developed by the Workforce Investment Board and the Duluth Workforce Development Board is greater inclusion on individuals of color in workforce development planning and programs. DEED has provided a resource to each region to help increase inclusion called Marnita's Table. Marnita's Table is a mission-driven nonprofit organization that seeks to measurably increase social capital across race, class, culture, gender and other means of self-identify in order to catalyze transformational change where racial and cultural differences are not viewed as deficits or merely tolerated, but instead viewed as assets. While this approach is not conducive to a region the size of ours, it will work well in Duluth, so it has been determined the event will be held on February 28th at Community Action Duluth. This event is free to participants, including people of color or individuals with disabilities, organizations that serve people of color or individuals with disabilities, or anyone else interested in employment disparities. Staff training will be provided immediately before the evening event.

Policy Development

The official implementation of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) is July 1, 2017. Ufford is looking for volunteers to assist with developing the new policy requirements; which includes the acquisition of the One-Stop Operator, update By-Laws, conflict of interest policy, and Memorandum of Understanding. Nystrom, Stone and Root volunteered to meet in February to discuss and make policy recommendations. The board will then review these policies and approve at the March 2017 meeting.

WIB Orientation/Refresher Session

An Orientation Guide was distributed outlining detailed information from the United States Department of Labor, the National Association of Workforce Boards, and the Minnesota Governor's Workforce Development Boards. The resources guide is an initial step to share the new WIOA information common to the members of Minnesota's sixteen local workforce development boards.

Ufford gave a power point presentation explaining an overview of the public workforce system. The role of the Workforce Development Board is to develop and submit a 4-year local plan and regional plan; conduct workforce research and regional labor market analysis; convene local workforce stakeholders; lead efforts to engage with employers; develop and implement career pathways; promote proven and promising practices; utilize technology promote accessibility; conduct oversight of WIOA employment and training activities; negotiate performance standards; select service providers, such as One Stop Operators; ensure a sufficient number and types of career and training service providers; and coordinate with ABE and providers of services to individuals with disabilities.

Board members will bring their expertise, knowledge and organizational goals to the table; communicate with external stakeholders; focus on strategic planning and initiatives; stay abreast of local labor market and economic conditions; make informed decisions; and attend meetings regularly.

Each local Workforce Center includes three partners – Arrowhead Economic Opportunity Agency (AEOA), MN Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED), and Northeast Minnesota Office of Job Training (NEMOJT). Each partner gave a short report of the various programs delivered at local Workforce Centers.

Northeast Minnesota Office of Job Training – Michelle Ufford

All participants work individually with an experienced and professional Career Counselor who manages each case using an electronic case management system, Workforce One. Each program has its own performance measures that must be achieved each year.

The Federal (WIOA) Dislocated Worker program helps individuals who have been laid off through no fault of their own or are unemployed long term (15+ weeks). The Federal (WIOA) Adult program helps low-income individuals with barriers to employment. Both of these programs provide counseling and career guidance that includes career assessments to determine a new career path, customized job search strategies, support services during participation, and tuition, books and fees for up to two years of occupational training for in-demand occupations.

The Federal (WIOA)/Minnesota Youth program assists youth with Work Experience (summer and year-round), determining interests and career pathways, helping to ensure graduation/diploma, and postsecondary planning.

The Minnesota Family Investment Program (MFIP)/Diversionary Work Program (DWP) provides services to help Public Assistance families support themselves to find and succeed in a job. Support services include mileage to and from a job, vehicle repair, and child care while in training or job search.

The Talent Development Program is a grant for incumbent worker training using state dislocated worker funding. This program is meant to offset the employer costs to train and upgrade the skills of current workers by providing reimbursement to eligible businesses for specific training costs accrued during the course of training. Eligible businesses must demonstrate that by receiving funding assistance through the program, their business will not only improve the skills of their workforce but also improve their business processes and competitiveness and/or avert a layoff.

The Northeast Career EdVenture program provides free career guidance and planning resources for area schools regardless of traditional eligible limitations.

Arrowhead Economic Opportunity Agency – Julie Greenly

AEOA employs 350 full and part time staff and utilizes more than a thousand volunteers divided among five major departments: Arrowhead Transit, Head Start, Housing, Employment and Training, and Senior Services.

Arrowhead Transit provides public transportation for the residents of the eight-county area and is one of the largest rural public transit systems in the United States. The Rural Rides program assists low-income individuals to overcome work-related transportation barriers. With the assistance of local Transportation Advocates, program participants create a personalized transportation plan and are linked with reliable, accessible and affordable transportation.

Head Start is a free program offering educational, social, and health services to expectant mothers and children from birth to age five. They also help the entire family work toward employment, education, and self-esteem goals.

Housing services provides funding for homeowners to improve the conditions of their housing, rental rehabilitation deferred loans, foreclosure prevention assistance; along with Homeless programs, permanent supportive housing, energy assistance, weatherization, CARE Program and MN Sure.

Employment and Training services include the Minnesota Family Investment Program, YouthBuild, Adult Basic Education, Vocational Evaluation, Lives in Transition, Free at Last, Senior Community Service Employment Program, Dislocated Workers, Family Assets for Independence in Minnesota, Bridge to Employment, Community Offender Re-entry Program North, Youth Homelessness Prevention, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, and Diversionary Work Program.

Senior Services provides essential community-based services that allow older adults to maintain their health, independence, and quality of life at home in their community.

Department of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (VRS) – Roland Root **State Services for the Blind**

Vocational Rehabilitation Services seeks to employ Minnesotans with disabilities to achieve their goals for employment, independent living and community integration. Eligible individuals who have a physical or mental disability receive vocational rehabilitation counseling, job training, job placement, services to keep a job, and assistive technology. Over 17,600 people received services from VR in 2016. 36% of all VR participants report a serious mental illness, with 43% of those receiving services in 2016 were the age of 24 or younger. Although Vocational Rehabilitation continues to serve those with the most significant work barriers, there is a growing wait list. By the end of September 2016, 1,085 people were on a wait list. 3,115 participants obtained employment in 2016, with the average wage being \$358 per week, compared to just \$36 a week when they applied for services.

The State Services for the Blind ensures that persons who are blind, visually impaired, or DeafBlind (including those who have additional physical or mental impairments) have the rehabilitation services they need to prepare for, seek, gain or retain employment.

Department of Employment and Economic Development – Art Larsen

The Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED) delivers key services to job seekers and businesses through Job Services. The focus of all services, which are available through Minnesota's statewide network of Workforce Centers, is to help job seekers find work and help employers find and retain qualified employees.

Job Service staff guide job seekers through all steps of job search and career planning, including:

- Inform job seekers about Workforce Center services including eligibility-based employment and training programs
- Educate job seekers on how to search and apply for jobs using MinnesotaWorks.net and DEED's online job bank
- Offer job search advice and assisting with writing effective resumes
- Provide free workshops and training to job seekers on the fundamentals of a successful job search; including up-to-date strategies using social media and online tools
- Recommend other community-based resources and services

A total of 177,622 customers were served in 2015; with 116,395 job seekers finding a job within 90 days of their last service at an average yearly wage of \$36,088. Job Service is the first point of contact for over 47,000 Unemployment Insurance (UI) applicants who are called into the Workforce Center's each year.

The next meeting date is scheduled for Wednesday, March 22, 2017 at Iron Range Resources in Eveleth. Meeting adjourned at 12:20 p.m.