

**NORTHEAST MINNESOTA OFFICE OF JOB TRAINING
LOCAL ELECTED OFFICIAL BOARD**

Thursday, March 14, 2019

Virginia Workforce Center

1:00 – 3:00 p.m.

Chair Adee called a regularly scheduled meeting of the Elected Official Board to order at 1:05 p.m. with the following in attendance:

Pete Walsh	David Mills	Kevin Adee
Tom Proulx	Paul McDonald	

Conference call in: Don Niemi

Excused: Burl Ives

Staff: Michelle Ufford, Renee' Marconett

Motion was made by Walsh, supported by Proulx to approve the March 14, 2019 agenda with one correction; change meeting minutes to November 15th; motion carried unanimously.

Motion was made by Proulx, supported by Walsh to approve the November 15, 2019 minutes as written; with no additions or revisions; motion carried unanimously.

Chair Adee began meeting by introducing new members, David Mills from Cook county and Paul McDonald from St. Louis county.

Chair Adee requested nominations for the election of officers. **Motion was made by Mills, supported by McDonald to remain with the same slate of officers as they stand: Kevin Adee, Chair; Donald Niemi, Vice-Chair; and Tom Proulx, Secretary. Motion carried unanimously.**

Handout #1 – January 2019 Funding Summary was reviewed. It was noted there is a summary detail on the back outlining what program means and their major activities. Mills questioned why Cook County was not included in the funding summary. The Northeast Minnesota Office of Job Training does not a

have a contract to perform MFIP/DWP services in Cook and Lake County. AEOA is the provider.

NEMOJT Overview and Updates

A handout was distributed outlining the “Overview of the Workforce System”. It graphically depicts the complexity of workforce development and the roles of numerous stakeholders. In reviewing the handout, members had many questions and a lengthy discussion involving the challenges of childcare facilities and transportation for job seekers.

Ufford gave a brief history of the Northeast Minnesota Office of Job Training. It began in 1974 under the joint powers agreement of seven counties to administer public workforce development funds. We are a relatively linear organization. Members were given an organizational chart showing 4 management staff, 2 fiscal staff, 3 clerical staff, 23 career counselors, 1 rural career counselor coordinator, and 1 outreach specialist. There are offices in Virginia, Hibbing, Grand Rapids, International Falls, Aitkin, Cloquet and Duluth. We partner in a regional Workforce Center system with DEED (Job Service, re-employment, Veterans, State Services for the Blind, and Department of Rehabilitation Services), and AEOA staff. The Minnesota Chippewa Tribe has one staff member located only in Virginia.

In April the Workforce Center system will be rebranded as “CareerForce” statewide. A committee was formed in an effort to combat the “best kept secret” theory and discuss ways we can better promote our system. This is not a job posting site, but rather an online platform for employers and job seekers. Each of the seven locations will be having an open house during the week of April 15-19. County commissioners were invited to attend the open house in their area.

The Northeast Minnesota Office of Job Training has youth and adult programs. 29% of our total program funds are to be spent on youth; which includes Minnesota Youth, WIOA In-school and Out-of-school youth, and Pre-ETS. 71% of total program funds are spent on adults. This includes MFIP/DWP, dislocated workers (federal and state), and WIOA adults.

Ufford then referenced the Program and Services handout. This lists a breakout of current programs, noting the fiscal year dollar amount in the right column. In all programs, participants receive customized one on one services tailored to their needs; including assessment of interests, personality and skills to help inform career goals, job search assistance, funding for post-secondary training, work experience for youth, and On-the-Job Training. The Talent Development Program was started for incumbent workers three years ago. Eligible businesses can receive up to \$25,000 per program year to train their full time (32 hours a week or more), 18 years of age or older, employees.

The Northeast Career EdVenture program was created for free career planning and guidance services at area schools regardless of traditional eligibility limitations. Career counselors deliver resources for individuals in resume development, career assessments, financial aid guidance, and transition from high school planning. The Career EdVenture program was started in 40 districts in the region and now is used across the state.

The Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre ETS) program is a career exploration resource for Special Education students. 5% of our total funding will be obligated for Pre-ETS. We have received an additional \$70,000 for youth work experience this summer. In September, we will reapply for this grant. Students will be placed in jobs at public sector worksites.

A system organizational chart was distributed noting the relationship between the Workforce Development Board (WDB) and Local Elected Officials (LEO). There are 16 Workforce Development Areas. Each WDA has a Workforce Development Board which is mandated by the federal government. A majority of membership must be from the private sector. The LEO is the appointing authority for the WDB.

The WDB is currently engaged in two sector initiatives, healthcare and the skilled trades, each with its own activity. The WDB is also working with Equity Alliance of MN to provide leadership and staff customized professional learning along with the administration of the Intercultural Development (IDI) assessment. Learning sessions will be provided to give the staff an opportunity for dialogue and reflection on topics such as the meaning of culture, the dimensions of culture, cultural values, implicit bias, and how bias impacts communication across

cultures. WIOA requires the NE and Duluth WDB's work together to support sector initiatives plus work on talent attraction.

Steve Grove is the new DEED commissioner. He was an executive at Google for 12 years and founding director of Google's news lab. He seems aware of the state's workforce dynamic and emphasizes closing the opportunity gap.

The new program year begins July 1st and we anticipate allocations will remain the same or increase. Funding is allocated to areas based on a formula that takes into consideration population and census data, income data, and areas of substantial unemployment.

The Business Support Services team at NEMOJT has been working to develop a suite of materials and services to assist employers in the region with their recruitment, hiring, and retention needs. This assistance is especially urgent during this time of record low unemployment. An online survey of business leaders was conducted and over 50 individuals responded. They were from a broad span of industries and sizes of companies. Results show business leaders are concerned they are not able to find the employees they need, both in quantity and quality. The team is working on developing a two-tiered structure of services for employers in the region. The first tier is "Basic Services" which will be straightforward services available to employers at no cost. For example: assistance with posting jobs on MinnesotaWorks.net, being an "Employer of the Day" at one of our centers, hosting networking and educational events, or reviewing a job posting before it is sent out to the public. The second tier of services will be "Enhanced Services". These services will be more in-depth and customized to the specific employer. More staff time will likely be necessary to deliver enhanced services so a fee for service model is being explored. These services will be customized to business need and will center on the human resources aspects of recruitment of new employees, hiring and on-boarding of new employees, and retention of current employees. The team is currently working on a family friendly resource guide for employers.

Motion was made by Proulx, supported by Walsh to approve the resolution between NEMOJT and IRRRB for the Career Exploration project in the amount of \$70,000; motion carried unanimously.

Ufford met with the Blandin Foundation last fall and discussed a project to work with the Deer River schools in providing students with the opportunity to understand their own career interests and experience the breadth of local career opportunities to help inform their own career goals, along with providing employers an avenue to help develop their future workforce and showcase their industry. A meeting was then arranged with the principal and counselors from Deer River to further discuss the project. The counselors suggested using Science of the Positive framework through the Montana Institute who helped design the underage drinking campaigns in Deer River and Grand Rapids. A \$10,000 initial planning grant was received to start working with the Montana Institute. Ufford and Bergland would like to attend the Montana Institute this summer to identify and understand how everything works. The Blandin Foundation will cover registration fees (\$1,700 for NEMOJT staff), but not travel, which is estimated at \$3,700. **Motion was made by Mills, supported by McDonald, to approve funds for Ufford and Bergland to attend the Montana Institute for five days at the end of June, motion carried unanimously.** A full grant will be developed and submitted in June. This will include hiring an individual from the Grand Rapids area to develop database, do employer outreach, and develop training and orientation materials for employers and students. Activities would be work credit from the school. This project will serve as a model in other areas.

Board members were informed a staff member has resigned from the Cloquet office. At this time, the individual is not being replaced at this time.

Following review of one new Northeast Workforce Development Board membership and nomination; **motion was made by Walsh, supported by Mills, appointing Kelly Hertling, Human Resource Supervisor from L & M Radiator; motion carried unanimously.**

County commissioners gave updates of what is happening in each of their counties.

Motion made by Proulx, supported by Walsh to adjourn at 3:20 p.m.; motion carried unanimously.