

NORTHEAST MINNESOTA OFFICE OF JOB TRAINING
ELECTED OFFICIAL BOARD
Thursday, September 21, 2017
Virginia Workforce Center

Chair Adee called a regularly scheduled meeting of the Elected Official Board to order at 9:35 a.m. with the following in attendance:

Tom Rukavina	Donald Niemi	Pete Walsh
Burl Ives	Tom Proulx	Kevin Adee

Excused: Myron Bursheim
Guest: Stacey Stark, UMD Geospatial Analysis Center
Staff: Michelle Ufford, Randy Lampton, Renee' Marconett

Motion was made by Walsh, supported by Niemi, to approve the September agenda as written; with no additions or revisions; motion carried unanimously.

Motion was made by Rukavina, supported by Ives, to approve the June 8, 2017 minutes as written; with no additions or corrections, motion carried unanimously.

Workforce System Asset Mapping Report

Stacey Stark, UMD Geospatial Analysis Center

The Northeast and Duluth Workforce Development Boards funded a comprehensive examination of employment and support services in the Northeast region. The purpose of the research was to inform the Boards of opportunities to align workforce development programs and related supportive service assets (service providers) with the people they serve, to expand and identify duplication of these programs and services, and to demonstrate a collaborative workforce system through visual and statistical means.

Employment service providers were identified using United Way's 2-1-1 database, and additional data was collected on each agency using a customized survey. In total, 128 unique employment services, and 75 support service agencies were identified throughout the Northeast Region. Surveys were distributed to all employment agencies, with 78 completing the survey in full, resulting a 60% response rate.

Low income individuals, older adults, and individuals with disabilities or health conditions were the most common populations among the agencies for which data was available. The analysis found that these were also three of the more underserved populations when comparing the number of agencies with the population in the region.

One of the survey questions asked agencies to identify the top five barriers facing their organization's clientele. Reliable transportation was the most frequently cited barrier among all survey respondents. Agencies also reported a lack of education and training, lack of appropriate soft skills, mental health issues, and childcare as being common barriers faced by their clientele. Minority-serving agencies were more likely to mention criminal history as a top barrier among their clients. Youth-serving agencies were more likely to select soft skills and mental health issues. Agencies that serve

individuals with disabilities put more weight upon soft skills, mental health, and chemical dependency as problems for their clients. Agencies that target low-income individuals were more likely to list mental health issues and childcare as major barriers.

Geographic data analysis of the agencies in the diverse seven-county region focused on the distribution of services and the patterns of specific target populations accessing services. Agencies were distributed in similar proportions to the population distribution between urban and rural areas except in Lake and Carlton counties, where significant proportion of the population live in rural areas outside of the town clusters where the agencies are located.

Stark will update the board once the final report is completed by the UMD Bureau of Business and Economic Research.

August 2017 Funding Summary/Program Allocations

Executive Director Ufford reviewed the August 2017 Funding Summary. All current grants and expenditures are in place. An additional handout was distributed outlining PY'17 funding allocations. There is a 35% increase in WIOA Adult funding, a 37% increase in WIOA Youth Program, but a large decrease in MN Dislocated Worker funding (30.8%) and WIOA Federal Dislocated Worker funding (12.4%). There are three additional/supplemental funding sources available for PY'17: The Rural Career Counseling Coordinator (\$190,000/year x 2 years – expected to be ongoing), the Pre-Employment and Training Project (\$100,000); and the Skilled Trades Pathway-St Paul Foundation (\$30,000).

Regional Professional Development Day

A Professional Development Day is planned for September 27, 2017 at Timberlake Lodge in Grand Rapids. All employees from Workforce Centers across the seven county regions will attend this day long workshop. Breakout sessions will include “Transitions and Offender Re-Entry”, “Engaging Clients with the Employer”, “You Can’t Serve what Ya ain’t Cooking”, and “Asset Mapping”.

Workforce Center Operations Update

In July, DEED was having some budget issues and decided to no longer support the amount of computers in resources rooms. There are 46 Workforce Centers in the state and each has decreased their computers in half. Clients can use their own laptops in the resource room and wireless access is offered.

The Office of Job Training is in the process of hiring a new Youth Career Counselor in the Grand Rapids office. One career counselor retired last year and another will be retiring soon.

Upcoming Contract Negotiations

The Office of Job Training will begin negotiating their union contract at the end of October. The Board will be updated on the progress at the November meeting.

Workforce Development Board Update

A joint Workforce Development Board meeting between Duluth and the Northeast will be held on September 26, 2017 in Cotton. Members will be reviewing the final Asset Mapping Report and work on regional planning. Connie Ireland, Executive Director of the Governor's Workforce Development Board will update board members on new opportunities and priorities regarding the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). Keynote speaker is Deon Clark, CEO of TCI Solutions.

Pre-ETS (Employment Transition Services) Project

The Office of Job Training received a \$100,000 grant to provide Pre-Employment Transition Services to area schools. Through a partnership with Minnesota Vocational Rehabilitation Services, the Office of Job Training will offer pre-employment and training services to special education students. This project will focus on Career EdVenture efforts for students with an Individual Employment Plan (IEP). A handout was distributed outlining the career planning resources for special education students. Services will be available on topics such as Job Exploration Counseling, Post-Secondary Education Counseling, Instruction in Self Advocacy, and Workplace Readiness Training. 900 participants will be served over a 9-month school year.

Miscellaneous

A representative from the Applied Learning Institute (ALI) will be invited to come in and explain their services to Board members.

Board members would like to have a Career Counselor attend a meeting and give an outline of their job description and capacity in the Workforce Center.

Next meeting scheduled for Thursday, November 9, 2017.

Motion made by Proulx, supported by Ives to adjourn meeting at 11:45 a.m.; motion carried unanimously.