

**NORTHWEST PRIVATE INDUSTRY COUNCIL
FULL WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD MEETING
18 February 2010**

Call to Order

The Northwest Private Industry Council Workforce Council meeting was called to order by Chairperson Dixie Holen at the Best Western in Thief River Falls on Thursday, 18 February, 2010 at 5:30 P.M.

Attendance

NWPIC members present were Thomas Anderson, Kirsten Fuglseth, Dixie Holen, Ginnie Kiviaho, Colette Kujava, MaryJo Larson, Joyce Magner, Bob Melby, Michael Moore, Leo Olson and Carolyn Toupin.

Guests present included Stephen Larson, DEED Regional Administrator, Rodger L. Coauette, NWPIC Executive Director and Suzan Gagner, NWPIC Administrative Assistant.

Introductions

Dixie requested each Council member and guest introduce themselves.

Minutes

The minutes of the 21 January 2010 meeting were read and approved. Motion to approve minutes by MaryJo Larson, second by Joyce Magner. Motion carried.

Stephen Larson: DEED Regional Administrator

Stephen deferred his time to Kirsten so that she could explain the services that the Northwest Service Cooperative provides. Kirsten stated that the Northwest Service Cooperative covers twenty-three school districts, 10,000 square miles and has thirteen teachers employed through fifteen classrooms. Larger locations include, Warroad, Crookston and Thief River Falls, in addition there are smaller sites located throughout the seven county region. Individuals served are sixteen and older with the objective being to bring their literacy skills to at least a high-school level. Some offices are co-located with colleges which serves a dual purpose. Approximately 600 – 700 learners are served each year.

MaryJo added that Marshall County Social Services has paired up with ABE to assist participants in obtaining their GED. Kirsten added that they were lucky to find a retired teacher to work with both agencies. It is mandated that to utilize Federal funding they need to serve the hard to serve clients.

Stephen stated that in order for participants to attend college they need to take the Accuplacer test, which the Northwest Service Cooperative also assists with. The goal is to have the individuals pass this testing without utilizing their financial aide, which should be allocated towards technical skills training. In Minnesota 30% of high-school graduates have sub-par academic skills to attend college. MaryJo asked how Minnesota compared to the rest of the nation. Stephen stated he was unsure but that over 1.9 million Minnesota Adult Learners either have no high-school diploma, little post-secondary education or no secondary education.

Stephen noted that Northland Community and Technical College has been awarded a \$5 million U.S. Department of Labor ARRA Grant. This grant, which will be allocated over the next three years, will be used to establish the Northland Community and Technical College Unmanned Ariel Systems Maintenance Training Center. Mike noted that the runway at the Thief River Falls airport will need to be lengthened 1000 feet to accommodate this training. The number of projected students to begin with will be approximately one hundred, but in a couple of years this number is expected to exceed five hundred. Thief River Falls is also creating a business incubator to attempt to incorporate the Unmanned Ariel Systems.

Committee Reports

There were no Committee meetings since the last Full workforce Board meeting. There was no additional discussion on this item.

Update on Assistant Director Position

The number of applicants was encouraging and out of thirty applicants there are four applicants that will be called back for a second interview. Draft questions are in the process. Rodger stated that the final applicant will be told the job offer is contingent upon a background check.

Roseau Update

The Roseau DEED office has completed their move to the new location. The cost of the move is just being submitted and will be based upon the old cost allocation agreement. The position that Jessica Bordun held, which is half funded by the NWPIC and half funded by DEED, has been approved for refilling. A Work Experience person has been placed in the Roseau DEED office and alleviates some of the workload. Mike asked if there was any update on the revitalization of the JSEC. Rodger stated that statewide the state had dissolved JSEC's and Carolyn added that she felt this gave employers a bad thought about JSEC's. Stephen asked what information was shared that was valuable information through the JSEC meetings. Mike stated that since the JSEC no longer meets there is not a regular venue to meet and talk with employers in the Thief River Falls area.

Master Grant Agreement

Included in each Council members packet was a copy of a master grant agreement covering state and/or federal funds.

DEED is required to have on file information regarding those authorized/delegated to sign contracts on behalf of each organization – including a copy of the resolution showing this authorization.

The Northwest Private Industry Workforce Investment Board passes a resolution designating Dixie Holen, the WIB Chairperson and Rodger L. Coauette, NWPIC Executive Director as the representatives of the NWPIC that are authorized to sign contracts on behalf of the NWPIC. In addition, Janet Halvorson, ICCC Fiscal Director, and Donna Cantwell, ICCC Assistant Fiscal Director, are authorized as the individuals authorized to draw down cash. Motion made by Michael Moore, second by Leo Olson. Motion carried.

Stephen asked for clarification regarding the section of the directions that states: “The term will allow for three (3) issuances of formula dollars”. Rodger will check with Shelly Langraff for further clarification.

Program Provider Selection for Adult and Dislocated Worker Programs

Rodger stated that for the WIA Adult and the Dislocated Worker programs the RFP allows for the option of an additional year and he is recommending that DEED be contracted with for the additional year for these programs. Right now the WIA Dislocated Worker program is anticipated to have the funding spent out, even with the additional \$240,000 of funding received. The Adult program, for all purposes, will also be spent out.

Motion to approve DEED as the program operator for the WIA Adult and Dislocated Worker programs for Program Year 2010, by Robert Melby, second by Michael Moore. Motion carried with Carolyn Toupin abstaining.

Rodger added that with the Executive Director transition upcoming he will be adding Carolyn Toupin to the agenda next time to discuss how DEED will deal with these programs. In addition, DEED and ICCC will be added to the NWPIC agenda at least bi-annually to make a program provider presentation to the WIB.

2010 Planning Process

We will be entering the time of the year to gather information for the annual planning process. The Youth Plan, which works through the NWPIC Youth Council, is no longer a checklist and will be added to the NWPIC website as it is updated. The Adult and DW annual plans will be due at the end of May. In addition, it is time to address the Joint Powers agreement, as is done every two years, which does allow Rodger to attend the County board meetings. Michael asked if the Assistant Director will be hired in time to participate in these meetings. Rodger stated that this individual will be involved as appropriate in these meetings and will assist with sections of the annual plans as well.

Informational Items

- a. Operational Reports
- b. WorkForce Center System Customer Satisfaction Survey

Other

Included in each Council members packet was the Office of the Legislative Auditor Evaluation Report summary / February 2010. Major findings and recommendations are listed on the front page. It was noted that included in the report was the comment that locating workforce centers at colleges is not automatically beneficial. Stephen commented that the notation regarding Workforce Center programs being only partially integrated with adult basic education is very poor. This information is important, but it needs to be accurate. Carolyn also stated this section is inaccurate. Unemployment Insurance has separated itself from the local WorkForce Center and that the Commissioner should be doing something to ensure that all departments are working together.

Michael asked if any formal response was going to be submitted. Rodger stated that there may be letters submitted. The Legislature held a hearing yesterday and overall the report was seen as quite positive. Rodger stated that a few of the other WSA's were allowed to view this report prior to publication and a few changes were made. Overall this report was viewed favorably by the WSAs.

Carolyn informed the Board that one of her staff from the Thief River Falls WorkForce Center has a four month old child that is requiring a bone marrow transplant and is extremely ill. A benefit is being held this evening in Thief River Falls should anyone be interested. Luckily DEED has a vacation donation policy.

Stephen asked Tom if he could make a report on the internship program available through Pathways. Tom stated that this internship program allowed for up to 520 hours at minimum wage, and could be subsidized by the employer. The funding for this program is through the Occupational Development Center. Stephen commented that WSA #1 has four hundred percent more internships compared to WSA #2.

Future Meetings

The next NWPIC Full Council meeting is scheduled for Thursday, 18 March 2010 at 5:30 PM at the Best Western in Thief River Falls.

Adjourn

The NWPIC Full Council meeting was adjourned by Chairperson Dixie Holen at 7:30 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Suzan Gagner
NWPIC Administrative Assistant