

**NORTHWEST PRIVATE INDUSTRY COUNCIL
FULL WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD MEETING
18 March 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 March, 2010 at 5:30 P.M.

Attendance

NWPIC members present were Bob Evans, Kirsten Fuglseth, Dixie Holen, Colette Kujava, Bob Melby, Michael Moore, Leo Olson and Carolyn Toupin.

Guests present included Rodger L. Coauette, NWPIC Executive Director and Suzan Gagner, NWPIC Administrative Assistant.

Minutes

The minutes of the 18 February 2010 meeting were read and approved. Motion to approve minutes by Michael Moore, second by Bob Melby. Motion carried.

Stephen Larson: DEED Regional Administrator

Stephen was unable to attend this meeting.

Committee Reports

Dixie and Rodger reported on the NWPIC Youth Council meeting held on Wednesday, 17 March, 2010. At this meeting Betty reported that the WIA In-school program is currently under-enrolled, but that enrollment numbers will meet plan numbers by the end of this month. Current enrollment is around 144. Work crews are working in both Crookston and Thief River Falls, sandbagging if necessary and shoveling sidewalks. The Pre Med Health Career classes are progressing with no concerns at this time. We are getting to the end of the fiscal program year for youth programs.

JaNan reported that for the month of February there were no new enrollments and no terminations in the ARRA Youth program. The WIA Youth program had one new enrollment and one termination. The average beginning wage is around \$13.

Special Youth Programs such as: the Outreach to Schools, Teen Parent Program, ARRA Special Youth Project, Supplemental Grant and the WIA Youth Incentive programs are being spent and progressing according to plan.

The Program Year Youth Council Work Plan is similar to the last few years; it provides a general template for guidance and needs to be flexible.

Two new Youth Council members have been added. Their appointments need to be addressed by the WIB. Murray Turner is also helping with the recruitment of someone from education, preferably a school counselor.

The Program Year 2010 Local Plan is being worked on and is due the middle of April. The plan will be posted on the NWPIC website. The PY 2010 meeting calendar was approved. Dixie reported on the National Association of Workforce Boards Forum, this item will be discussed later on during this Full Council meeting.

Update on Assistant Director Position

Amanda Grzadzielewski has been hired as the Assistant Director and will begin employment on Monday, 5 April, 2010. Amanda holds a master's in psychology and currently resides in Duluth. She is employed as a Wellness Employment Navigator. Bob Evans asked what her motivation was for applying for this position in Northwest Minnesota. Rodger replied that she has family in the Thief River Falls area and it was also understood that her husband was looking at opening a business in the Thief River Falls area. The hiring process was lengthy and some good candidates applied.

Report on National Association of Workforce Boards Annual Conference (Dixie)

Dixie reported that she recently had the opportunity to attend the National Association of Workforce Boards Annual Conference in Washington DC. Attendance appeared to be higher than in previous conferences, which is most likely due to the additional stimulus funding. The conference was very exciting and informative. She suggests, should funding be available in the future, that more than one NWPIC Council member attend, due to the many workshops and their topics. Rodger noted that this conference is the "Grand-daddy" of all Workforce Association Conferences. The two biggest focuses in this conference were entering employment and concentration on job creation. The importance of the youth programs was phenomenal and also emphasized. Dixie noted that it is amazing what some youth have to go through and that these programs make a world of difference. The youth programs should be easily defended. Dixie shared informational items and asked that if any council members wished to view them they just ask.

Dixie also noted that having the conference at the same hotel they were staying at was so convenient. Another highlight is that a member of the Minnesota Workforce Council Association has been elected to serve as the Director of the National Workforce Council Association.

Rodger stated that an email was received today that mentions that the Minnesota Workforce Council Association has posted ARRA Success Stories on their website. This information will be forwarded to council members. Rodger asked Dixie if WIA Authorization was mentioned at the conference, Dixie replied that it was not mentioned much at all. Bob Melby mentioned that the jobs bill recently passed has no mention of funding for summer employment, but the possibility still exists.

Report on Adult and Dislocated Worker Programs (Carolyn)

Carolyn stated that because of a request from Rodger she has prepared a report on Adult and Dislocated Worker Programs. Lorelee Taylor and JaNan Erickson both work out of the Crookston WorkForce Center. Lorelee runs the Dislocated Worker Programs and JaNan runs the WIA Adult and WIA Youth programs. In the Thief River Falls WorkForce Center Carl Unbehaun handles the Dislocated Worker programs and Karen Gonsorowski handles the WIA Adult and WIA Youth programs. In addition, Carolyn noted that due to stimulus funding they hired three additional staff persons. Jennifer Person works out of the Thief River Falls WFC, Wyatt Johnson works out of the Crookston WFC and Jennifer Killmer works out of the Roseau DEED Office. Susan Peterson also works out of the Thief River Falls WorkForce Center and is partially funded by stimulus funding. Carolyn also oversees staff at the East Grand Forks DEED Office. The Dislocated Worker program is for individuals that have lost their jobs due to no fault of their own. Employers often contact Carolyn, Rodger or Lorelee to inform them of a business downsizing and to see what programs are available. Programs have different components such as; On-the-Job Training, Work Experience, Classroom Training and Job Search. Each individual has assessment testing in the areas of skills, interests, levels of reading and math skills and is informed of high-wage, high-demand occupations in this seven county region.

Staff also refers individuals to Adult Learning Centers, Rehabilitation Services, Social Service programs, Migrant Services, Tri-Valley and Inter-County Community Council.

Marketing consists of flyers, posters, newspaper and radio advertisements and face to face communication.

Selection of Out-of-School Youth Program Provider

A request for proposal was placed for an Out-of-School Youth program provider with both ICCC and DEED responding. Both agencies provided a presentation and after much discussion the recommendation from the NWPIC Youth Council is to contract with Inter-County Community Council as the Out-of-School Youth Provider for fiscal year 2010. The biggest reasons are that the summer youth program funding was not spent out according to contract and the difficulty with meeting the contract numbers for the Work Experience component. The Work Experience component turned into more of a Classroom Training component. In addition the attitude of DEED staff at Youth Council meetings was mentioned. Rodger also noted that with regard to new enrollments and worksites, DEED staff continually had excuses for not being able to meet plan goals, whereas ICCC staff meets goals and does not make excuses.

Carolyn asked if she could say a few words regarding this recommendation. She stated that she was unaware that the ARRA Youth program was a summer program and it was not originally stated as such. She was under the impression it would “roll over” as other stimulus funding, into the regular WIA programs. Although she does understand that this ARRA funding was not spent timely, enrollment numbers did increase and in fact, Carolyn stated, the regular WIA Youth Program enrollment numbers are up to planned levels.

She has a feeling the NWPIC wanted this program to be ran more like ICCC's programs and if that is how the NWPIC wants the program to be ran then they need to make this change.

Rodger stated that in fact the regular WIA Youth Program Plan calls for fifty enrollments and currently has thirty-five enrollees. There is only two weeks left on this plan, so enrollment numbers will most likely not be met. Carolyn stated that emails have been sent stating that there were to be no new enrollees, Rodger stated that the emails that have been sent have not stated no new enrollees into the regular WIA Youth program. Carolyn added she will need to verify this.

Carolyn also mentioned that the contract was not in place until 09-22-2009 and felt there was much miscommunication as to how to revamp for a summer youth program.

Dixie reiterated that another big concern is the attitudes of DEED staff at the Youth Council meetings along with the same comment every meeting – no new enrollments. This comment not only seems to never change, but staff appears to have no desire to change it. She also noted a meeting last summer at which a DEED staff member commented that they once again had no new enrollments, because they could not find any Out-of-School youth that were eligible for, or interested in, working for the summer. Dixie commented at that time that she couldn't help but wonder how in this economy there was nobody to enroll.

Motion to approve Inter-County Community Council as the Out-of-School Youth provider by Leo Olson, second by Bob Evans. Motion carried with Carolyn Toupin and Bob Melby abstaining.

Mike asked if the programs were actually year round or summer programs, and who gives the DEED report at the Youth Council, was it Carolyn. Rodger replied that Carolyn has never attended a NWPIC Youth Council meeting. Carolyn stated that she does not attend the NWPIC Youth Council meetings due to the fact that her DEED managers meetings are scheduled for the same dates. She comes directly from Saint Cloud to attend the NWPIC Full Council meetings. JaNan and Karen attend the Youth Council meetings to answer questions. Rodger also added that the enrollment numbers have been an issue for more than the last year. The bottom line is that DEED needs to be more accountable and reliable.

Rodger also added that the high number of enrollments showing enrollment into classroom training is only reflected on MIS paperwork or in WF1, and that the actual number of participants enrolled in classroom training is significantly lower. This is not only for the Youth program. A harder stance needs to be taken to ensure that everyone is on the same page. Just because DEED has had programs in the past does not mean that it is DEED's God given right to retain any programs. Carolyn asked if meeting the performance standards meant nothing and stated again that the NWPIC just needs to do what they need to do. Also, Carolyn added that if the NWPIC was so dissatisfied then why did they continue to contract with DEED. Rodger stated that is was due to default that they continued to get contracts. Carolyn added that this year was different due to Rodger's request that ICCC submit a Request for Proposal.

2010 Planning Process

Rodger informed the board that the 2010 Youth Plan needs to be done and submitted by 15 April, 2010, with the DW and Adult plans being required by 30 May, 2010. As these items are updated they will be posted on the NWPIC website for review, comments and suggestions.

Informational Items

- a. Operational Reports
- b. Office of the Legislative Auditor Workforce Programs Evaluation Report

Other

Rodger noted that there are two new Youth Council members that require appointment approval. Both potential members, Darla Swanson and Nancy Stoffel, are currently employed at Pathfinders in Thief River Falls and are foster parents. Motion to approve both Darla Swanson and Nancy Stoffel as NWPIC Youth Council members retroactive to 17 March, 2010, by Michael Moore, second by Bob Melby. Motion carried.

Rodger stated that at the 18 February, 2010 meeting a resolution was made that authorized individuals to sign contracts on behalf of the NWPIC and the individuals authorized to draw down funding from the state on behalf of the NWPIC. This resolution should have included Council member Leo Olson as Vice-Chairperson as an individual authorized to sign contracts on behalf of the NWPIC. Motion to include Vice-Chairperson Leo Olson as an individual authorized to sign contracts on behalf of the NWPIC and for this resolution to be submitted to the State of Minnesota by Michael Moore, second by Bob Melby. Motion carried.

Future Meetings

The next NWPIC Full Council meeting is scheduled for Thursday, 15 April 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 7:15 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Suzan Gagner
NWPIC Administrative Assistant