

**NORTHWEST PRIVATE INDUSTRY COUNCIL
YOUTH COUNCIL MINUTES
17 March 2010**

Call to Order

The Northwest Private Industry Council Youth Council meeting was called to order by Chairperson Dixie Holen at the Evergreen Restaurant in Thief River Falls on Wednesday, 17 March 2010 at 5:45 P.M.

Attendance

Two new Youth Council members were present. Darla Swanson and Nancy Stoffel are both employed by Pathfinders in Thief River Falls. Youth Council members, DEED Staff and NWPIC Staff introduced themselves.

Youth Council Members present were Kathy Giannonatti, Betty Halvorson, Dixie Holen and Murray Turner.

Guests present were JaNan Erickson, DEED Employment Specialist, Rodger L. Coauette, NWPIC Executive Director and Suzan Gagner, NWPIC Administrative Assistant.

Minutes

The minutes of the 20 January 2010 Youth Council meeting were approved as written. Motion to approve minutes by Kathy Giannonatti, second by Murray Turner. Motion carried.

WIA In-School Update (Betty Halvorson)

Betty reported that the WIA In-School program is under enrolled at this time, but that they will be fully enrolled by the end of March. Current enrollment is around 144 participants. Two crews are working in the cities of Thief River Falls and Crookston shoveling sidewalks for the elderly and will be sand bagging if necessary. Each crew consists of one crew leader and four students. ICCC staff continues to talk to partners such as the ALC's, Head Start parents, homeless individuals or near homeless individuals and people that are in emergency situations, about possible work experiences. In addition, Betty noted that she sits on the ALC Board in Thief River Falls.

The Pre Med Mini Health Careers Exploration classes are progressing with no concerns at this time.

WIA In-School Demographics/Activities/Expenditures

Rodger stated that we are getting to the end of the Youth Program fiscal year and he is hoping that we will receive a similar allocation amount for the upcoming year or at least a fairly consistent amount. More funding was received this year than any time in the past.

A Jobs bill that was just passed did not include any funding for summer jobs, but a summer youth program is still possible. Betty and Rodger will be meeting to discuss new programs, along with the special programs that end in June, 2010. Betty added that she expects the Younger Youth program to carry over approximately 20% of the allocated funding.

WIA Out-of-School Update (JaNan Erickson)

JaNan stated that for the month of February, there were no new enrollments and no terminations in the ARRA Youth program. There was one new enrollment into the WIA Youth program and one termination. Youth that are exiting the program for unsubsidized employment have found employment right away and at a decent beginning wage, usually around \$10 - \$13 an hour. It has been difficult to find employers that are willing to participate in the Work Experience component. Staff is now branching out further. In addition, JaNan noted that it is difficult to find new enrollees due to the fact that there are currently so many "pots of funding" out there. MFIP, MYP, WIA Younger Youth have all seen an increase in funding this year, which reduces the amount of referrals.

WIA Out-of School Demographics/Activities/Expenditures

Rodger noted that the \$10 - \$13 an hour beginning wage was a decent beginning wage, especially in Northwest Minnesota. Polk County has the lowest unemployment rate out of the seven counties that the NWPIC represents, with other parts of the state being much higher. Northwest Minnesota is actually doing pretty well.

Special Youth Programs (Betty Halvorson)

Outreach to Schools – Betty stated that seven schools have had been presented to, one has rescheduled and three more are upcoming. In addition, Stephen-Argyle has also expressed interest in the Outreach to Schools presentations.

Teen Parent Program – The Teen Parent Program has four participants currently working, one of which is currently taking time off. As of the second quarter 47% of the funding has been spent. All funding will be spent by the end of June, 2010. This program is funded by DHS.

ARRA Special Youth Project – Sixty-one percent of the budget is spent and staff continues to enroll and monitor this project. Some participants may need to be transferred to other programs so that participants may continue to be served.

Supplemental Grant – The Supplemental Grant has approximately 31% of the funding spent at this time.

WIA Youth Incentive – Betty stated that at first glance she was concerned about this grant funding, but after reviewing and breaking down the budget per participant, the current funding will be manageable.

Program Year 2010 Youth Council Work Plan

The Program Year Youth Council Work Plans have been primarily a guide in the past. With the addition of programs, this work plan needs to be flexible.

Rodger will put together a Program Year 2010 Youth Council Work Plan template with updates being made as needed. This will be posted on the NWPIC website for comments and feedback.

Rodger also mentioned that an Assistant Director has been hired. Although the new Assistant Director, Amanda Grzadzielewski, has little workforce development experience, she does have considerable experience working with individuals with disabilities. Rodger plans on retiring sometime around the end of this year.

Membership

Rodger stated that we have two new NWPIC Youth Council members in attendance and that the two youth participant Youth Council members were unable to attend this meeting. Betty stated that she thought both Marybeth and Brittany were close to finishing their involvement with the NWPIC. Murray mentioned that we also previously mentioned the inclusion of a school counselor as a board member and wondered if this was one area we still wanted representation from. Rodger asked Murray to mention this position to counselors as he travels and visits with them. Rodger also noted that a representative from the area North of Thief River Falls would be appropriate due to our desire for geographic balance.

Program Year 2010 Local Plan

Rodger has received the Program Year 2010 Youth Council Work Plan, which in the past has primarily been a guide or a check list. This current Work Plan is primarily a narrative and Rodger is finding out he is re-writing sections or having to include completely new responses. Tracy Smith has also been assisting Rodger with questions. Rodger will put together a draft plan which will be posted on the NWPIC website for Council Members comments, questions and feedback. This Program Year 2010 Local Plan needs to be submitted by the middle of April, no plan equals no funding.

PY 10 Meeting Calendar

Included in each Council members packet was the PY 10 Meeting Calendar. This meeting calendar proposes the same meeting time and location as PY 09. Motion to approve the PY 10 Meeting Calendar by Murray Turner, second by Betty Halvorson. Motion carried.

Informational Items

- a. Workforce Investment Act Summer Youth Employment
- b. Teen Summer Employment Outlook

Other

The PY 2009 WIA Youth Performance – Preliminary report was distributed. Rodger noted that the numbers on the last report that showed ICCC was low in placement and retention has increased, as it was expected to. All performance standards are being passed which could lead to incentive funding.

Dixie attended the National Association of Workforce Boards Forum in Washington D.C. recently and wished to report a little on this forum.

She noted that the focus on youth programs was excellent and relayed a story. One youth speaker shared his story about how he and his family became homeless and their trial of hunger and living in their car. While being homeless he saw a newspaper advertisement about youth employment programs and thought that he had to at least try to help his family. He explained how important that first paycheck was, even remarking that when he did receive it "You would of thought I was Bill Gates". He also said what a difference being involved in these programs can make. Dixie wished to emphasize how important these youth programs are and how vital to youth they may be. She also wished to emphasize that we need to convince legislation that funding needs to be continued. There are so many youth today that feel hopeless and abandoned. Lives can be drastically affected through these programs. Rodger also added that it is important that the media hear these stories also. So many times it seems like they print gripes about the funding being wasted, when it in fact is so very important.

Future Meetings

The next meeting of the NWPIC Youth Council is scheduled for Wednesday, 19 May 2010 at 5:30 P.M. at the Evergreen Restaurant in Thief River Falls.

Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned by Dixie Holen at 7:15 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Suzan M. Gagner
NWPIC Administrative Assistant