

# SE MN Workforce Development Board

September 5, 2019, 2:00 PM

Workforce Development, Inc.  
Rochester, Minnesota

## Minutes

**Members Present:** Jinny Rietmann (Executive Director), Rick Gnemi, Cheryl Gustason, Aaron Benike, Vicki McKay, Dee Sabol, Guy Finne, Andy Toft, Nadine Holthaus, Laura Link, Dan Belshan, Michelle Pyfferoen, Erin Main, Marleen Lundberg, Brian Cashman, Rob Van Craenenbroeck, Joy Watson, John Pugleasa, Jeff Custer

**Others Present:** Mike Postma, Wanda Jensen, Beth Christensen, Sonji Davis, Jaden Peck, Susan Boehm, David LeGarde, Ethan VanLaarhoven, Emily Wessing (note taker)

A quorum was present, and Cheryl Gustason called the meeting to order. Introductions were made. **Guy Finne moved for consent of the September agenda; Brian Cashman seconded, and the motion passed. Guy Finne moved for consent of the June meeting minutes; Brian Cashman seconded, and the motion passed.**

### **Program Reports**

#### **Management Committee – Jinny Rietmann**

- Jinny Rietmann opened the meeting with a discussion of new board member approval – Mandi Morrissey has stepped down, and we are evaluating several new members for addition. Sonji Davis introduced and gave background on one of the recommendations, Marvin Urias of K&G Manufacturing (Rice County). Background and introductions were then given for Geoff Smith of IBI Data (Mower County/Private) and Chad Kleist of McNeilus Company (Dodge County). Ms. Rietmann discussed her desire to fill the board with specially qualified applicants from a variety of industries and backgrounds. Ms. Rietmann added that an updated board roster has been distributed, and we are still looking for a Houston County private seat placement and are open to recommendations, as well as an Older Worker representative. **Guy Finne moved to approve the new members on a slate; Marleen Lundberg seconded, and the motion was approved by Cheryl Gustason.**
- Laura Link gave an overview of the Management Committee meeting. She opened by stating that the committee had also reviewed the three new board candidates, then moved on to the fiscal report as presented by Brian Ashton, a dislocated worker report from Sonji Davis, a youth report from David LeGarde, success stories, and a welfare and WIOA report from Jinny Rietmann.
- **Fiscal Report:** Laura Link opened discussion for changes in fiscal reporting – the management committee decided to review in the full board meeting but will not have an action for approval. Ms. Link reviewed the July 2018 to June 2019 report, highlighting that we ended up under budget for last fiscal year and are carrying over \$1.9 million into this fiscal year. The fringe benefits only had a \$30,000 increase from the previous year, which is a 5% increase overall and is terrific news. There was a bit of group discussion regarding the nature of rolling over funds year to year. Ms. Link reconvened and presented the July 2019 to August 2019 report, highlighting that we have two more employees in total than last year. Cheryl Gustason noted that we have 63 funding sources that are tracked every quarter, and these play into carry over this year but take up a significant amount of time and tracking for staff. Jinny Rietmann noted that the full budget was approved at the June meeting.

#### **One Stop Operating Partners – Joy Watson**

- There is a new CareerForce director for DEED, lots of change at the state level. 23 new employees were hired statewide to help with career navigation and career counseling. CareerForce is launching all over the state and region, all are welcome to attend upcoming open houses.

#### **Taskforce and Work Group Reports**

- Mike Postma shared the *Services & Trades* report – they did not have a quorum for this month's meeting but discussed Rochester's recent Laborer's training. At 20 participants, it was the largest class ever, with 10 that had to be turned away, and 60-70% that were females or minorities. Mayor Kim Norton spoke at the graduation, discussed the impact of the workforce in relation to DMC. The next class is scheduled for March 4, and Susan Boehm is currently looking for funding sources. We recently partnered with and are receiving grant money from MNDot to fund 8 CDL trucking students.
- Beth Christensen shared the *Healthcare* report. Under the International Medical Graduate Program or IMG grant, funding is changing, switching from a 12 to 22-month stream. It hasn't been announced who gets those grants yet, but we should know within a couple of months if we get that 22-month funding. Discussed LPN training program – there are two tracks in the works between HealthSource, Mayo and Rochester Public Schools. The first track would have students identify their interest as a freshman in high school, and then would work on LPN coursework for four years in order to graduate with license. The second track would be to identify your interest junior or senior year, then graduate with license after a couple of additional years of education post-high school.

Guy Finne discussed Kim Norton's efforts to pilot PTECH program. Partners are still being identified, but it would be a great opportunity to connect with high school students before they make that four-year decision – it's about providing additional opportunities and connecting with that talent as early as possible. Rob Van Craenenbroeck opened up a broader discussion regarding the purpose, audience, mission, etc. of the sector.

- Laura Link shared the *Manufacturing* report. Manufacturing week is coming up – WDI will again be part of a committee organizing tours for this event. Participation was great last year – more students and schools are requesting to participate for this year. We're looking for up to five more people to participate in tours. This event began 7 years ago, and it's an important one as we are home to over 800 manufacturers in SE MN alone. The tours run for two hours and a planning team will help design an engaging experience at each location. A tool kit will be provided as well to help enhance the facility as well. The FutureForward portal overview will be discussed more in October.
- John Pogleasa shared the *Emerging Technology* report. He explained how there are opportunities to retain populations and move forward. There was a discussion of the "Construction Trades and You? For Farmers!" event. It was mentioned that in the last decade, in Houston County alone, 150 family farms have disappeared – so this will be a very appropriate and timely event. The event is a partnership with WDI, CEDA, and Houston County Economic Development. Hoping to have a great turnout – targeting Houston & Fillmore specifically.

## **Presentation on RETAIN Grant – Ethan VanLaarhoven**

### **Director's Report – Jinny Rietmann**

- Jinny Rietmann opened her report by discussing how there is a new Secretary of Labor nomination. We're in a holding pattern for state funding but wrote for several competitive grants this summer (upwards of 12) that are awaiting review. Guy Finne inquired if there was a new director for the MN Association of Workforce Boards, Ms. Rietmann confirmed Jeanna Fortney. We're trying to collaborate and unify with DEED's strategic objectives for 2019 (see handout). Discussed open houses for CareerForce.
- Ms. Rietmann shared how her director journey is going. She is proud of our engaged and passionate staff and board, as it creates a great environment for new leadership. Went to a training in Wichita with 25 other directors and learned best practices in addressing challenges, concerns, etc. She met with about 50% of the board about their thoughts moving forward under new leadership. As of now, her number one priority is to solidify the WDI board position and market that position moving forward. She announced that we've pulled back together our employer services team and are revitalizing our collaboration with Winona. Additionally, technology is going to be another priority in the coming year, as we are moving forward with a website redesign, as well as a portal where we can house and access all digital files.
- Ms. Rietmann delved into an overview of the August 15<sup>th</sup> strategic planning session. In preparation for this meeting, a survey was sent out, along with information about the region as well as local workforce shortages. At the meeting, it was determined that there is no need to revamp our mission and vision, as it still fits the work that WDI does. Continued emphases for the coming year include reducing and eliminating poverty, engaging youth and young adults, training workers, and targeting for more diversity and equity in the workplace as well.
- Ms. Rietmann shared the results of the sessions "Keep/Change/Add" activity, to identify focus areas for the coming year. See attachment.

### FOUR PRIMARY INITIATIVES FOR 2019/2020:

- Career Pathways
- Youth Outreach
- Diversity
- Employer Engagement & Networking

### **Other Area Activity/Upcoming Meetings**

- Next meeting is Thursday, October 3<sup>rd</sup>.
- EquityLogic for Growing Businesses 2.0 / \$49 per session / All dates confirmed
- The Construction Trades and You? For Farmers! – November 14<sup>th</sup>

**Motion to adjourn meeting was made by Cheryl Gustason; Dee Sabol seconded; the motion was approved by Guy Finne.**

Respectfully submitted,  
Emily Wessing  
Workforce Development, Inc.