

SE MN Workforce Development Board

April 2, 2020, 2:30-4:00 p.m.

via Zoom

Workforce Development, Inc.

Rochester, Minnesota

Minutes

Members Present: Linda Flanders, Brian Cashman, Anthony Toft, Erin Main, Rick Gnemi, Marvin Urias, Laura Link, Jess Anderson, Chad Kleist, Diane Simon, Jim Kinglsey, Marsha Danielson, Nadine Holthaus, Jeff Boyd, Shelly Caldwell, Geoff Smith, Joy Watson, Michelle Pyfferoen, Vicki McKay, Marleen Lundberg, Burke Murphy, Peggy Young, Kenneth Johnson, Aaron Benike

Others Present: Jinny Rietmann (Executive Director), Emily Wessing (note taker), David LeGarde, Dee Slinde, Beth Christensen, Desirae Dyke, Brian Ashton, Rebecca Zoubek, Wanda Jensen, Michael Postma, Jakki Trihey, Susan Boehm, Aaron Benike,

A quorum was present, and Laura Link called the meeting to order. Introductions were made. **Laura Link motioned for consent of the April agenda; Rick Gnemi moved, Erin Main seconded, and the motion passed. Laura Link motioned for consent of the March minutes; Rick Gnemi moved, Jim Kingsley seconded, and the motion passed.**

Program Reports

Management Committee – Laura Link

- Laura Link shared the *Management* report. We did not have a quorum today, and therefore were unable to vote on any action items. David LeGarde gave a youth plan update. Brian Ashton gave a budget update. There were not many changes to the fiscal report. We discussed the 2020 Executive Officer Slate nominations. Ms. Link concluded her report.

One Stop Operating Partners – Marleen Lundberg

- Marleen Lundberg shared that the One Stop Operating Partners did not meet today.

Taskforce and Work Group Reports

- David LeGarde shared the *Emerging Workforce* report. We had a small group and updated those that have not attended previous meetings on several of the initiatives that the committee is going to be focusing on, including our scholarship program, our work experiences, and the transportation barriers that our youth face. We had a brief discussion regarding these issues. Mr. LeGarde concluded his report.
- Jim Kingsley shared the *Employer Engagement* and *Career Pathways* reports. We had Cassie Greenwood and Claire Knocke join us from Olmsted County Health. They provided an overview on COVID-19, recent data, what the virus is, its symptoms, and preventative measures. They provided recommendations and addressed frequently asked questions. Following that presentation, I (Jim Kingsley) provided an overview of how Wenger Corporation is addressing COVID-19, and what measures and practices we have enacted as the virus progresses. A discussion followed. Next month, we will be reviewing updates on COVID-19 and continuing the conversation. Mr. Kingsley concluded his report.
- Jess Anderson shared the *MaxAbility Employment* report. This taskforce met this morning via Zoom. They have rescheduled their reverse job fair for June 17th. As the landscape continues to change, the team is monitoring the ability for employers to attend. At this time, they are moving forward with the event but will reassess in May before marketing the event broadly. They are partnering with the Disability Employment Resource Group at Mayo Clinic for a Mental Health First Aid presentation. The event is scheduled for July 22, from 1-2 p.m. They've updated marketing resources as well. Ms. Anderson concluded their report.
- Jess Anderson shared the *Salute Southern MN Veterans Network* report. This group is reaching out to various national guard units to raise awareness of Salute's mission and help as needed. They're trying to connect veterans and family members with county veterans service officers and employment opportunities through CareerForce. They're also working on reviving their website, creating new collateral, and revamping their social media presence on Facebook and LinkedIn. Ms. Anderson concluded her report.
- Susan Boehm shared the *Previously Incarcerated Individuals* report. This taskforce has not met since last meeting, so no update. Ms. Boehm concluded her report.

Approval of 2020-2021 WIOA/MYP Youth Plan

David LeGarde shared an overview of the youth plan. The final draft is due April 10th. This plan will address areas such as goals for our youth committee, how we're going to deliver our services, our eligibility process and requirements, the assessments we provide, how our Career Pathways programming connects with our youth program, our best practices, how WDI will implement our youth program elements, and concludes with a chart that explains how our youth programming supports the Minnesota Blueprint of Shared Vision for Youth. Mr. LeGarde concluded his report.

Laura Link motioned for approval of the 2020-2021 WIOA/MYP Youth Plan; Diane Simon moved, Rick Gnemi

seconded, and the motion passed.

Audit Summary

Brian Ashton provided the audit summary. The audit organization returned a clean opinion with no question on cost for PY18. In addition to the financial reporting, they also provided a review of the internal controls, finding no material weakness or reportable condition. They did a complete uniform grant guidance compliance test for all our federal programs, specifically WIOA, and had no findings on those as well. They also compiled a governance letter for the board outlining whether they had any issues with control, compliances issues, significant estimates, etc. They found no problem with these estimates. The audit has been submitted to the clearing house awaiting the board's approval. Mr. Ashton concluded his report.

Hot Jobs List

Wanda Jensen provided an overview of the hot jobs list. This guides our decisions regarding what we're targeting for individuals both for training and careers. We evaluate growth of positions in the region, salary details, etc. This is a required part of our plan but is also a working document for our career planners to ensure we're getting our customers into in-demand, high-wage careers. We have eliminated positions that do not result in a wage of over \$15/hour, require a doctorate or master's, or do not meet regional projected growth requirements. Ms. Jensen concluded her report.

Laura Link motioned for approval of the hot jobs list; Diane Simon moved, Rick Gnemi seconded, and the motion passed.

Benefits Proposal Update

Jinny Rietmann provided the benefits proposal update. We will be submitting this for final approval in May. In our recent survey of employees, we gleaned a lot of information. Salary, health benefits, and PTO are ranked mostly highly in importance for employees. Flexibility, training opportunities, and variety of benefits were also ranked highly. We would like to look at possibly implementing a salary increase for next year and researching how our PTO benefit stacks up to other organizations. We may revise our merit pool program as well. Finally, we are considering different PTO structures. Ms. Rietmann concluded her report.

Approval of 2020 Executive Officer Slate

Laura Link provided an overview of the 2020 Executive Officer Slate. We have five seats to fill – President, Vice President, 2nd Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer. Currently, Laura Link is nominated for President, Jim Kingsley is nominated for Vice President, there are no nominations for 2nd Vice President, Dee Sabol is nominated for Secretary, and Jeff Custer is nominated for Treasurer. Ms. Link concluded her report.

Laura Link motioned for approval of the 2020 Executive Officer Slate as-is (with open 2nd Vice President seat); Rick Gnemi moved, Diane Simon seconded, and the motion passed.

Hot Topic: COVID-19 Impact on Businesses

Jinny Rietmann noted that we have compiled a COVID-19 resource guide for employers. Dee Slinde provided a brief overview of this document. We're trying to direct traffic as opposed to serving as the expert in these areas and are trying to utilize our network in order to serve as a resource for individuals seeking support. There was a brief discussion addressing other employers' COVID-19 resources, best practices and protocols. Ms. Rietmann and Ms. Slinde concluded their report.

Director's Report – Jinny Rietmann

Ms. Rietmann shared the Executive Director's report.

On Monday, March 30, Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi (CA) indicated that Democrats are in the beginning stages of drafting a fourth coronavirus relief package, which could be ready for a vote in the coming weeks. She said the legislation would shore up health systems and protect frontline health care workers as well as include substantial infrastructure investments - specifically for priorities like water systems, the energy grid, and broadband. Many Democrats are also eager to fight for more robust family and medical leave programs, stronger worker protections for first responders, as well as more money for state and local governments.

Unemployment Insurance Claims

On Thursday, March 26, the Department of Labor (DOL) Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) reported a record number of unemployment claims as businesses closed their doors to help slow the spread of coronavirus. Unemployment claims rose to 3,283,000, showing how devastating the pandemic is to the U.S. job market and economy. It was the largest increase,

by far, of unemployment claims ever recorded for a single week - the previous high being 695,000 in the week of October 2, 1982.

Minnesota - Updated numbers released Wednesday show the state has received 273,000+ applications for unemployment insurance benefits since April 2nd. That's far more applications than DEED got during the entire year of 2019.

New from DOL/ETA

U.S. Department of Labor Announces Additional Guidance Explaining Paid Sick Leave and Expanded Family and Medical Leave Under the Families First Coronavirus Response Act

On Thursday, March 26, the U.S. Department of Labor's Wage and Hour Division (WHD) announced more guidance to provide information to workers and employers about how each will be able to take advantage of the protections and relief offered by the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA) when it takes effect on April 1, 2020. The new guidance includes two new posters, one for federal workers and one for all other employees, that will fulfill notice requirements for employers obligated to inform employees about their rights under this new law. It also includes questions and answers about posting requirements, and a Field Assistance Bulletin describing WHD's 30-day non-enforcement policy. The new guidance addresses critical issues such as whether employers may post required notice electronically, whether employers must provide notice of this law to recently laid-off individuals, when FFCRA applies to federal workers and when enforcement of the new rules will begin.

On the Frontlines of a Pandemic, America's Workforce Needs a Lifeline Now

Policymakers deserve credit for coming together in a bipartisan way on three stimulus packages that help workers access paid sick leave, expand unemployment insurance, suspend work requirements for safety net programs, make very small investments in workforce training to dislocated workers, and take a first step towards helping businesses avert layoffs. What's missing is a robust, comprehensive workforce strategy to address the immediate shortages in industries that are needed to respond to this.

Reports & Articles

New from Brookings

COVID-19 and the U.S. Economy

An aggressive response aimed at improving the availability of testing, equipment, emergency supplies, hospital capacity, and treatment is paramount for public health and the well-being of Americans. In addition, as long as there is a widespread outbreak and rapid transmission, economic activity will be curtailed. Therefore, the crucial actions taken to limit the spread of the pandemic will have the greatest impact for both the broader welfare and the economy. This document offers answers to frequently asked questions about the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the U.S. economy and the implementation of various fiscal and monetary policy tools used in response to the crisis. While the document focuses on the economic policy tools used to respond, it is important to remember that the most crucial steps both for overall welfare and for the economy will be those taken to limit the spread of the pandemic itself. As long as there is a widespread outbreak and rapid transmission, economic activity will be curtailed.

New from National Skills Coalition

The Stimulus Package Leaves Workforce Behind

This week, the House and Senate passed a third stimulus package to address the CoVid-19 pandemic and its economic impact. The bill included some important provisions for workers who have lost their jobs such as expanded unemployment insurance and national grants to serve dislocated workers, but it lacked a comprehensive national strategy to support workers' ability to reenter the workforce after job loss. Right now, the workforce needs skilled workers in healthcare, manufacturing, transportation, distribution, and logistics industries to respond to the pandemic, but the bill does not enable businesses to rapidly upskill and reskill workers to address these needs.

Click here to access the full analysis of the stimulus package.

Employer Resources:

See this link for a listing of all the new funding streams and UI information for businesses:

<https://mn.gov/deed/newscenter/press-releases/?id=425890>

Update on Best Places to Work

- Banquet moved to July 16th
- We will still notify lead organizations, but this may delay the feedback being provided
- Unsure on-site visits at this time – may do at a later date or after event

Minnesota Youth Program Annual Report

- Can be used for marketing/advocacy for youth funding

Update on Remote Work Plan

Shared verbal report on our offices, which are all still currently closed to the public; however, we want our message to be loud and clear that we ARE open for business and we are all working, and available and willing to help! We are utilizing virtual and phone services like never before, which has been a very positive experience thus far. We are looking for creative approaches from our staff through social media, networking events online, creation of videos on various job search, career planning, and work readiness topics, and other best practices for serving customers during this time. As an agency, we are also exploring formalized online curriculum to substitute for some of our Career Pathways trainings and also as an option for some of our customers whose classes at local colleges have been cancelled.

Interesting read

Joan Garry shared a few do's and don'ts of boards during this time of uncertainty.

https://blog.joangarry.com/best-boards/?utm_source=ActiveCampaign&utm_medium=email&utm_content=What+Your+Board+Should+Do&utm_campaign=Blog%3A+What+Your+Board+Should+Do

Staff benefits survey

Shared results of a recent staff benefit survey. Overall, very positive feedback on WDI's overall pay, health benefit, and other benefits package. Individuals valued flexibility, health benefits, and pay as the highest. We are looking at a few new options for our PTO schedule, as well as a potential salary increase proposal for the May meeting.

Ms. Rietmann concluded her report.

Other Area Activity/Upcoming Meetings

- Next meeting: May 7th – 2:30 p.m.
 - Presentation of MN DOLI on Apprenticeships (tabled from April)

Motion to adjourn meeting was made by Laura Link; Rick Gnemi moved; the motion was seconded by Andy Toft. The meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,
Emily Wessing
Workforce Development, Inc.