
Rural Minnesota CEP, Inc.
WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD MEETING
803 Roosevelt Avenue, Detroit Lakes, MN
March 25, 2025

Members present: Carol Anderson, Jerry Arneson, Terry Blake, Ed Bolas, Kathy Cottew, Amanda Hanson, Troy Haugen, Duane Johanning, Amy Johnson, Julie Sachs, and Tammy Schatz, Leigh Shebeck, and Sandy Voigt

Members excused: Jeff Bjornson, Nick Heisserer, and Darrell Lende

Members unexcused:

Staff present: Heather Bergseid, Arlyce Cucich, Jaelyn Hicks, Tina Jaster, Chrys Kirschbaum, and David Smith

Guests: Curtis Anderson, Beltrami Workforce Impact

MINUTES

Business Committee Meeting – David Smith/Arlyce Cucich

Mr. Smtih and Ms. Cucich reviewed the reports for the month ending February 2025. This included the Program Progress, MFIP/DWP County Performance Standards, WIOA Performance Standards, SNAP and Ticket to Work reports.

Program Progress

Mr. Smith reviewed all current programs. Overall, there are no concerns. There may be Senior American funds unspent and returned.

MFIP/DWP County Performance Standards

- MFIP:
 - Entered Employment Rate: 8 counties are exceeding and 2 are meeting.
 - Successful Placements: 8 counties are exceeding and 1 is meeting.
 - Wage at Placement: All counties are exceeding.
- DWP: Enrollments are at 139.

WIOA Performance Standards (through month ending December 2024)

Adult:

- Employment Q2: 92% of goal
- Median Earnings: 121.5% of goal
- Employment Q4: 98.8% of goal
- Credential: 85.4% of goal
- Measurable Skill Gain: 42.14% of goal

Dislocated Worker:

- Employment Q2: 105.5% of goal
- Median Earnings: 110.7% of goal
- Employment Q4: 99.1% of goal
- Credential: 100.28% of goal
- Measurable Skill Gain: 68.53% of goal

Youth:

- Employment Q2: 110.26% of goal
- Median Earnings: 123.39% of goal
- Employment Q4: 117% of goal
- Credential: 117.7% of goal
- Measurable Skill Gain: 30.59% of goal

SNAP Slots

- Region IV is at 3 of 41 slots enrolled.
- Region V is at 2 of 29 slots enrolled.

Ticket to Work

There are currently 17 active enrollments with 67 cumulative enrollments.

- Revenue to date (DEED and ADEN): \$406,511.42
 - Remaining Ticket to Work funds: \$151,203.27
 - Revenue from 2014-2018 (DEED): \$104,574.67
 - Revenue 2018 to present (ADEN): \$301,936.75
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Call to Order – Carol Anderson, Chair

Ms. Anderson called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

Agenda Additions: None

February 25, 2025, Minutes – Ms. Anderson

Moved by Terry Blake and seconded by Ed Bolas to approve the minutes from February 25, 2025, meeting as presented. Motion carried.

Youth Council Report – Troy Haugen

Mr. Haugen reported on the March 24, 2025, Youth Council meeting. The main topics of discussion were possible grant opportunities and approval of the 2025 Local Youth Plan.

Local Youth Plan 2025 – Ms. Cucich

Ms. Cucich and Jaclyn Hicks, Operations Specialist, reviewed the Key Priorities components of the Local Youth Plan (Plan). The Youth Council approved the Plan at its March 24, 2025, meeting and is recommending approval by the Workforce Development Board.

Moved by Troy Haugen and seconded by Kathy Cottew to approve the Local Youth Plan for 2025 as presented. Motion carried. It will now be brought to the Board of Directors for approval.

Career Explorer Internships – Kathy Cottew

Essentia Health is partnering with the Sourcewell, Brainerd Lakes Chamber of Commerce, and Central Lakes College to build the medical workforce by creating career paths for high school students. Information on the Youth Skills Training Program was given by Kathy Cottew of Essentia Health. Presentation topics included:

- Early Exposure/Exploration
 - Events, programs and resources to showcase opportunities
 - From the Employers Perspective
 - Union environments
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- Existing systems/schedules
- Age restrictions
- Capacity to host
- Training time
- Workplace readiness
- Youth Skills Training
- Healthcare Career Exploration Event: April 15
 - Hands-on tour of Essentia Health
- Healthcare Camp: July 16-17 at Central Lakes College
 - Hands-on for healthcare fields
- Internship Program at Essentia Health for area High School Students
 - Partnership with Sourcewell and the Youth Skills Training Program
 - Beginning in late March

Discussion ensued; the group had many positive comments.

Grants – Tina Jaster

The Shade Store (Anderson Fabrics) Mass Layoff

The Shade Store in Blackduck, MN, will be closing on April 30, laying off 115 employees. The RMCEP Bemidji Team was sent in with the Rapid Response team to meet with those affected. RMCEP has received a \$10,000 grant to begin working with the Dislocated Workers. An additional \$290,000 would be available if needed. Eighteen Dislocated Worker applications have already been received. A Resource Fair will be held at the company’s location on April 15.

Douglas County Child Support Grant Opportunity

RMCEP has been asked to partner with Douglas County (County) on their Next Gen Grant. The County is seeking assistance with providing Employment and Training services to non-custodial parents behind on child support payments. It is a three-year, \$40,000 grant to assist 60 participants.

Youth Supportive Services Grant Opportunity

The Youth Supportive Services Grant Request for Proposal (RFP) is due in early May. Ms. Jaster requested feedback from the group on youth services gaps in their communities.

- Assistance with CDL training
 - Promotion of farm work
 - The West Central Juvenile Center Director offered suggestions to the Youth Council
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Director’s Report – Ms. Jaster

Ms. Jaster provided an update on Recent Accomplishments and Current Activities, Staffing Changes, and Agency Outreach Efforts. Additional information shared: DEED January 2025 Employment Analysis newsletter and the DEED LAUS Map.

Regional Planning/Career Advising – Chrys Kirschbaum

Career Advising

- This year’s Career Advising services are near the end.
- Contracts for the 2025-2026 school year are being prepared.
- Services will again be offered free of charge.

Regional Planning

- April 8: Community Workforce Inclusion Council (CWIC) meeting
 - April 17: Full Regional Workforce Alliance (RW) meeting
 - Ms. Kirschbaum has completed an Ethics training module through the University of Wisconsin.
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Member Updates – Roundtable Contribution

Sandy Voigt

- The *She Leads* event will be held in Nisswa, MN, at the end of April. The event offers opportunities for entrepreneurs to share business ideas or information on new products. Two openings for the event remain. Contact Ms. Voigt for additional information or visit www.sheleadsinternational.com.

Ed Bolas

- DyCast Specialties is operating at four days a week, with four shifts. With the reduction of hours, several workers have moved on and several others will retire within the next few years.

Jerry Arneson

- Mr. Arneson has been processing and analyzing credits, as farm lines of credit come due in April.
- Watching tariff news for potential effects on the Ag industry.
- Ms. Jaster provided information on Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) services provided through the state. The TAA program assists workers affected by job losses due to international trade. In our area, there are potentially 1,000 currently affected.

Amanda Hanson

- Midwest Minnesota Community Development Corp. (MMCDC) runs the VITA program, which processes and files taxes free of charge for low-income persons. It is estimated that 1,700 returns will be processed this year. There will be no funding for next year available at this point.

Terry Blake

- Mr. Blake attended a seminar on the challenges small business owners are facing. Many businesses are suffering in small towns.
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Celebrate Wins – Ms. Jaster

Success Stories and Job Fair Flyers were shared in the packet.

Adjourn – Ms. Anderson

Ms. Anderson adjourned the meeting at 11:45 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

**Terry Blake, Secretary
Workforce Development Board**