
Rural Minnesota CEP, Inc.
WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD MEETING
803 Roosevelt Avenue, Detroit Lakes, MN
April 26, 2022

Members present: Carol Anderson, Jerry Arneson, Terry Blake, Troy Haugen, Amanda Hanson, Darrell Lende, Don Martodam, Lori Meader, Julie Sachs, Tammy Schatz, Durant Thoen Sr., and Eric Wittbrodt

Members excused: Eloise Graves-Jallen, Teresa Johnson, Rebekah Kent, John Tormanen, and Sandy Voigt

Members unexcused: Matthew Gordon

Staff present: Heather Bergseid, Mike Fisher, Tina Jaster, and Vicki Leaderbrand

Guests: Rommel Lee and Jake Chisholm (Senator Klobuchar's office); James Whirlwind Soldier and Chet Bodin (DEED); and Tom Iverson (Agency)

MINUTES

Business Committee Meeting – Tina Jaster

Ms. Jaster reviewed the reports for the month ending March 31, 2022. This included the Program Progress, MFIP County Performance Standards, WIOA Performance Standards, and SNAP reports. Everything is looking very good!

Program Progress

- Sr. Americans: Enrollments goal has been met
- DWP: Currently at 154 enrollments. We may return some funds to the MFIP program.
- PY21 Youthbuild: The program was moved to Detroit Lakes and is currently at 7 enrollments of 21 (enrollments are from the ALC). It will be run as a summer program.
- TANF Youth: This is a small program requiring only eight enrollments. It will be run as a summer program.
- MYP: No concerns, we are on track at 76% of budget.
- IWCO: We are ahead of expenditures and have 170 enrolled.
- State Dislocated Worker: No concerns, enrollments are on track.
- P2P-Great Careers: Currently recruiting and are at 9 enrollments.
- Equipped to Work: United Way grant in Alexandria. Have seen some movement lately.
- Youth at Work: Will see activity in May when school is out.
- WIOA Dislocated Worker: At 78% of plan and are above in enrollments. Will use towards IWCO if needed.
- SNAP: Rely on referrals from the counties.

MFIP/DWP County Performance Standards

- Entered Employment Rate: 10 out of 16 counties meets or exceeds
- Successful Placements: 9 out of 16 counties meets or exceeds
- Wage at Placement: Agency exceeded at \$14.86/hour
- Counties exceeding in all three categories: Clay, Grant, Otter Tail, Pope, and Wadena

- DWP enrollments are at 154
 - Wage at Placement: \$15.73

WIOA Performance Standards

- WIOA Adult: Looking good overall; no concerns
- WIOA Dislocated Worker: On track; no concerns
- State Dislocated Worker: On track; no concerns
- ISY and OSY: Exceeding on the youth State reports

SNAP

The Agency has a total of 12; nine in Region 4 and three in Region 5.

Ticket to Work

We currently have 21 active enrollments with 41 cumulative enrollments. Revenue to date (DEED and ADEN) is \$229,000.68. Remaining Ticket to Work fund are \$132,551.69.

Call to Order – Carol Anderson, Chair

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

Agenda Additions: None

March 15, 2022, Minutes – Ms. Anderson

Moved by Amanda Hanson and seconded by Terry Blake to approve the minutes from the March 15, 2022, meeting. Motion carried.

Guest Introductions

Vicki Leaderbrand introduced Rommel Lee and Jake Chisholm from Senator Klobuchar's office. Mr. Lee thanked the Board for the invitation to attend the meeting and shared information on some of Senator Klobuchar's recent activities.

New Workforce Strategy Consultant – James Whirlwind Soldier and Chet Bodin

Chet Bodin has taken a new position within DEED and wanted to take the opportunity to introduce his Workforce Strategy Consultant replacement, James Whirlwind Soldier.

I-WE

Chet shared a presentation that gave the background and purpose of I-WE designation.

- I-WE Background
 - Equity Summit held in Moorhead, Spring 2019
 - Inclusive Employer Recognition developed by the F/M Community Workforce Inclusion Council (CWIC)
 - Approved by Local Workforce Development Boards 01 and 02
 - "Business Engagement" subcommittee formed to develop criteria

- Five pilot organizations receive designation in pilot phase, July 2020
- Webpage launched, Summer 2020 - <https://www.rwa-nw.org/inclusive-workforce-employer>
- I-WE has grown across the state
 - Northwest (Region 01): RMCEP and NW PIC
 - Central MN (Region 03): Central MN Jobs and Training Services and Career solutions
 - Southeast MN (Region 06): Workforce Development Inc.
- Criteria
 - 1) Express a commitment to an inclusive workplace in their stated values, mission or policies.
 - 2) Assess how diversity, equity and inclusion influence their work and culture.
 - 3) Provide diversity, equity and inclusion education for staff and leadership.
 - 4) Allocate resources to support and sustain an inclusive and equitable workplace.
- The I-WE Designation Pathway
 - Welcome form (employer onboarding)
 - Initial consultation (DEED Workforce Consultant)
 - Inclusive workforce development (Company Leadership/HR)
 - Meet with CWIC (Community Workforce Inclusion Council)
 - Apply feedback
 - Apply for recognition
- CWIC Composition and Responsibilities
 - Diverse group of community members
 - Advise employers on inclusive workforce development
 - Review I-WE designation applications
 - Make recommendations for recognition to LWDBs
 - Promote employers they engage with to underserved talent pools
- I-WE Scoring Rubric
 - Tool for CWICs to evaluate I-WE designation applications
 - Currently in development with the University of MN Extension
 - Outlines dimensions of inclusion within each I-WE criteria
 - Allows CWICs to consider an employer's size and capacity
- RWA CWIC Representation
 - Tribal Partners
 - Immigrant Service Partners
 - Accessibility Expertise
 - Racial Equity
 - Low-Income Families
 - Underserved Youth
 - LGBTQ
 - Woman-Led
- Why Employers Participate
 - Short-term benefits
 - Starting place
 - Support system
 - Increase in knowledge
 - Identify practices that display cultural competence
 - Long-term benefits
 - Increase the size and diversity of your applicant pool
 - Develop Inclusive Workforce practices
 - Community of Practice

- Employee retention and referrals
- Increase your consumer or supplier market
- I-WE Online Support
 - Get Started (employer onboarding)
 - Inclusive Employer Toolkits
 - Designation Applications Promotional Material
 - Inclusive Workforce Employers by Region

Northwest: <https://www.rwa-nw.org/inclusive-workforce-employer>

Central: <https://www.cmjts.org/business-services/central-minnesotas-inclusive-workforce-employer-designation-program-i-we/>

Southeast: <https://workforcedevelopmentinc.org/programs/i-we-program/>

Chet indicated that the creation of an I-WE central hub on the CareerForce website (www.careerforcemn.com) is being considered. He requested the Workforce Development Board's permission to use the I-WE logo and information on the CWICs in order to expand marketing the I-WE concept online.

A motion was made by Don Martodam and seconded by Ms. Hanson to allow the I-WE logo to be used on the CareerForce website with added verbiage giving origination credit to the Northwest area. Motion carried.

A motion was made by Durant Thoen and seconded by Darrell Lende to allow Community Workforce Inclusion Council (CWIC) information to be shared on the CareerForce website. Motion carried.

Journey of Organizational Transformation – Tom Iverson

Ms. Leaderbrand welcomed Mr. Iverson of Sagency. Tom provided Sagency's background and shared that he has a personal history with RMCEP as a youth.

The Journey of Organizational Transformation process was introduced, and a status update was provided. Mr. Iverson answered questions as they arose.

Strategic Planning Framework

Ensure you have a high functioning Leadership team

- Access the current reality
- Clarify the core
- Craft a winning strategy
- Create action plans
- Execute
- Keep score

Strategic Pillars

- Strategic Pillars-the structure, support and boundaries for strategic planning process
- Five identified pillars
 - People
 - Culture transformation
 - Technology modernization
 - Operational excellence

- Leadership development
- Pillars support the purpose/mission/vision of the organization

Strategic Planning Retreat

A retreat will be held for the agency Leadership Team in May

Topics will include:

- Purpose
- Mission
- Values
- Strategy

A second retreat will be discussed and possibly expand the attendees

Local and Regional Plan – Vicki Leaderbrand

The 2022 submission deadline for the updated Regional and Local plan has been delayed until 2023.

House Omnibus Bill HF4355 – Ms. Leaderbrand

An update on House Bill HF4355 was given.

- Bill has turned into an Omnibus Bill, meaning it is among many other funding requests
 - Amount was raised to \$20 million
 - Has been moved to the Workforce Development Fund
 - Was desired to be out of the Surplus Fund
 - Concerns:
 - Commissioner Grove submitted a letter requesting it to go through the competitive grant process, which would mean less for rural areas
 - Current verbiage calls for no administrative spending
 - Representative Kresha recommends letting the Omnibus Bill go through and submitting an amendment at a later date
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Regional Planning/Career Advising – Mike Fisher

Mid-Minnesota Builders Association

RMCEP partnered with the Mid-Minnesota Builders Association on a youth deer stand building competition which was held in March. Two of the schools scheduled to attend withdrew, leaving a portion of the grant dollars un-used. The remaining funds were returned to the Brainerd Lakes Area Foundation.

ABE Regional Meeting

The P2P grant was discussed at the April ABE Regional Meeting.

Economic Development Summits

The Midwest Economic Outlook Summit was held in March.

Topics/speakers included:

- Federal Reserve
 - Interest Rates

- Supply Chain Problems Continuing
- Commissioner Steve Grove
 - MN employment rates
- NDSU Economist
 - Inflation rate

Regional Workforce Alliance

The Full RWA meeting will be held virtually (Zoom) on May 13 from 1:00-3:00 pm.

Agenda items include:

- Speaker: Ron Wirtz of the Federal Reserve
- New I-WE Designations will be awarded to Lakewood Health Center and Crestliner
- Introduction of new RWA member

National Association of Workforce Boards (NAWB) Forum Overview – Ms. Anderson, Terry Blake, and Ms. Leaderbrand

Ms. Anderson, Mr. Blake and Ms. Leaderbrand attended the NAWB Forum which was held in Washington, D.C., on April 11-14. They all agreed that it was a great conference and found it very informative.

Breakout Sessions attended:

Ms. Anderson:

- K-12 Education
 - Stop pushing four-year degrees
 - Pre-Apprenticeships
- Social Media
 - Catch attention quickly
 - Use of Avatars
 - Youth – Instagram and Facebook
 - Adult – LinkedIn
 - Use of Podcasts
 - Google for non-profits
 - Will remove the ads
- Workforce Policy
 - WIOA Reauthorization
 - More local decision-making authority
 - Plan for continuing resolution
 - Allow for more Incumbent Worker Trainings
- Tips
 - Make employer visits to inquire about youth position
 - Pre-employment certificate for internships
 - Provide stipends to instructors to tour industries
- Possible income generator for RMCEP
 - Offer to do paperwork for a fee for employers for apprenticeships
- Federal Reserve speaker
 - Labor shortage
- Strategic Planning
 - Model ourselves as a business

Mr. Blake:

- Youth employment
 - o Indiana four-level youth program
 - o Alabama integrated employment/education history for agencies to access
 - o Do not deny employment due to lack of degree
- Regional Planning
 - o Terry found our area is advanced in the Regional Planning area

Ms. Leaderbrand:

- Workforce Policy
 - o WIOA Reauthorization
 - Possible discontinuation of the IFA
 - o Wanting to give more local decision-making authority
- Workforce180
 - o Discussed podcast opportunities on our agency website

Director's Report – Ms. Leaderbrand

WIOA Reauthorization

Considering possible discontinuation of the IFA.

NAWB

The NAWB Forum was attended in by Ms. Anderson, Mr. Blake, and Ms. Leaderbrand on April 11-14 in Washington, D.C.

MAWB Operations

- Marc Majors is new Deputy Commissioner of DEED, replacing Hamse Warfa
- New Leading with Equity subcommittee
- Legal discussion on Open Meeting Law
- Areas of Substantial Unemployment update
- U.S. DOL Readiness and Responsiveness During COVID follow-up meeting was held
- MAWB Summer Meeting will be held in Duluth on August 3-5

Journey of Organizational Transformation

- Update from Tom Iverson (Sagency) to the Boards
- Retreat will be held for Leadership staff in May
- Changes have already been implemented
 - ✓ Availability of flexible work schedules
 - ✓ Greater authority at Team Leader level
 - ✓ Funding for MYP (youth) outreach activities
 - ✓ Operational policies to be more flexible
 - ✓ Operations Service Technicians have been visiting the teams
 - ✓ New Outreach Discretionary Funds which can be used for items typically not allowed for (ex. Job Fair supplies)

DEED - IFAs

We have received information from the training that the DOL held with DEED staff on MOUs and IFAs. Little Falls IFA negotiations will begin soon.

Regional Workforce Alliance

The Full RWA virtual (Zoom) meeting will be held on May 13 from 1:00-3:00 p.m.

Agenda items will include:

- Speaker, Ron Wertz of the Federal Reserve
- Introduction of new RWA member
- New I-WE designations awarded

Tri-County Healthcare

Ms. Leaderbrand has been nominated and interviewed for the Governing Board of Directors of Tri-County Healthcare.

Rural Directors' Meeting

A Rural Directors' meeting was held in Brainerd and attended by Ms. Leaderbrand and Ms. Jaster.

Legislative Open Houses

Teams were asked to plan Legislative Open Houses for this fall.

Job Fairs

Job Fair season is in full swing. Congratulations to the Teams for their hard work and successes!

Business Committee Report – Ms. Jaster

Ms. Jaster provided a summary of the Business Committee's review of reports earlier this morning.

Celebrate Wins – Ms. Leaderbrand

Ms. Leaderbrand encouraged the Board members to review the Success Stories and Job Fair flyers included in their packet.

Adjourn – Ms. Anderson

A motion was made by Mr. Thoen, seconded by Ms. Hanson, to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried.

Ms. Anderson adjourned the meeting at 11:58 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,



**Terry Blake, Secretary
Workforce Development Board**