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**Rural Minnesota CEP, Inc.**  
**WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD MEETING**  
**803 Roosevelt Avenue, Detroit Lakes, MN**  
**Tuesday, March 16, 2021**

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**Members present:** Carol Anderson, Jerry Arneson (CC), Terry Blake, Sue Boehland, Amanda Hanson, Rebekah Kent, Darrell Lende, Don Martodam, Lori Meader, Julie Sachs, Tammy Schatz, and Durant Thoen Sr. and Eric Wittbrodt (Microsoft Teams)

**Members excused:** Kathy Guess, Teresa Johnson, and Sandy Voigt

**Members unexcused:** Matthew Gordon, Eloise Graves-Jallen, and John Tormanen,

**Staff present:** Dana Gulson, Tina Jaster, Vicki Leaderbrand and Dan Wenner

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**MINUTES**

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**Business Committee Meeting – Tina Jaster**

Ms. Jaster reviewed the reports for the month ending February 28, 2020. This included the Program Progress, MFIP/DWP County Performance Standards, WIOA Performance Standards, SNAP, and Ticket to Work reports.

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**Call to Order – Carol Anderson**

Ms. Anderson called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.  
Amended Agenda - VI.D. should be Youthbuild.

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**February 23, 2021 Minutes – Ms. Anderson**

**Moved by Don Martodam and seconded by Terry Blake to approve the minutes from the February 23, 2021 meeting. Vote – Ms. Anderson - yes, Jerry Arneson - yes, Ms. Blake - yes, Sue Boehland - yes, Amanda Hanson - yes, Rebekah Kent - yes, Darrell Lende - yes, Mr. Martodam - yes, Lori Meader - yes, Julie Sachs - yes, Tammy Schatz - yes, and Durant Thoen Sr. - yes, Motion carried.**

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**Youth Council Report – Ms. Boehland**

- ✓ Reviewed WDA 2 Local Youth Plan
  - ✓ Presentation from Char Hirte on Youth Ticket to Work services
  - ✓ Youth at Work Grant summary and proposal
  - ✓ Member comments on local activities
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## Local Youth Plan 2021 – Ms. Jaster

### **Mission Statement:**

The goal of the Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act (WIOA) 2021 program for youth in Workforce Development Area 2 (WDA 2) is to establish a comprehensive development system that will assist youth to achieve economic self-sufficiency and empower them to act as solid contributors to community growth. The system will provide effective learning environments linking education and employment; leadership development; nurturing mentors; and sustained support. Rural Minnesota Concentrated Employment Programs, Inc. is committed to Racial Equity in its practice, policies, and procedures.

### **Key priorities for 2021**

- 1) Resiliency: Staff will understand the causes of trauma producing events and its long-term effects on employability. Staff will have the knowledge to respond appropriately.
  - a) Staff will discuss, promote, and work with the youth to identify one caring adult relationships that models responsibility and success in meaningful and relevant activities and roles.
- 2) Financial Literacy
- 3) Leadership
- 4) Employability skills
- 5) Career Planning

**Moved by Ms. Boehland and seconded by Ms. Kent to approve the Local Youth Plan 2021. Vote** – Ms. Anderson - yes, Mr. Arneson - yes, Mr. Blake - yes, Ms. Boehland - yes, Ms. Hanson - yes, Ms. Kent - yes, Mr. Lende - yes, Mr. Martodam - yes, Ms. Meader - yes, Ms. Sachs - yes, Ms. Schatz - yes, Mr. Thoen Sr. – yes, and Mr. Wittbrodt – yes. **Motion carried.**

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## Grants – Ms. Jaster

### **Youth at Work Grant**

Planned participants 100, budget \$250,000 and operating period July 1, 2021 through June 30, 2023.

- ✓ RMCEP seeks to improve its ability to help youth learn skills by focusing on Career Pathways in Occupations in Demand and coupling this training with a work-based learning program in an entry-level position within their chosen career pathway. The primary goal in this initiative will be to provide and recognized credential in one of the identified career pathways and pair the training with a related work-based learning experience. Each youth participant who is placed in work-based learning will be mentored for development of employability skills.

**Moved by Ms. Sachs and seconded by Ms. Kent to approve the Youth at Work Grant.** Ms. Anderson - yes, Mr. Arneson - yes, Mr. Blake - yes, Ms. Boehland - yes, Ms. Hanson - yes, Ms. Kent - yes, Mr. Lende - yes, Mr. Martodam - yes, Ms. Meader - yes, Ms. Sachs - yes, Ms. Schatz - yes, Mr. Thoen Sr. – yes, and Mr. Wittbrodt – yes. **Motion carried.**

### **Youth at Work MI2 Career Academies**

- ✓ The MI2 Career Academies project goal is to Introduce youth to technical skills and employment. Our program navigators gather and qualify individuals for training and provide wrap around services. Participants create an Individual Development/Employment Plan including options to learn about employer expectations, work readiness, careers in high demand occupations and training to gain certifications from the Manufacturing Skills Standard Council, National Institute of Metalworking Skills and high school as well as college academic credit.

**Moved by Ms. Sachs and seconded by Ms. Kent to approve the Youth at Work MI2 Career Academies. Vote** – Ms. Anderson - yes, Mr. Arneson - yes, Mr. Blake - yes, Ms. Boehland - yes, Ms. Hanson - yes, Ms. Kent - yes, Mr. Lende - yes, Mr. Martodam - yes, Ms. Meader - yes, Ms. Sachs - yes, Ms. Schatz - yes, Mr. Thoen Sr. – yes, and Mr. Wittbrodt – yes. **Motion carried.**

#### **Minnesota Alliance of Boys and Girls Club**

Budget \$850,000 and operating period July 1, 2021 through June 30, 2023

- ✓ DEED is seeking proposals to serve economically disadvantaged or at-risk youth. The Minnesota Alliance of Boys and Girls Clubs seek WDB support of their submission for a Youth at Work Grant.
- ✓ As members of the Minnesota Alliance, Boys & Girls Clubs of Detroit Lakes, Boys & Girls Clubs of White Earth, and Boys & Girls Clubs of the Leech Lake Area would utilize these funds to provide youth workforce readiness programs at our sites that serve school-age youth.
- ✓ We are asking to add the Rural Minnesota Concentrated Employment Program as a partner in our RFP.

**Moved by Ms. Boehland and seconded by Ms. Hanson to approve the Minnesota Alliance of Boys and Girls Club. Vote** – Ms. Anderson - yes, Mr. Arneson - yes, Mr. Blake - yes, Ms. Boehland - yes, Ms. Hanson - yes, Ms. Kent - yes, Mr. Lende - yes, Mr. Martodam - yes, Ms. Meader - yes, Ms. Sachs - yes, Ms. Schatz - yes, Mr. Thoen Sr. – yes, and Mr. Wittbrodt – yes. **Motion carried.**

#### **Youthbuild Program 2021**

Planned participants 14, budget \$75,000 and operating period July 1, 2021 through June 30, 2022.

- ✓ This program will provide specialized training, work experience and education for youth, 16 through 24 years of age, who are at risk of not completing their high school education and who are economically disadvantaged, or eligible for the High School Graduation Incentives Program. Construction projects will be based on local need, suitability of the site, safety, costs, the work needed and the skills to be learned.
- ✓ Participating agencies will provide the following services: Assessment, Construction Work Experience, Individualized Transition to Employment Plan Development, Counseling, Referral, Training in Construction Terminology and Concepts, Sp2 Training, Leadership and Community Service Opportunities, Mentoring, Job Seeking Skills Training, Placement Assistance, Follow-up Counseling, Career Planning, High School Diploma Instruction, Job Shadowing, Life Skills, Job Retention Skills, and Support Services. Each youth will complete safety training prior to joining the Youthbuild Worksite. They will receive Sp2-Construction and Environmental Safety instruction. Additional opportunities for leadership experience and training will be provided to the Lead Worker position.

**Moved by Ms. Schatz and seconded by Ms. Sachs to approve the Youthbuild Program 2021. Vote** – Ms. Anderson - yes, Mr. Arneson - yes, Mr. Blake - yes, Ms. Boehland - yes, Ms. Hanson - yes, Ms. Kent - yes, Mr. Lende - yes, Mr. Martodam - yes, Ms. Meader - yes, Ms. Sachs - yes, Ms. Schatz - yes, Mr. Thoen Sr. – yes, and Mr. Wittbrodt – yes. **Motion carried.**

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#### **Workforce Development Fund – Ms. Anderson/Vicki Leaderbrand**

Commissioner Grove, several Deputy Commissioners and DEED Directors met with the MAWB members and other stakeholders to further discuss the proposed changes to the Workforce Development Fund bill.

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## Regional Plan – Dan Wenner

1. Describe the region’s economic conditions including existing and emerging in-demand industry sectors and occupations and also the employment needs of employers in these sectors and occupations. Attach a copy of an analysis addressing these factors. It is acceptable and recommended to use the regional analysis and other information if desired that is available from DEED’s Labor Market Information Division.
  - ✓ Between April 2020 and November 2020, the monthly unemployment rate was as much as 4.8% higher than in the same period in 2019 due to the effects of the pandemic on the economy. The labor force in Northwest Minnesota in 2020 dropped 1.8% from the previous year.
2. What is the regional strategy to coordinate efforts to address existing and in-demand industry sector and occupations workforce needs? Description the methodology for outreach to these industry sectors and how they will be connected with the workforce system in the region.
  - ✓ The Local Workforce Development Board pioneered the process of identifying regional Occupations in Demand. Local business, education, labor, government, and non-profit leaders meet in each Economic Development Region to review statistics and personal knowledge to identify workforce need and issues, and project occupations in demand.
3. Describe how the local boards will direct regional workforce system alignment through shared policies and practices. In this description include any cooperative service arrangements being planned for the region and how they will promote consistency within the regional workforce development area and with state policy.
  - ✓ The Northwest Private Industry Council and Rural Minnesota Concentrated Employment Program have been sharing best practices, policy and training for decades. Furthermore, the Regional Workforce Alliance is comprised of members from each Local Workforce Development Board along with appointees representing special interest groups, business and diversity. The Regional Workforce Alliance meets quarterly to plan for coordination of workforce development activities within the greater Northwest region.
4. Describe how the regional approaches used will ensure that it includes diverse representation, specifically among populations experiencing the greatest barriers to employment or communities facing the greatest levels of economic disparities?
  - ✓ Regional Community Workforce Inclusion Councils have a diverse membership. They review the Inclusive Workforce Employer Designation applications.
5. Describe how performance negotiations will be managed among the local workforce development areas within the region.
  - ✓ The Local Workforce Development Boards utilize data as the basis for negotiation.
6. Describe how the region’s development efforts will be coordinated with economic development services and workforce providers.
  - ✓ Since the inception of WIOA Regional Planning, Regional Development Commissions have been the key point of contact in an identifiable effort to combine economic development efforts with workforce development. CareerForce staff also collaborate with county economic development on joint projects.
7. Describe any regional coordination of administrative cost arrangements, including the pooling of funds for administrative costs, as appropriate. Also, please describe regional coordination of transportation and other supportive services.
  - ✓ Both Local Workforce Development Boards have pooled RC3 resources to provide a single point for Regional Planning.

**Moved by Mr. Martodam and seconded by Ms. Kent to approve the Regional Plan. Vote – Ms. Anderson - yes, Mr. Arneson - yes, Mr. Blake - yes, Ms. Boehland - yes, Ms. Hanson - yes, Ms. Kent - yes, Mr. Lende - yes, Mr. Martodam - yes, Ms. Meader - yes, Ms. Sachs - yes, Ms. Schatz - yes, Mr. Thoen Sr. – yes, and Mr. Wittbrodt – yes. Motion carried.**

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## Career Advising – Mr. Wenner

- ✓ Sourcewell Career Advising Mid - Year Reports
    - Served over 1,500 students – unduplicated count. Started with 16 school, still working in 14.
    - We have worked with 71 parents.
    - Contacted 24 worksites regarding experiential learning.
    - Nearly 11,000 have participated in group sessions (duplicated count):
      - Career Exploration 3,087
      - Updating PLP 1,904
      - Testing 1,378
      - Job Search 908
      - Financial Aid 844
      - NCRC 413
  - ✓ Doing most of the work virtually. A combination of interactive, video and zoom.
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## Wagner Peyser Annual Report – Julie Sachs

### Annual Cybrarian Data

CareerForce was only open to the public 29% of the year in 2020.

Cybrarian tracks data for people who used the CareerForce computers. Comparing the data from 2019 – 2020, most of the data points were on trend from last year, showing if we had been open for the full year, our service usage numbers would have been roughly the same. Workshop numbers are lower, but Job Service quickly pivoted to doing online workshops statewide and there is no way to sort out how many of those workshop attendees were from our region.

Another data set looks at Workforce One enrollments and that is where eligibility-based programs are tracked. The biggest contrast in enrollments was for MFIP. Enrollments in 2019 were 444, versus 204 in 2020, a 54% drop. One could surmise that it was because state unemployment benefits combined with Federal Pandemic Unemployment compensation and several extensions kept people off MFIP roles.

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## Directors Report – Ms. Leaderbrand

### IFAs

- ✓ DEED has requested we temporarily pause the negotiations on the IFAs. DEED needs clarity from the DOL regarding if off-site workshops or intake/initial assessment of customers can be a valid infrastructure contribution, (the infrastructure costs associated with the workshops and intake/initial assessments like the cost of rooms, technology involved, etc.). In their conversation with the DOL a few weeks ago they got the impression they would not consider those infrastructure contributions valid. Meantime, we are close to finishing, still need numbers from 3 ABEs and final negotiations with Job Service and VRS. Pivot point on the latter is sharing costs for universal customers.

### MAWB Operations:

- ✓ UI RESEA (Re-employment and Eligibility Assessment) will be restarting soon. UI recipients will receive a letter in the mail and two weeks later a screening phone call. This should help with dislocated worker enrollments. However, the strategy has been to pull all DEED staff off their normal duties to make these calls. For RMCEP, this means we lose the reception hours

contracted to us by DEED in Alexandria and Brainerd. Our staff there are trying to cover those hours, but it was unexpected and is difficult.

- ✓ DEED has been working on designating certain months as Industry Months. April will be Tech month.
- ✓ Regional and Local Plans are deadlines have been extended to May 31<sup>st</sup>. With a required 30-day Public Comment Notice, we need to have ours done by the end of April. Regional is complete.

### **RWA 2/26/21**

- ✓ We welcomed legislative aides: Louis Crombie (Congressman Stauber), Ben Anderson (Congresswomen Fischbach), and Carson Oellette (Senator Smith) to our session. I-WE Designation application approvals were granted to Minnesota State Technical and Community Colleges and the Brainerd YMCA. Awarded designations were Essential Health and Delta Dental. These entities have also been invited to become RWA members. The I-WE MOU was developed as a guideline to share the curriculum we developed and was approved by the group. We can use the trademark logo for two years.
- ✓ Employability Skills update: will be using Soft Skills USA. An action the RWA has taken to address issues we hear from employers.
- ✓ Ben Winchester, of the U of M Extension, an expert in rural Minnesota, was excellent as always. He presented Resident Recruitment and Retention in Rural American, rural is changing not dying!
- ✓ Focused on current trends in local areas and discussion on expanding diversity and equity efforts. A new CWIC was formed in Brainerd. Will be invited to become members of RWA.

### **MFIP Contracts are complete.**

### **All Staff Conference March 11, 2021**

- ✓ We continue to try to offer All Staff Training. These year's conference was a one-day virtual conference, focused on Expanding our Horizons.
- ✓ Morning was spent in LCSC Well Conference (no charge!).
  - Ergonomic in a Virtual Environment (Kim Rosendahl, PT at Rehab Authority in TRF)
  - Eating for your Health (April Graff, Dietitian for Hy-Vee)
  - Workplace Wellness-Control your own Destiny (Rachel Cox-Raverty, Social Worker with Southwest West Central Service Coop)
  - Worksite Yoga (Brittani Daniel, Wellness Manager).
- ✓ The afternoon concentrated on Diversity and Inclusion:
  - Quality and Inclusion Training for Real Change – Sarah Oquist
  - The Funny Thing about Stress – Kay Francis

We provided lunch for those in attendance at the locations. Good participation by staff and so far, positive comments.

### **GCDF Training:**

- ✓ Happy to report we have funding to send 8 counselors to receive training as a Global Career Development Facilitator, with the potential of receiving the credential. A reminder this is the first and most notable credential in the US for career development. A few years ago, we were able to provide this training to several counselors.

### **Spring Job Fairs**

- ✓ Center 2 is planning on conducting a “Hiring Extravaganza” this spring, hosting drive-in or “trunk” job fairs in each of the locations during the same week. Bemidji, Brainerd, Little Falls and Wadena. Workforce Impact in Bemidji will also be involved. (Partnership getting stronger).

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**Business Committee Report – Ms. Jaster**

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

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**Good News – Ms. Anderson**

Ms. Anderson encouraged the Board members to review the articles that are in their packet.

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**Adjourn – Ms. Anderson**

The meeting adjourned at 11:55 a.m.

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**Respectfully submitted,**

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Terry Blake". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the typed name.

**Terry Blake, Secretary  
Workforce Development Board**