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**Rural Minnesota CEP, Inc.**  
**WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD MEETING**  
**803 Roosevelt Avenue, Detroit Lakes, MN**  
**Tuesday, April 27, 2021**

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**Members present:** Carol Anderson, Jerry Arneson, Terry Blake, Sue Boehland, Amanda Hanson, Darrell Lende, Don Martodam, Julie Sachs, Tammy Schatz, Durant Thoen Sr., John Tormanen, and Sandy Voigt, (Microsoft Teams)

**Members excused:** Kathy Guess, Teresa Johnson, Rebekah Kent, and Lori Meader,

**Members unexcused:** Matthew Gordon, Eloise Graves-Jallen, and Eric Wittbrodt

**Staff present:** Nancy Bisek, 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 March 31, 2021. This included the Program Progress, MFIP County Performance Standards, WIOA Performance Standards, and Ticket to Work reports. Also reviewed Program at Year-End: WIOA Out of School Youth.

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**Call to Order – Carol Anderson**

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

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**March 16, 2020 Minutes – Ms. Anderson**

**Moved by Don Martodam and seconded by Terry Blake to approve the minutes from the March 16, 2021 meeting. Vote – Ms. Anderson - yes, Jerry Arneson - yes, Mr. Blake - yes, Sue Boehland - yes, Darrell Lende - yes, Mr. Martodam - yes, Tammy Schatz - yes, Durant Thoen Sr. - yes, John Tormanen - yes, and Sandy Voigt – yes. Motion carried.**

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**Planning – Ms. Jaster**

**Meat Cutting and Butchery Program**

RMCEP intends to support the application for Community Project Funding submitted by Central Lakes and Ridgewater Colleges. This grant is intended to develop a training program in Meat Cutting and Butchery to serve this sector in the agricultural industry and meet a skills gap in this area. The colleges, along with AgCenter will partner together to create and train an entrepreneurial workforce to augment access for farmers to get livestock from farm to table.

RMCEP supports development of training programs for in-demand occupations in our area. Once established, RMCEP will refer clients to this program as appropriate. We will also offer to provide any assistance with Labor Market Information or any other workforce issue.

**Moved by Ms. Boehland and seconded by Julie Sachs to approve Meat Cutting and Butchery Program. Vote** – Ms. Anderson - yes, Mr. Arneson - yes, Mr. Blake - yes, Ms. Boehland - yes, Ms. Hanson - yes, Mr. Lende - yes, Mr. Martodam - yes, Ms. Sachs - yes, Ms. Schatz - yes, Mr. Thoen Sr. - yes, Mr. Tormanen - yes, and Ms. Voigt – yes. **Motion carried.**

#### **Draft Local Unified Plan – Vicki Leaderbrand**

Ms. Leaderbrand informed the members the changes that have been made to the plan. This plan is due to the state by the end of May. It is posted on our website and will be in local newspapers in our 19-county area.

**Moved by Ms. Hanson and seconded by Ms. Voigt to approve the Draft Local Unified Plan including public comments. Vote** – Ms. Anderson - yes, Mr. Arneson - yes, Mr. Blake - yes, Ms. Boehland - yes, Ms. Hanson - yes, Mr. Lende - yes, Mr. Martodam - yes, Ms. Sachs - yes, Ms. Schatz - yes, Mr. Thoen Sr. - yes, Mr. Tormanen - yes, and Ms. Voigt - yes. **Motion carried.**

#### **Incumbent Worker Training Review**

Ms. Leaderbrand provided the board members with a list of Incumbent Worker Trainings that are in training and/or onboard to start.

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#### **Programs at Mid-Year – Ms. Jaster**

Ms. Jaster reviewed the SNAP program in both Region IV and V that ends on September 30, 2021.

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#### **Regional Planning – Dan Wenner**

##### **Employability Skills Certificate**

The Employability Skills Certificate is awarded to career seekers to enhance transferrable and essential workplace skills, and to demonstrate attainment of those skills to employers.

- Development of this component began with Regional Workforce Alliance (RWA). The RWA noted that many new employees lack basic employability skills.
- These skills needed for any job such as working in a team, communicating, and listening.
- The problem is that it is difficult to tell which job applicants might possess these skills.
- The RWA decided to develop a process to certify whether job seekers possessed employability skills.
- It would provide an assurance to employers that job applicants have employability skills.
- To provide a credential to job applicants that they could share with prospective employer.
- A committee was formed which was made up of staff and RWA members to develop the process.
- The first step was to identify which skills employer considered important.
- The committee conducted a survey of employers.
- The skills prioritized by employer are listed in the packet.
- Once the skills were identified a curriculum was needed. After looking many options, the core group consisting of CareerForce staff from the regions and ABE, settled on a curriculum and certification process available through Soft Skills USA.
- ABE purchased the courses and holds them for the partners.
- If eligible for the program, RMCEP purchases a course from ABE. If not eligible, ABE enrolls person.
- Staff provides the student with an orientation.

- Staff monitors progress in the on-line course.
- Each module includes 10 question quiz. Participants must score 70% or higher to obtain a certificate.
- Additional skill building is available through work experience.
- Certificate is awarded by Soft Skills USA, CareerForce or ABE staff.
- The job seeker is coached on how to communicate the value of the certification to employers.
- CareerForce staff assist with other job search tools such as a cover letter, resume, application information, letters of recommendation, etc.
- Staff recognize complete with celebrations.
- The process is currently being pilot tested in Northwest ABE Service area which includes all seven counties of LWDA1 and the Beltrami, Lake of the Woods, Cass, and Hubbard counties.

### **CWIC**

- Moorhead group meeting on Thursday, April 29, 2021.
- Focus of this group is building equity in the workplace in EDR4.
- Will be looking at progress made on short- and long-term deliverables and action plans.

### **RWA**

- Meeting on May 21, 2021.
- Will do a quick review on updates made to the Regional Plan since the February meeting.
- Neil Lindscheid, Extension Educator at University of Minnesota Extension will present on Designing Community Strategies to recruit, welcome, and retain rural residents.
- Childcare Initiative is another focus of the RWA. Billie Jo Greene, Team Leader from Bemidji is part of a collaborative making progress in this area.
- Also trying to line up a regional expert on childcare.

## **Career Advising – Mr. Wenner**

### **Sourcewell**

- We have two Career Advisors transitioning at the end of the month.
  - One is going to be a Youth Coordinator on the Little Falls office.
  - The other one is going to work for Vocational Rehabilitation Services

### **HECAP**

- Introduction to Career Exploration tools in five modules.
- Available in ten high schools.
- Introduced LMI to 332 students.
- Introduced 236 students into interest assessment.
- 248 students began developing a career plan.

### **Bernick's Pre-Apprenticeship Project**

- Operating in Pequot Lakes and Pillager.
- Involves 7 high school students.
- We received some nice press on the Pequot Lakes portion of the project which is included in the "Good News" section of the WDB packet.

## **Infrastructure Funding Agreements – Ms. Leaderbrand/Nancy Bisek**

Ms. Leaderbrand and Ms. Bisek explained how the negotiation works and with who, contribution details and what the methodology was used to determine contribution amount.

**Moved by Mr. Martodam and seconded by Ms. Boehland to approve the submission under predigests the Infrastructure Funding Agreements. Vote** – Ms. Anderson - yes, Mr. Arneson - yes, Mr. Blake - yes, Ms. Boehland - yes, Ms. Hanson - yes, Mr. Lende - yes, Mr. Martodam - yes, Ms. Sachs - yes, Ms. Schatz - yes, Mr. Thoen Sr. - yes, Mr. Tormanen - yes, and Ms. Voigt - yes. **Motion carried.**

Discussion on lack of the negotiation with Vocational Rehabilitation. With the approval of the Board, working with Ms. Anderson and Lori Schwartz, Ms. Leaderbrand with send letters to the appropriate parties of interest.

**Moved by Mr. Martodam and seconded by Mr. Blake to approve sending letters to the appropriate individuals. Vote** – Ms. Anderson – yes, Mr. Arneson – yes, Mr. Blake – yes, Ms. Boehland – yes, Ms. Hanson – yes, Mr. Lende – yes, Mr. Martodam – yes, Ms. Sachs – abstain, Ms. Schatz – yes, Mr. Thoen Sr. – yes, Mr. Tormanen – yes, and Ms. Voigt – yes. **Motion carried.**

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### All Staff Training Survey Results – Ms. Leaderbrand

All Staff Training survey results were shared. Excellent overall ratings.

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### Director's Report – Ms. Leaderbrand

#### Policies and Issues

- Reopening physical CareerForce location timeline and opening sites for businesses to do small job fairs.

#### Operations

- Jason Wadell - Rapid Response Flowchart
- Jim Hegman, Unemployment Insurance Director- Upcoming UI Efforts
- NAWB Forum in Washington, DC end of June
- Meeting Minnesota Association of Workforce Boards (MAWB), CareerForce Systems, Vocational Rehabilitation Services (VRS), and State Services for the Blind (SSB) Joint Statewide Meeting
- A new CWIC was formed in Brainerd. We will be invited to become members of RWA.
- New Director at Minnesota Council of Non Profits...said goodbye to Joe Pederson, hello to Warsame Warsame

#### Spring Job Fairs

- Already had two Job Fairs in Park Rapids, one for the public and one for the school.
- Moorhead Construction Job Fair was held in March.
- 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). Tina will attend Bemidji and Brainerd I will attend Wadena and Little Falls.
- Detroit Lakes will have their Job Fair on May 6<sup>th</sup> in the parking lot at M-State.

403(b) audit is in process

Regional and Local Plans done, IFA done, now to focus on OSO, Time Study and Enrollment Tracking.

Discussion on some personnel issues.

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**Celebrate Wins – Ms. Leaderbrand**

Ms. Leaderbrand encouraged the members to review the articles on the Job Fairs and Good News that are in their packet.

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**Adjourn – Ms. Anderson**

The meeting adjourned at 11:56 p.m.

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**Respectfully submitted,**



**Terry Blake, Secretary  
Workforce Development Board**