
Rural Minnesota CEP, Inc.
WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD MEETING
803 Roosevelt Avenue, Detroit Lakes, MN
Tuesday, November 23, 2021

Members present: Carol Anderson, Jerry Arneson, Terry Blake, Amanda Hanson, Troy Haugen, Rebekah Kent, Darrell Lende, Don Martodam, Tammy Schatz, Durant Thoen Sr., and Sandy Voigt

Members excused: Teresa Johnson, Lori Meader, Julie Sachs, and John Tormanen

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

Staff present: Heather Bergseid, Char Hirte, Tina Jaster, Vicki Leaderbrand, and Dan Wenner

MINUTES

Business Committee Meeting – Tina Jaster

Ms. Jaster reviewed the reports for the month ending October 31, 2021. This included the Program Progress, MFIP County Performance Standards, WIOA Performance Standards, SNAP, and Ticket to Work reports.

Program Progress

- MFIP: There has been more participation.
- Crow Wing County EAP: There are good efforts to provide these resources and have seen some movement.
- Detroit Lakes PY21 Youthbuild: The program was moved to Detroit Lakes. Had a great turnout for the Big Ideas trailer. There are currently six enrollments.
- Bernick Family Foundation: We have had staffing issues and are looking at ideas to keep the program moving.
- IWCO Direct: Full funding has been received and there are currently 51 enrollments. The second round of layoffs is on January 1, 2022. The Little Falls office has three days of intakes planned.
- Initiative Foundation: Funds were used for IWCO Direct project start-up costs and provided support for job fairs.
- State Dislocated: These funds can also be used to support the IWCO project if funding runs low.
- Region 4 SNAP: The new SNAP funds have been received. We are still working on getting more referrals.
- Equipped to Work: Funding is provided through the United Way and is used for those who do not qualify for other programs.
- OSY: We are a little behind on plan but have good enrollments.
- WIOA Adult: We are a little behind plan but there are no concerns.
- WIOA Dislocated Worker: These participants a little harder to find but we can use funds for Incumbent Worker Trainings as well.
- Youth at Work: Teams plan on using these funds in the Spring. We will see more movement in March.
- Region 5 SNAP: The new SNAP funds have been received. We are still working on getting more referrals.

MFIP/DWP County Performance Standards

- Entered Employment Rate: Twelve out of 16 counties meet and nine are exceeding
- Successful Placements: Nine out of 16 counties are meeting
- Wage at Placement: Fifteen out of 16 are meeting or exceeding
- Star Counties exceeding in all three categories: Becker, Douglas, Grant, Otter Tail, Pope and Cass
- DWP currently has 34 enrollments.

WIOA Performance Standards

The Agency is doing well in Employment Rates at Exit, Credential Rates, and Median Earnings. The Agency is exceeding in all requirements for our Youth Program.

SNAP Slots

SNAP is still fully voluntary until the end of June 2022.

- Region IV is at 3 out of 47 enrolled.
- Region V is at 0 out of 20 enrolled.

Ticket to Work

We currently have 18 active enrollments with accumulative of 38 enrollments. Revenue to date (DEED and ADEN) is \$217,883.43.

Program at Mid-Year

Diversionary Work Program (DWP) got started very late in the year and is coming along very well.

Call to Order – Carol Anderson, Chair

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

Agenda Additions: None

October 26, 2021, Minutes – Ms. Anderson

Moved by Don Martodam and seconded by Rebekah Kent to approve the minutes from the October 26, 2021, meeting. Motion carried.

Youth Council Report – Troy Haugen

Mr. Haugen summarized the Monday, November 22, 2021, Youth Council meeting.

- The Young Adult Survey results were reviewed.
 - The Possibilities of online response and to collect demographic information was suggested for next year.
- Brainstorming Key Priorities for 2022.
 - Employability Skills will be removed from the list because it is already part of the services our counselors provide.
 - A priority recognizing equity and inclusion will be added.

The Youth Council had four positions vacated in the past year and are seeking replacements. Please let Ms. Leaderbrand or Ms. Jaster know of any possible candidates.

Social Security Advocacy/Ticket to Work – Char Hirte

Ms. Leaderbrand introduced Char Hirte, RMCEP Ticket to Work Coordinator, gave a brief background on the Social Security Advocacy (SSA) grant.

Ms. Hirte shared a PowerPoint presentation explaining the potential SSA services we can provide to participants. Highlights included:

- The Differences between Social Security Insurance and Social Security Disability Insurance
- SSA Services Eligibility Criteria
- Services we can assist with:
 - Initial application
 - Reconsideration on initial claim
 - Hearing before an Administrative Law Judge on an initial claim
 - Appeals council review on an initial claim
 - Continuing disability review
- Payment Rates for Agency Services
- Benefits of Providing SSA Services
 - Value added service for MFIP/DWP/SNAP participants
 - Good tie to Ticket to Work program
 - Could provide RMCEP additional unrestricted revenue
 - Needed and important service in our service area
- Outcomes of using the SSA program
 - Nearly doubles the application acceptance by Social Security

Ms. Leaderbrand congratulated Ms. Hirte for her work on growing the Agency's disability program.

Recovery Readiness and Technical Assistance Consultations Report – Vicki Leaderbrand

The Department of Labor (DOL) conducted an inquiry to see how state agencies assisted the Local Areas during the pandemic. RMCEP was asked to take part and was interviewed by representatives of the DOL. Ms. Leaderbrand reported on the summary of the DOL inquiry for the State of Minnesota.

2022 NAWB Forum – Ms. Leaderbrand

The 2022 NAWB Forum will be held in Washington, D.C., on April 11-14. Ms. Leaderbrand, Ms. Anderson, and Tina Jaster will be attending. Lori Schwartz (BOD Chair) cannot attend, so an invitation was extended to Terry Blake.

Regional Planning – Dan Wenner

MAWB Economic Development Committee Meeting:

- ✓ Guest Speaker: Mike Wimmer, Minnesota Association of Professional County Economic Developers
- ✓ M-state will be launching a website for employers interested in customized training this month
- ✓ DEED has a grant program for Automation Training Incentive Program
- ✓ DEED has a new economic development website: joinusmn.com

Regional Workforce Alliance October Meeting

- ✓ New American Integration Center presentation (East Grand Forks)
- ✓ Presented I-WE plaque to the Initiative Foundation
- ✓ I-WE designations: Brunswick and Lakewood Health
- ✓ Roundtable Discussions
- ✓ CWIC meeting will be held in December
 - Designation considerations for KLN and Lakes Country Service Coop

WIOA Region Planning Funds

- ✓ Plan was submitted
- ✓ DEED wanted funds used for I-WE designation and pulled money from the program
- ✓ RMCEP resubmitted its Plan

Director's Report – Ms. Leaderbrand

Grants

RMCEP had applied for the WESA, P2P, and African Communities grants. The grants were to be awarded by early November, but RMCEP has not received any information to-date.

County MFIP Contracts

- ✓ Program Managers have been visiting with county directors regarding their contracts.
- ✓ Many counties want to add value-added services, but a few have cut back on their funding.
- ✓ RMCEP wants all contracts signed in December because they will begin in January.

Legislative

Ms. Leaderbrand took part in a meeting with Senator Amy Klobuchar's staff and Congresswoman Michelle Fischbach. Discussions included WIOA reauthorization and workforce development funding. A meeting with Senator Tina Smith is set for next week to discuss the same topics.

IFAs

The IFAs will be re-negotiated next year. New information that will affect negotiations:

- ✓ DEED staff will not be returning to the Career Force locations to provide Career Lab or reception services.
- ✓ VRS will not be renewing their leases in our offices.

Business Committee Report – Ms. Jaster

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

Round-Robin Local Area Reports – All

Carol Anderson

- ✓ Ms. Anderson provided information to the Star Tribune for an article regarding the meat cutting program.
- ✓ IWCO Direct Layoff:
 - Job Fair was well received by businesses and attendees
 - Sandy Voigt thanked the Little Falls team for their work in the community

Darrell Lende

Fargo-Moorhead Diversion Project

- ✓ Contractors will need registered apprentices
- ✓ Mr. Lende requested a letter of support for a grant submission to fund pre-apprentice training in order to get workers on the project
- ✓ There will be approximately 6,000 people working on the project and last seven to eight years

Terry Blake

- ✓ Local farmers were used to haul sugar beets due to a lack of truckers
- ✓ Businesses are having issues getting products

Don Martodam

- ✓ Eventide is considering building a facility in Hawley and adding a large (Sanford) clinic to it

Vicki Leaderbrand

- ✓ Lakeshirts is expanding in Detroit Lakes and Little Falls, as well as considering another location
 - RMCEP will do what it can do to assist

Celebrate Wins – Ms. Leaderbrand

Ms. Leaderbrand encouraged the Board members to review the articles included in their packet, highlighting the Big Ideas article.

Adjourn – Ms. Anderson

Ms. Anderson adjourned the meeting at 12:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

**Terry Blake, Secretary
Workforce Development Board**