

NWWIB, INC. YOUTH COUNCIL MEETING
Tuesday, October 16, 2007 – 2:00 p.m.
NWCEP Administrative Office – Ashland, WI

Meeting Minutes

Present

Brad Gingras, CEP, Inc.
Candace Salmon, Ashland Cty. Human Services
LeRoy Forslund, WIB Chairman
Bruce Lindgren, WIB Member
Patrice Waldron, Parent Representative
Mitch Bormann- WIB Member
Barb Landstrom, WITC Shell Lake
Sheila Young, Sawyer County Housing Authority
Otto Rusch, WIB Member
John Hancock, Law Enforcement
Abby Hamilton, Youth Representative
Jim Lee, Education
Dustin Meyers, Youth Representative

Excused

Jerome Drahos
Joan Wimme

Others Present

Mari Kay Nabozny
Jennifer Baron
Steve Terry

The meeting was called to order by Mitch Bormann, Youth Council Chairman. Everyone introduced themselves. Two new Youth Council members were introduced. They are John Hancock representing law enforcement and Abby Hamilton, a former Crex Meadows youth camper, representing youth.

It was noted that the public meeting notice was published in 2 class A newspapers and aired on the area radio stations in WDA #7.

Approval of the July 11, 2007, Meeting Minutes

One correction was noted on the first page, last paragraph of the July 11th meeting minutes. The correction noted is the time periods that the Crex Meadows Youth Camp operates. The Crex Camp runs one three week session and two, two week sessions.

A motion was made by LeRoy Forslund to approve the July 11, 2007, meeting minutes as amended. Seconded by Otto Rusch. Vote taken, carried unanimously.
--

Crex Meadow's Youth Camp 2007 Report

Mitch noted that at the last Youth Council meeting on July 11th a tour of Crex Meadows Youth Camp took place. Mitch indicated that the tour of the camp facility and explanation of how the camp operates was very informational for Council members.

Brad Gingras, NWCEP Youth Services Manager and Camp Director for the Crex Meadows Youth Conservation Camp in Grantsburg, Wisconsin gave a report on the Camp from this past summer. He indicated that 90 percent of the campers have come from difficult life circumstances. Abby Hamilton described her experience at the Crex Meadows Youth Camp. She indicated that she went the entire summer and learned a lot of valuable information which she uses in science class at school. Dustin Meyers went to the Crex Camp for four years in a row. He indicated that the youth are taught a variety of important life and work skills. Dustin also served as a junior counselor as well.

Brad explained that there are two, two week sessions and one three week session with 20 youth in each session, typically ten female and ten males, ages 14-18. The students that come to the first session were return campers. Brad indicated that return youth are a good indication that they enjoyed the camp. Two campers are in leadership roles, which are junior counselors. Most of the youth are from the ten northwest counties in Wisconsin. Brad noted that the camp is open nation wide for youth. There are youth from at this session of camp that are from all ten counties. There is a fee for those youth that are not WIA eligible. Brad said that he sends information to every school in our WDA about the camp.

Brad discussed the outdoor work activities and projects with the DNR that the youth do and get paid for 40 hours a week earning \$6.50 per hour at the Crex Meadows Youth Camp in Grantsburg. Brad discussed the science and nature curriculum that can be used as science credits in high school towards graduation. Brad noted that if a youth is in more than one session, they can max out on their science credit with schools. Brad indicated that the youth completed 6,144 hours of work for Crex Meadows for the state DNR at no cost. He explained the Creative Engineering Activity that the youth participated in. He also noted that the youth are allowed recreational activities on evenings and weekends.

Brad discussed funding for the Crex Meadows Camp. Brad indicated that much of the funding is through WIA funds, but some funding has been raised through private donations. The annual budget is around \$100,000 to operate the camp, which includes the youth wages, staff wages, facility costs, rental vans, food and all other necessary items needed to operate the camp. Brad said that the state of Wisconsin has been assisting in securing additional funds to support continuation of the camp. Brad indicated that there is not enough funding and resources to expand the camp. Brad discussed ways that the camp operated leaner financially. He indicated that the camp was 100 percent filled, which helps decrease cost per camper. Brad discussed follow-up with the youth that attend the camp. The graduation rate for students that attend the camp is 87.7%, with 95% of the campers being considered at risk.

Discuss the RISE Initiative

Mari gave a background on RISE initiative. This started with the Governor's GROW plan two years ago, in which our area was funded. The GROW initiative has been replaced by RISE. The

state of Wisconsin received a \$1.5 million dollar grant from the Joyce foundation to review state policy as it changes and grants will be available to various areas to implement career pathways in various industries. The state seems to be emphasizing more on the technical college system to implement career pathways projects. The services that will be funded through these grants have not been clearly defined. Brad indicated that career pathways are related to career clusters. The target population is low income and adult basic education. Jim Lee asked to keep CESA updated on the progress of RISE. There has been a decrease in student enrollment and funds are limited due to this, along with decreased opportunities, which could be funded. Another area suggested to focus on for youth is small business generation and entrepreneurship and the utilization of distance technology. It was noted that Carolyn Peckham is leading the facilitation of RISE. She facilitated the NWWIB's strategic plan.

Discuss Skill Attainment

Brad Gingras stated that any student enrolled in NWCEP's programs have goals set such as basic skills, work readiness and work skills that are rated by the state of Wisconsin. A successful method used to reach these goals at NWCEP has been through work experience programs. Due to decreased funds, it's been more challenging to offer these programs, so a comprehensive list has been developed to assist youth. This will require better partnering with schools and employers. These goals are an effective way to help youth gain life skills. The NWCEP Employment Specialists can utilize the skill attainment process in serving youth on the program. Brad explained a skill attainment verification form that is used with the employer to help strengthen the process and completion.

Fundraising Progress Update

Brad discussed funding for the Camp. Brad indicated that the state of Wisconsin has included \$80,000 in the state budget for Crex Meadows Camp. These funds would come through the Department of Commerce and would be appropriated on a biennial basis with a stipulation that for every \$10,000 in private funds raised, the state will allocate \$40,000, with a max of \$80,000. A suggestion was made that DPI would be the most logical source to help fund this camp. However, this past year, DPI's budget did not have additional funds to allocate towards the camp. Another area to research for state funds is the DNR due to all the work that the youth provide at no cost for the Crex area. Brad discussed other proposals submitted, including one to the Brett Favre 4ward foundation that assists disadvantaged youth.

Discuss Youth Council Next Steps

Brad indicated that this agenda item is an opportunity for Youth Council members to provide input and ideas they have for projects taking place and furthering the work that is being done. A question was raised on whether there is a best practices resource guide on WIA youth services available around the state that could be a benefit to our area. Mari will talk to other WDA Directors to find out what type of WIA youth programs they fund to bring back for discussion at the next meeting.

Mari indicated that we'll need another parent representative on the Youth Council due to Candace Salmon moving from the area.

Brad reported that Youth Apprenticeships are still being done, but enrollments in the program are down due to budget decreases. Discussion took place on how distance learning can be utilized to minimize some of the barriers that our rural area faces, such as lack of opportunities in more specific occupational areas. A suggestion was made for the Youth Council to continue to work on and research more on distance learning opportunities.

Mari discussed a “Want to Move” campaign through the Northland Works website that is used to encourage people to the northern Wisconsin area with the available jobs. It is a new addition to the Northland Works web site and more information will be forthcoming on how it’s working.

Next Meeting Date and Location

The next meeting of the Youth Council will be on Tuesday, January 15, 2008, at 2:00 p.m. in Ashland.

Adjournment

A motion was made by Otto Rusch to adjourn. Seconded by Bruce Lindgren. Vote taken, carried.
--

The meeting was adjourned at 11:45 a.m.