

NORTHWEST WISCONSIN WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD MEETING, INC.

Thursday, June 28, 2007– 10:00 a.m.

Lakewoods Resort - Cable, WI

MEETING MINUTES

The meeting was called to order by LeRoy Forslund, WIB Chairman. Roll call was taken, a quorum was present. The WIB honored the Pledge of Allegiance.

PRESENT:

Mitch Bormann
Dan Westlund, Jr
Bruce Lindgren
Otto Rusch
Gail Huycke
LeRoy Forslund
Walt Jaeger
Jerry Hembd
Mike BeBeau
Bob Martin, Sr
Toby Johnson
Dick Nystrom
Bill Eskola
Doug Moquin
Chuck Gottschall
Ray Maday
Bambi Pattermann
Mary McPhetridge
Phil Rasmussen, Jr.
Theresa Pierce
James Kehoe, Jr.
Rick Roeser

ABSENT:

Jack Wichita- ex.
Elizabeth Skulun – ex.
Carol Ewan – ex.
Pete Whiteneck – ex.
Jerry Drahos – ex.
Jerre Eckes – ex.
Mike Martino – ex.
Tom Draghi – ex.
Clare Hintz – ex.

OTHERS

Mari Kay-Nabozny
Steve Terry
Jennifer Baron
Norm Vorhees

The public meeting notice was published in 2 class A newspapers and aired on area radio stations in the WDA.

Dick Nystrom explained the reason for canceling the business tour at Enbridge Energy was due to the computer system was moved to Edmonton, and the only thing that would be left to see is the tanks. A suggestion was made to consider Marquip United. James Kehoe suggested a tour of Amzoil in Superior. He indicated that he has a contact there we may try.

Approval of 3/22/07 Meeting Minutes

Bob Martin, Sr. made a motion to accept the 3/27/07 meeting minutes as presented. Seconded by Mitch Bormann. Vote taken, carried unanimously.

Phil Rasmussen noted that under other business, transportation and hospitality should be included along with tourism in the discussion about addressing the emphasis and results of the economic and climatic changes that have impacted business at Lakewoods and other businesses in the area. .

Executive Committee Report

Steve Terry discussed the most current Executive Minutes from June.

A motion was made by Bruce Lindgren and seconded by James Kehoe Jr. to approve the Executive Committee report. Vote taken, carried unanimously.

Review/Approve Preliminary Budget Report PY07

Steve discussed the comparisons between this year's preliminary budget and last years operating budget for the WIB and CEP. There were some adjustments made due to the budget cuts such as staff layoffs, a reduction in some staff hours, reduction in fringe benefits and other operating costs. The budget is preliminary since there are some grants that have been applied for that we have not received word on yet. A suggestion was made to break down the Board budgets and to look at what items are costing the most money, such as food, travel, number of meetings and other miscellaneous expenses.

Steve discussed the staff layoff decisions. He indicated that the decisions were based on retaining those staff that had the most impact on the WIA performance measures. Since there has been a reduction in hours with the CSS positions in the Job Centers, there may be a slight reduction in hours someone is available to assist with in the Job Center resource room. A question was raised about how the voluntary layoffs will be handled. Steve indicated that the organization will make adjustments as they go and use existing staff to take on some of those duties. Another question was raised on what occurs if the organization receives more money? Steve stated that training and support would be the first area where additional money would be slated for. A question was raised on if these budget cuts are long term or is there a possibility of these funds being restored? Steve indicated that there has been a steady decline in WIA dollars. It was noted that the state allocation formula needs to be researched as to how it's determined, and how it's determined on the federal level as well. There was discussion about the special set aside of funds that NWCEP used to receive through the U.S. Department of Labor's discretionary funds that were eliminated years ago due to leadership changes in the federal legislature. There was a question raised about the state of Wisconsin's carry over dollars that are set aside for workforce investment. Steve indicated that a development plan will be worked on with the other CEPs and other rural areas. It was noted that the reality of the situation is more dollars allocated to urban areas. A suggestion was made that partnerships with other WIA partners need to be strengthened. A comment was made that there needs to be more funds allocated for incumbent workers.

A motion was made by Otto Rusch to approve the preliminary budget for PY07. Seconded by Mitch Bormann. Vote taken, carried unanimously.

Consent Agenda Items

Otto Rusch made a motion to accept the consent agenda items. Walt Jaeger seconded the motion. Vote taken, carried unanimously.

Business Conference Final Report

Mari Kay-Nabozny discussed the Business Conference Final Report and the budget. She noted a major decrease in budget expenditures due to putting the conference on in house. She discussed the number of sponsors, exhibitors, participants and paid registrants.

Otto Rusch distributed a report he put together on what area most conference attendees come from. His report indicated that most participants come from Ashland, Bayfield, Douglas and Price counties. Otto Rusch suggested having two conferences, one in the northern counties and one in the southern counties or combining the conference with another like conference in the region. Another point raised was that the topics have been similar over the years, so many businesses might not return if topics are the same.

Marketing methods for the conference were discussed. A couple suggestions were made to change the time of year of the conference and to consider not charging for registrations. Another suggestion was made to tailor the conference based on meeting with area employers. Small and large business have different issues, such as how to compete with Walmart, how to deal with theft, etc.

It was noted that the comments section of the report will be used to help plan next year's conference.

Discussion on Streamlining Board Costs

The WIB and CEP Board of Directors have been discussing Board cost reductions due to the recent layoffs and other reductions in operating costs due to the major budget decreases in WIA. It was decided that reducing the mileage rate was impractical due to the increases in gas, and the meeting allowance will also remain the same due to many members who take time from work to commit a day's time for travel and time spent at a meeting. The WIB has researched ways to reduce costs such as sending fewer individuals to conferences to reduce travel expenses.

There has been discussion on combining a couple of the WIB sub-committees which have some of the same members on both. Mari discussed a proposal to combine the WIB Business Development Committee and the WIB Workforce Development Committee. Two options to combine those are, to have specific workgroups as needed and to report to the larger committee. The other option was to give some members an opportunity after the two groups met together and then break up into smaller groups to discuss specific issues similar to others. Or the structure can be left the same. A comment was made that the two sub committees are too large at this time and should be reduced in membership. A suggestion was made to use more video teleconferencing and to also minimize the amount the meetings that take place.

A question was raised about the WIB sub-committees relationship with the Executive Committee. Steve indicated that the sub committees work on the strategic issues of the strategic plan. The Executive Committee deals with more governance issues and have more authority in decision making. It was noted that we need to follow what kind of issues data sheds light on and then set up work groups that are more ad hoc in nature that are set up to work on individual items of need and chose members who would have the most knowledge about that topic. It was recommended that this structure would help to expedite the process of getting work items accomplished with smaller groups who can meet more frequently or as needed. A comment was made to revise the strategic plan and not to spend an inordinate amount of time revising the plan. It was recommended to pilot a new committee structure. LeRoy indicated that a decision would have to come before the full Boards for approval due to changes that would have to take place in the Bylaws. A suggestion was made to have a joint meeting between the two committees to brainstorm the suggestion to streamline the committees.

Revenue Generation Update

Bayfield County Community Healthcare/Bremer Foundation

A handout was distributed on the new Community Healthcare Advisory Committee structure. Steve explained how the original proposal came about with the Bremer Foundation which our area received for \$35,000. Steve indicated that the federal registr indicated that Bayfield County has been designated as one of 122 counties in the nation that has a high level of poverty and unemployment. This designation made federal funds available for Bayfield County to plan for or implement a Community Healthcare Center. A question was raised about the liability and fiscal responsibility of the CEP and WIB. The CEP and WIB would not be the employer of record, but would be the fiscal agent whose responsibility is to allocate the funds to the Community Healthcare Center and receive an administrative fee. There was concern that there still could be joint liability for anything that goes wrong with clinic operations. The Healthcare Advisory Committee has been meeting regularly. It was agreed that the Board will investigate their liability and responsibility should Bayfield County Receive this grant.

Emerging Industry Skills Partnership-Bio Industry Proposal

Mari indicated that this is a state grant that has been written for infrastructure and training for \$100,000. The grant was written with the supply side of the bio industry by identifying what is currently in existence, such as on creating logging certifications and then identifying what bio industries will anticipate training. Mari was commended for her work in Madison for building the relationships necessary to leverage additional resources.

Pathways Grant Proposal

Bill Eskola explained the priority of this grant is to build more collaboration between area disability providers and employers to help those with disabilities gain employment with area employers through an increased awareness of this available workforce that can be utilized to find qualified disabled workers to fill labor shortages our area has been facing. This will cover Bayfield, Iron, Price and Sawyer.

NWWIB/NWCEP Board Development Training Report

The Board Development training summary was discussed on the retreat that took place for the WIB and CEP Board of Directors on June 11th in Trego, WI. The purpose was to help Board members gain a better understanding of their roles with each other and with the mission of the organization. There was discussion at the retreat about doing an environmental scan to take a more comprehensive look at what the Boards and staff should focus their efforts on in workforce development. Other topics discussed were fundraising and working more with building collaborative partnerships with those involved in workforce development. Mari indicated that the Organizational Assessments indicated that there were some members who did not understand Board process and procedures. The retreat also shed some light on other industry sectors to work with for their training and other workforce needs, such as the service/hospitality sector. Another point raised was that workforce development needs to sell themselves and do a much better job marketing the purpose and value of workforce development initiatives. Another question raised was how does our area compare to other areas with the Baldrige Assessment. A suggestion was made to develop a small committee to look at what our needs are and how to develop marketing strategies to promote our programs and develop new programs.

NWWIB Membership Update

It was noted that Helen Hansen, Labor Representative on the WIB has resigned due to health reasons. Norm Vorhees, President of the Northern Wisconsin Building and Trades Council has applied for the Labor vacancy. There is a vacancy in the leisure/hospitality sector. The vacancy in the Trades/Transportation/Utilities sector is in the process of being filled. It was noted that the WIB needs

representation on Iron and Burnett County. A suggestion was made to contact Will Andresen, the Community Development representative in Iron County for suggestions.

News Items

Steve discussed a packet of news items that include client success stories, thank you letters, press releases, and other articles that promote a message of how valuable the work the Job Center systems is. These news items were emailed and sent to federal, state and local elected officials and workforce policy makers. It was emphasized how important it is to get these types of news items out to everyone.

Other Business

Mary McPhetridge announced that the Ashland Area Development Corporation has nominated Washburn Iron Works as Business of the Year. Otto Rusch is founder and owner of the Washburn Iron Works.

Next Meeting Date and Location

The next meeting of the NWWIB will possibly take place at Marquip Ward United in Phillips on Thursday, September 27, 2007.

Adjournment

Chuck Gottschall made a motion to adjourn. Seconded by Phil Rasmussen Jr. Vote taken, carried unanimously.
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The meeting was adjourned on 12:15 p.m.