



Bay Area Workforce Development Board

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BAY AREA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD

MEETING MINUTES

April 19, 2007

- Present:** Tony Marcelle (Board Secretary acting in the absence of Chair), Larry Bergner, Louise Blankenheim, Marcia Christiansen, Amy Du Bois, Shelly Ghere, Ben Grigg, Bob Guenther, John Haugh, Penny Helmle, Jill Hennessey, Sue Kromm, Don McAdams, Jesus Panalez, Brian Pelon, Ted Penn, Sam Perlman, Chuck Rohlmeier, John Schwantes, Loretta Shellman, Peter Thillman, Mike Troyer
- Absent:** John Bloor, Sue Hammersmith, Larry Harkness, Joe Hilke, Holly Hoppe, Christine Jensema, Paul Linzmeyer, David Lisle, Terri Luebke, Jean Marsch, Pamela Phillips, Noel Ryder, Pat Simonar, Ken Stubbe, Corky West, Alex Zacarias

Mr. Marcelle called the meeting to order at 1:00 PM at Lakeshore Technical College in Cleveland, WI. A quorum of the WDB members was present. The Minutes of the February 15 meeting were approved as submitted on a motion by Dr. Troyer, second by Mr. Perlman. Dr. Mike Lanser, the President of Lakeshore Technical College and a former Bay Area WDB member, greeted the board members and guests. He provided a short presentation about the college and his plans for future expansion of programs in areas such as public safety. The location halfway between Manitowoc and Sheboygan in a rural setting provides the college with ample land resources to develop very unique programs. LTC touches more than 15,000 individuals in the two counties and has a particular emphasis on training in the skilled trades. A recent welding training program specifically for Hmong students was especially innovative and successful.

Committee Reports. The Strategic leadership Committee had met and their discussion will be included as part of Agenda Item 6.

Strategic Leadership Appointment. With the resignation of Karen Besiada-Hansen, a seat is open on the Strategic Leadership Committee. The committee consists of four private sector board representatives and four job center representatives. Motion to appoint Terrie Luebke to that committee was made by Dr. Troyer, second by Mr. Guenther. Motion was adopted on a unanimous voice vote.

2007 Budget. Mr. Golembeski reported that the state office had just received federal WIA allocation amounts for the program year that begins on July 1. We have not yet

received the local allocation numbers even though this is very late in the year. The Congress had kept the federal WIA allocation at the same level as last year, but it is allocated to the states using a complicated formula using workforce data. Wisconsin took a substantial decrease in its share of the federal WIA pie for 2007 and that will be reflected in our new WIA allocations when we receive them. It will not be pretty! At this point, however, there was no useful budget information available to put in front of the board members. The plan is for the board members to work on workforce strategy at the meeting today and then money will follow strategy when we meet on May 24. Mr. Golembeski encouraged members to make the May 24 meeting a priority.

WIA Youth RFP Update. Ms. Gregory-Paasch told the board members that WIA Youth Program Request for Proposals (RFPs) were sent out based on the board's discussion at the January meeting. Proposals have been received and a committee of board members, a Youth Council member, and staff are reviewing them. Recommendations for funding will be made to the board at the May 24 meeting.

Program Updates. Members received several informational items in their packets. A chart showing the number of program enrollees by county and program was provided. Almost 2000 individuals received WIA program services so far during this program year. Another chart showed the companies who have joined the Manufacturers Alliance. About \$20,000 in dues have come in. Mr. Golembeski continues to work with the Wisconsin Department of Corrections on a variety of projects including their response to the recent political controversy in Green Bay about sex offender residency. Packets included a copy of a guest editorial he wrote in the Green Bay Press Gazette about this issue. Lastly, members received a description of a new short term training program, "Basic Industrial Skills Training" that is being piloted at the NWTC campus in Marinette. The Marinette Job Center recruited potential trainees who were then screened by a panel of employers who guaranteed they would hire those who successfully completed the 10-week training program. Of the 50 individuals screened, four were hired immediately, and 20 were selected as having the requisite skills for the training. One of the strategies we will discuss involves how we might better prepare those who were not selected so that they can take advantage of these kinds of training opportunities.

Special Response Grant. Staff has applied for additional State Special Response funding for several nursing training programs in Marinette for workers from Emerson Electric and Bay Care, and formal support from the WDB is required. Motion to approve the application for \$116,922 for these special projects was made by Mr. Schwantes with a second by Mr. Perlman. Motion passed on a unanimous voice vote.

Federal and State Updates. Members received a copy of the "Dear Colleague" letter drafted by Senators Susan Collins (R-Maine) and Maria Cantwell (D-Washington) to restore WIA program funding to 2005 levels. The President's budget proposal for 2008 cuts WIA funding significantly. Mr. Golembeski was pleased to share that both Senator Herb Kohl and Senator Russ Feingold had signed the Collins/Cantwell letter in support of WIA funding. Bob Schweder, Regional Coordinator for Russ Feingold, was in attendance and expressed the Senator's support for WIA and workforce boards.

State Senator Joe Leibham. Ninth District State Senator Joe Leibham spoke to the board members and welcomed them to his part of the state. He spoke well of the work accomplished by the public workforce development system, especially during the last economic recession and mentioned the need to help citizens to have a better understanding of how to access services. There are several areas that he has been working to address legislatively in regard to workforce development. In the last session he sponsored the Job Advantage Program based on an Iowa model that allowed technical colleges to bond for funding that would be used for training programs. The increase in state tax revenue that would be generated from the increased earnings of the trainees would go toward paying off the bonds. Unfortunately, this program was not enacted into law, but he intends to bring it back this year. This approach would allow for incumbent worker training, an area that the Bay Area WDB recognizes as vital to maintaining the quality of Wisconsin's workforce, but for which there is currently very little federal or state funding.

Another area of concern to him and other legislators stems from a recent audit of the Wisconsin Department of Commerce showing a multitude of different programs and services that are not well coordinated and not very focused. The Legislature will be working on consolidation of some of those programs and focusing them on high wage, high skilled job creation. As always, there is concern on the part of legislators to keep taxes down in the state.

[Note: the Economic Development/Commerce audit can be found at this link:

<http://www.legis.wisconsin.gov/lab/reports/06-9Full.pdf>

and a short summary is at:

<http://www.legis.wisconsin.gov/lab/reports/06-9highlights.pdf>]

Mr. Golembeski asked about the state Unemployment Insurance system noting that UI was created at a different time and was designed to tide workers over between one job and another. In the 21st century economy, additional training is more often than not required as workers move from one job to another. Some states have begun to invest UI resources in training opportunities to create a "Reemployment Insurance" system. In particular, a number of years ago Wisconsin received a payout of \$130 million in Reed Act funds from the federal government. These funds were placed into the state UI Trust Fund, but might they be better used to invest in worker training? Senator Leibham indicated that he would look into that option. He also spoke about enacting additional tax deductions for businesses that provide worker training opportunities. Lastly, he recognized the important role our job centers play as the first line of contact for citizens, and promised to look at ways to make sure that job centers keep their doors open.

Workforce Issues. Members received a summary document that staff put together based on the discussions that the Bay Area WDB has had throughout the program year. It articulated three strategic focus areas for 2007 that included:

1. Business Services, especially assisting our high-demand, high-wage businesses meet their need for skilled workers. Primarily this will be in the advanced manufacturing and health care industry sectors.

The vision of the Bay Area Workforce Development Board is that job skills and educational levels are increased, quality of life for all individuals is enhanced, while employers' needs are met.

2. Work Readiness Programs targeted at individuals who lack the “21st century skills” that are required for the skilled jobs in this economy. These include the skills articulated by the NEW North Education Attainment Committee:
 - 1) Employability and Career Development
 - 2) Communication
 - 3) Problem Solving/Critical Thinking
 - 4) Information Technology
 - 5) Understanding Systems: Social, Organizational, Technological
 - 6) Safety, Health and Environment
 - 7) Leadership and Teamwork
 - 8) Ethics/Legal Responsibility
 - 9) Creativity and Entrepreneurship

3. Mainstream Customer Service will be increasingly provided via the Internet. Most of our job center customers, both job seekers and employers, will interact with our system through our on-line capacity. With the new “Virtual Job Center” project funded through the state Council, we will be able to provide some case management services on-line as well. We will need to develop the capacity of this system and make it responsive to the changing needs of our customers.

There was considerable discussion around each of the three strategic areas and examples were given of initiatives already underway in each one. It was noted that the Workforce Readiness area (#2) will have to include continued interaction with our Bay Area K-12 education districts to ensure that our young people are learning these vital skills, as well as paying attention to the many job seekers coming into our job centers who are lacking in these foundational skills.

Action based on these strategic areas will mean a definite move toward short term, more focused training in which employers are directly involved, as opposed to one and two year training programs. There will be a greater focus on Older Youth, likely at the expense of traditional Younger Youth services. Job centers will be asked to redefine their roles based on these strategies, especially around recruitment for targeted training opportunities and the provision of training in the workforce readiness skill areas. Mr. Golembeski emphasized that staff will prepare a WIA budget based on these strategic focus areas and present it to the board at the May 24 meeting. Being able to articulate clearly what we want to accomplish is an invaluable asset in making difficult budget decisions. He will try to get a draft of the proposed budget to the members at least a week prior to the May meeting.

There was consensus that these three strategic areas articulated the learning that the Bay Area WDB had been doing over the past year and that they would be the basis the 2007 program year.

The meeting adjourned at 2:45 PM.
The next meeting will be May 24, 2007.