



## ***Bay Area Workforce Development Board***

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### **BAY AREA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD**

#### **MEETING MINUTES**

**April 20, 2006**

**Present:** Paul Linzmeyer (Chair), Larry Bergner, Amy Du Bois, Bob Guenther, Sue Hammersmith, Larry Harkness, Penny Helmle, Jill Hennessey, Joe Hilke, Christine Jensema, Sue Kromm, Mike Lanser, David Lisle, Louise Lochner, Jean Marsch, Don McAdams, Bob Miller, Dee Olsen, Jesus Panalez, Ted Penn, Sam Perlman, Pamela Phillips, Chuck Rohlmeier, Noel Ryder, Loretta Shellman, Pat Simonar, Mike Troyer, Michael Van Dyke, Alex Zacarias

**Absent:** Karen Besiada-Hansen, John Bloor, John Haugh, Holly Hoppe, Diane Koepke, Tony Marcelle, Sandra Paul, John Schwantes, Shawn Smith, Corky West

Mr. Linzmeyer called the meeting to order at 1 PM at the NWTC Center for Business and Industry. Roll Call showed a quorum present. The Minutes of the March 23, 2006 meeting were adopted as submitted on a motion by Dr. Troyer, second by Ms. DuBois.

**Committee Reports.** Mr. Hilke reported that the Strategic Leadership Committee had an animated discussion about identifying measurements for the key areas identified in the WIA Local Plan. He indicated that the committee had come a long way in the focus and quality of their discussion of these important issues, allowing the WDB to have a better idea of whether we are actually doing what we say we want to do. The committee plans to meet during the summer months while the board is off. The committee meeting summary will specify the metrics the members are working on.

Ms. Jensema reported that the Program Performance Committee was a little shorthanded this time, but they discussed more effective application of the Baldrige criteria to the job centers. There is concern that the two committees are increasingly covering the same issues and tasks, so she asked for a meeting between staff and the committee chairs to determine their different roles and issues. Staff will set that meeting up. Mr. Linzmeyer noted that the state Council had a similar experience with committees beginning to overlap, so adjustments were made as well. Mr. Linzmeyer also called attention to a news article about new articulation agreements between the UW and technical colleges in Madison that allowed for easier credit transfer between the two schools, noting that their Green Bay equivalents had already accomplished such an arrangement last fall. It was also noted that Lori Weyers, the NWTC Vice President of

Student Learning who had given that report last November, will become the President of Northcentral Technical College in Wausau effective July 1.

**Door County Allocation.** Staff brought forward the need for additional WIA funding for the Door County Job Center in the amount of \$7000 to cover costs under June 30. This would cover the cost of moving some staff from part time to full time in order to meet customer demand in the resource area. Motion to allocate up to \$7000 additional WIA dollars to the Door County Job Center was made by Dr. Phillips, second by Mr. Penn. Motion passed on a roll call vote [Yes: 27; No: 0; Abstain: 2 (Perlman, Van Dyke)].

**Program Report.** Mr. Golembeski called members' attention to several things in their packets, including the all-important meeting schedule for the Bay Area WDB. [Note: this will be posted on the website soon.] Also included were a note of thanks from Russ McCollister, the former Georgia-Pacific Mill Manager, for services to their dislocated workers, a newspaper article about the project the WDB did with the Wisconsin Council on Children and Families, and an article from The Business News on a successful Manitowoc company that demonstrated many of the elements of the "new economy" that we have been talking about.

**WIA Younger Youth Work Experience.** Mr. Golembeski informed the board of a policy change he had made with regard to work experience in the WIA Younger Youth program. Previously we had limited the amount of paid work experience available. Recently we had been approached by the Partners in Education organization about two students in the Youth Apprenticeship program who were eligible for WIA services because of family income and identified employment barriers these particular students were facing. PIE staff asked if WIA might provide the student wage for a longer period of time as an incentive for employers to take these students on. The new policy will allow for a longer period of wage supplements to accommodate situations such as this.

**Strategic Plan.** This will be covered by the state staff and a document will be presented to the WDB at the May 25 meeting as well.

**2006-07 Schedule.** Board meeting dates through the end of calendar year 2007 were in the packets.

**School-to-Work.** Patricia Colwitz (Preble High School in Green Bay) and Lee Kornaus (Oconto Falls) were gracious enough to come to share their thoughts and experiences as school guidance counselors. There was a lively presentation by each and discussion with board members. Some highlights:

- The Oconto Falls District prides itself on the consistent School-to-Work (StW) program that it provides students beginning in the early grades and has a strong technical education focus. The district has six tech ed teachers, which is unusual for a smaller district. They utilize WISCareers and students begin a portfolio in 9<sup>th</sup> grade. The guidance staff works creatively to provide a wide variety of offerings to address students' interests.
- The Green Bay District also has a variety of programs that give students exposure to careers throughout their K-12 experience. There is a formal

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“Academic and Career Planning Course description Guide” for both Middle School and High School that helps students and parents match career interests with school curriculum along identified “pathways” and post-secondary plans. The Green Bay District has also created career “academies” in four areas, each centered at one of the four high schools. The Engineering and Manufacturing Academy is located at Preble High School. As a large district, Green Bay works hard to coordinate and cross-train staff on the overarching career planning strategy. Implementing career portfolios has been a struggle, but WISCareers is used in the district.

Discussion dialogue included these topics:

- Is there a negative spin given to manufacturing as an important career area in NE Wisconsin? Neither of the counselors felt that was the case and there is a great deal of information and learning opportunities in the manufacturing sector.
- What is done with “unmotivated” students? Both counselors agreed that at-risk students are a continuing challenge and that it is not unfair to say that a small percentage of students take up a huge majority of guidance counselor staff time. Motivation is a problem with many students. In Green Bay there are 6.5 guidance counselors for 2200 students, so every student does not get the time and attention that would be optimal for this important area.
- WISCareers is an excellent tool for career planning, but there are no plans to put it into a Spanish language format. Green Bay uses a tool called “Career Cruising” that does have a Spanish version and is very good.
- Electives hook kids! Areas such as Business, Tech Ed, and Agriculture are popular.
- Finding racially diverse faculty is a challenge.
- There is a real interest having more interaction with area employers, but finding time to make those connections and sustain relationships is difficult.

In summary, the guidance counselors encouraged the board to find more ways for foster communication and interaction between businesses and the school districts, especially getting business representatives to come into the schools to share knowledge and information with the students. Aligning the education system with the workforce development system remains a significant challenge. If 10% of the students in a school take up 90% of the guidance counselor time, how do we more effectively link the vast majority of the students to successful careers in the regional economy?

**Immigration Issues.** Mr. Linzmeyer asked Mr. Zacarias and Mr. Panalez to offer some brief thoughts on the immigration issues that have arisen in the country. They emphasized the key role that employers can play in this national debate and stated that the focus should be on fixing the system that has put so many people into difficult situations in order to survive. Mr. Linzmeyer opined that the workforce needs of NE Wisconsin will require strategies to better prepare immigrant and other minority youth for highly skilled jobs. He suggested that topic and its related issues as a focus for the WDB’s work in the fall. This suggestion was referred to the Executive Committee for

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further discussion. Dr. Hammersmith spoke of the legislative barriers, real and perceived, that keep minority students from applying for postsecondary education. Mr. Lisle asked for information about the proposed May 1 boycott of products by Hispanic immigrants. Mr. Panalez stated that there was a rather loosely organized effort to demonstrate the purchasing power of the immigrant population in the US. There is also the fact that Congressman Sensenbrenner, the sponsor of legislation that is targeted by the recent demonstrations, is heir to the Kimberly-Clark fortune, so there is some focus on that company in the debate. Mr. Miller again shared the challenges the job centers face in trying to provide services to non-English speaking customers and to illegal immigrants.

**WIA Local Plan.** Two officials from the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development: Bill Clingan, Division of Workforce Solutions Administrator, and Connie Colussy, Bureau of Workforce Programs Director, discussed the new WIA Local Plan with the board members. The Bay Area Local Plan had already been reviewed by the board and submitted in time to meet the March 31 deadline, but Mr. Clingan and Ms. Colussy wanted to provide some background and insight into the strategic direction of the planning guidelines. Mr. Clingan explained the clear need for strong state leadership in further developing the state's One-Stop system. The Governor's "GROW Wisconsin" Plan with its focus on high skill, high wage jobs is the foundation of this effort. There is a clear recognition that diminishing resources in all workforce programs (43% reduction in federal funds since 1998) requires new levels of partnership and a focus on priority services. Job Service, for example, will begin to segregate staff into employer services and job seeker services to increase the quality of service to each group and make better use of staff abilities. The employer side will focus on "high wage employers" as determined by state standards. The job seeker side will focus on career counseling to help job seekers gain the skills to navigate successfully in a more volatile job market.

The WIA Local Plan guidelines set stringent operational standards for "Comprehensive Job Centers" and require the establishment of Business Services Teams for a coordinated outreach to high-wage employers. Business account managers will gain better knowledge of these employers' needs and devise strategies to fill those needs more effectively. Local areas will be required to spend 35% of their WIA resources on training for high-wage jobs. Staff felt that the Bay Area is well-positioned to meet that goal because of our focus on training.

Services for job seekers are also being developed and refined. Better, more accessible labor market information is available at: [www.worknet.wisconsin.gov](http://www.worknet.wisconsin.gov) as part of an effort to help job seekers become more knowledgeable about economic realities. Financial counseling programs will be regularly available in the job centers to provide useful training that helps people avoid costly learning experiences with handling money. Professional certification of job center staff will be actively promoted to increase the quality of service. There is a real desire to create more consistency of service at job centers across the state. Partner program support of the job center core services and infrastructure will be more clearly identified and state programs will be adapted to support this effort. Lastly, local areas are encouraged to generate additional financial resources for the local One-Stop system through fee-for-service efforts and grant writing.

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Overall, the Bay Area WDB is well aligned with these new Local Plan guidelines. The strategic planning that has been accomplished, along with the traditional emphasis on training, and the job center regionalization efforts all fit well with the direction given by DWD.

**Other Business.** Mr. Golembeski stated staff would prepare a strategic document for the May 25 meeting that included a budget and some direction on the School-to-Work issues the board has been discussing. Election of officers for two-year terms will also take place then.

The next WDB meeting is scheduled for Thursday, May 25, 2006.

The meeting adjourned at 3:15 PM.