



Bay Area Workforce Development Board

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LOCAL ELECTED OFFICIALS of the Bay Workforce Development Area

MEETING MINUTES December 8, 2004

Present: Bruce Osterberg (Chair), Dan Haefs, Jim Barlow, Arlyn Tober, Elmer Ragen, Jim Gilligan, Don Markwardt, Cheryl Wruk, Biz Virlee
Absent: Randy Reiter
Guests: Bob Schweder (Senator Feingold), Marlene Mielke (Senator Kohl)

Mr. Osterberg called the meeting to order at 1:00 PM. A quorum was present. Minutes of the April 29, 2004 meeting were approved as submitted on a motion by Mr. Gilligan, second by Mr. Ragen.

WDB Appointments. WDB member Carmen Granados, who represented the Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers Program on the board, has resigned due to a scheduling conflict. The MSFW program operator, United Migrant Opportunity Services (UMOS), has nominated Jesus Panalez, the UMOS Statewide Recruiter, for the seat. Motion to appoint Mr. Panalez to serve the remainder of Ms. Granados' term, was made by Mr. Gilligan, second by Mr. Markwardt. Motion passed on a unanimous vote.

WIA Updates. Mr. Golembeski spoke about his concerns that the area WIA allocation will drop significantly in 2005. This comes on the heels of mostly good economic news in NE Wisconsin as jobs are being created and many companies are hiring. In fact, the beginning of a general labor shortage is becoming evident from the employer inquiries coming into the office. A handout provided a short history of the job center system in the Bay Area and showed that employment services have been expanded in the area over the last twelve years, largely due to the availability of special grants. Initially there was a "One-Stop Grant" obtained by the state, then there were significant W-2 Start-Up funds and, more recently, additional National Emergency Grants for dislocated workers. All of these revenue sources prompted the expansion of services, and services were delivered on the county by county model based on the W-2 program rather than on a regional model used by most of the other employment programs. Looking ahead, no additional resources are evident and the Bay Area WDB will be looking at how best to deploy reduced program resources using new models. This may mean that some job centers will be scaled back or closed. Members also reviewed a chart that provided some numbers reflecting job center usage and the cost of WIA services. It is obvious that access to the basic job search tool, JobNet, via the Internet far exceeds access through the "Touchscreen" application provided at the job centers. The WDB members will utilize numbers such as these to make difficult decisions if WIA funding is reduced.

LEO members also reviewed the “Strategic Goals” developed by the Bay Area WDB during the fall meetings. These include:

1. To create a Job Center model through innovation to address needs of the knowledge-based economy: “Become the Best Workforce System in Wisconsin.”
2. To blend Workforce Development with Economic Development with Community Development: Developing a Regional Economic Community.
3. To focus on the Basics: Development of Board and Staff and Leadership relative to the Bay Area and the State.
4. Go beyond being “Customer-Focused”: become a visionary “Customer-Driven” Workforce System.

The WDB had spent much of its November meeting fleshing out those strategic goals. LEO members expressed satisfaction with the work of the Bay Area WDB and complimented the board on its leadership and focus on the future.

Economic Opportunity Study. The NEW Economic Development Partnership LAUNCH event took place on November 15 with about 400 people in attendance, about 40% of them business leaders from the area. The focus of the event was the NEW Economic Opportunity Study and its potential impact in NE Wisconsin. Members received a copy of the Executive Summary of the study and additional information about subregional reports that are available online at www.neweconomyproject.org. A group consisting of representatives from various regional constituencies continues to meet and promote the implementation of the study recommendations.

Other Business. Members discussed various topics of interest with the two representatives of the U.S. senators. Mr. Golembeski shared his experience recently touring the “Windows to Work” program that the Bay Area WDB jointly funds with the Wisconsin Department of Corrections. Corrections Secretary Matt Frank visited the Oshkosh prison and praised Windows to Work as a model he would like to see expanded throughout the state. Windows to Works fosters a smooth transition for prisoners when they are released back into the Bay Area communities.

The meeting adjourned at 2:50 PM. The LEO Board will meet next on Wednesday, March 2, 2005 at 1:00 PM.