



Bay Area Workforce Development Board

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LOCAL ELECTED OFFICIALS of the Bay Workforce Development Area

MEETING MINUTES

November 9, 2006

Present: Bruce Osterberg, Charles Most, George Bousley, Jim Gilligan, Don Markwardt, Jim Barlow, Elmer Ragen

Absent: Dan Haefs, Chyrl Irving, Arlyn Tober

Mr. Osterberg called the meeting to order at 1 PM at the NWTC Center for Business and Industry. A quorum was present. Minutes of the September meeting were adopted as submitted on a motion by Mr. Gilligan with a second by Mr. Barlow.

Appointments. The LEO Board considered nominations to the Bay Area Workforce Development Board. A current member, **Michael Van Dyke**, will be retiring from his position as Director of Door County Social Services as of December 31, 2006. Mr. Van Dyke represents the W-2 program on the board. Nominated to succeed him was **Marcia Christiansen**, the Executive Director of Forward Service Corporation. FSC administers the W-2 program in several Bay Area Counties including Brown, Kewaunee, and Florence, and is a significant WIA contractor as well.

The Department of Workforce Development had submitted a request to name **Brian Pelon** to replace **Robert Miller, Jr.** as the representative for the DWD program (Wagner-Peyser, Veterans Employment Services, Trade Act) on the Bay Area WDB. Motion to appoint Mr. Pelon to the remainder of Mr. Miller's term through June 30, 2009 effective immediately, and to appoint Ms. Christiansen to an initial term ending June 30, 2009 effective January 1, 2007 was made by Mr. Gilligan, with a second by Mr. Markwardt. Motion passed on a unanimous vote. Mr. Most asked about the balance of representation among the counties since Mr. Van Dyke is from Door County. Mr. Golembeski pointed out that there is an on-going attempt to maintain a balance and that recently, when Ms. Olsen from Sheboygan resigned, Mr. Perlman from Door County replaced her.

Updates. Mr. Golembeski reviewed PY 2005 WIA program performance. The Bay Area exceeded 14 of the 15 performance standards and met the one remaining standard. He explained the meaning of several of the numbers on the report. He also went over an updated WDB budget with the members. The LEO members suggested that the WDB speak with staff from the Bay Lakes Regional Planning Commission about working together on grant writing efforts.

Members discussed the major strategic initiatives of the Bay Area WDB. School-to-Work continues to be a primary area of discussion and there is a partnership with the NEW North Educational Attainment Committee in an effort to better align K-12 education with the needs of the regional economy. The Bay Area WDB has been studying the issue and reached a number of conclusions, including:

- Manufacturing careers have a negative image among young people, their parents, and educators despite the fact that manufacturing is the highest paying industry sector in most of our counties, it is a large part of the regional economy, and there are significant skill shortages throughout the area;
- A high percentage of students (70%?) in NE Wisconsin are graduating high school without having well determined plans for how they will make the transition into the workforce;
- Many of the skill sets taught in the school systems are not those that the business community has identified as being valuable to them as they hire workers.

These are not easy issues to address, but progress is being made toward identifying successful strategies to meet the challenges of the future workforce.

The One-Stop job center system of NE Wisconsin is changing significantly because of new technology, changing demands of job seekers and employers, as well as the decrease in available resources. Plans for 2007 include the development of a single website for all job centers in the Bay Area and centralizing services in regional offices. Underlying such changes are the need for access to high speed Internet and basic computer skills. The website will allow all job seekers to know about job fairs, workshops and other opportunities throughout the area without going to multiple websites. Strategies to address Internet access and universal computer literacy are being discussed. The reality is that there are many jobs in NE Wisconsin that require applying online, and that number is increasing. Basic computer literacy is a necessary skill for today's world regardless of where you live or what your age is.

Members went on to discuss the importance of working together to increase the political influence of the NEW North counties in order to meet these challenges. The election this week provides new opportunities to work effectively with state and federal legislators.

Projects. The **Manufacturers Alliance** continues to grow and a new website that collects the applications of workers with manufacturing experience is very popular with the members. About 90 people attended the **Northwoods 2 Economic Summit** on October 3, including Mr. Bousley who talked about the energy and spirit of collaboration that was present at the event. The current labor and skill shortages in NE Wisconsin have brought attention to the potential of better training for individuals coming out of state prisons. In 1980, the **Wisconsin Department of Corrections** released 1,601 inmates back into Wisconsin communities. By 2002, that number reached 7,731 releases. There is a workforce here that could be very valuable but will require some holistic planning to ensure success. Already 5 inmates from the Sanger B. Powers prison west of Green Bay are going to work as welders at Bay Shipbuilding each day, and

there is interest from other employers as well. Three juveniles who have returned from the Lincoln Hills facility are enrolled in the Industrial Mechanic program at NWTC, as two-semester program that is in high demand.

The **NEW North Summit** is on December 14 at the Manitowoc Civic Center and Mr. Golembeski encouraged all to register and attend. This is the third annual event and it is an important meeting that brings together the energies present in the 18-county area.

The meeting adjourned at 2:15 PM.

The Bay Area Local Elected Officials Board will meet next on Thursday, February 22, 2007 from 1-2:30 PM.