



Bay Area Workforce Development Board

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STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP COMMITTEE
of the Bay Area Workforce Development Board
Meeting Summary
September 21, 2006

Present: Joe Hilke, Larry Harkness, Heidi Schaible, Brian Pelon, Patty Nagle, Liz Mahloch
Others: Loretta Shellman, Betty Gregory-Paasch, Karen Flood, Ann Franz, Jim Golembeski

Mr. Hilke called the committee meeting to order at 11:00 AM at the NWTC Center for Business and Industry. There was no Meeting Summary from the August meeting available.

Project Updates. Karen Flood provided an update on the regional job center website project. The plan is to have a comprehensive site that will link to the home pages of the job centers that already have them or create a page if needed. The design of the Manitowoc Job Center website was considered to be the most functional, attractive and easiest for users to navigate, so she has been working with that design. The comprehensive site will have a calendar for the entire region. There will be an opportunity to sell advertising space on the website. The members agreed that one important aspect of the job center in the future will be the provision of an increasing number of services online.

Ann Franz reported on the Manufacturers Alliance which seems to add members month by month. The Fox Valley and Bay Area WDBs have received a GROW Grant from the state Council for \$50,000 to improve the website that connects companies with workers who have Manufacturing experience, as well as to conduct a series of "Manufacturing Academies" for young people. The new website should be operational by the end of November. The Manufacturers Alliance plans to go public at the NEW North Summit on December 14 in Manitowoc.

Recently a Youth Job Fair was held in Green Bay under the leadership of Ms. Flood and the job center partners. Twenty employers, mostly retail and focused on the upcoming holiday season, set up booths at the East Town Mall in Green Bay on an early release day from school. Several hundred young people showed up to talk with these employers. The morning Green Bay paper had carried a very positive review. Another such event is being planned for April to prepare for summer employment opportunities. In addition, the Northeast Wisconsin Job Center in Green Bay had recently held a Youth Day in which young people had come into the job center to learn about job seeking skills and have some experience in the computer lab. That project had also gone very well. Ms. Schaible shared the fact that the Marinette Job Center is working closely with the NWTC campus on youth outreach as well.

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.

Mr. Golembeski reviewed the work that was being done on reintegration projects with people released from state prisons. The first Community Circle of Support is still set to begin in Green Bay this fall. Volunteers for the first Circle are being recruited at this time. He had recently brought a Human Resources Manager and the Welding Training Manger from the Manitowoc Company to the Kettle Moraine Correctional Institution to view the welding training program there. There is hope that some mutually beneficial opportunities will surface from that conversation. Through a local staffing agency, there are now five individuals from Sanger B. Powers Center who completed welding training and have work release each day at Bay Shipbuilding in Sturgeon Bay. Mr. Golembeski asked the committee members to think about how we might better connect these prisoner reintegration efforts with our job centers. Ms. Schaible said that Marinette already is participating in a transition program for inmates from the county jail.

Funding Issues. Mr. Golembeski distributed updated budget summaries for the WIA funds. As contracts were closed there are some unobligated funds in Adult and Dislocated Worker. However, staff had erred by overestimating the amount of available WIA Youth dollars, and full funding of the Expelled Youth program was in jeopardy. Staff has been working with the partners to make sure all enrolled young people get appropriate services. Program enrollment numbers will be scaled down because of the shortage of funds.

Looking ahead to 2007, the necessity of doing more with less funding remains a stark reality. Some positive steps have been taken to consolidate the Bay Area One-Stop system, and those activities will continue. There was discussion about the key areas around which the job centers would develop in the next few years. These are:

1. More and better quality services delivered online;
2. More effective business services;
3. Focused services to targeted groups;
4. Engaging young people.

There is agreement that all job seekers need computer skills as a basic workforce entry requirement, and that job centers can provide that training as a core service. The computer lab in Green Bay is heavily used and very successful in providing those skills to customers. Forward Service Corporation is the contractor for that computer lab that is supported mostly with WIA funds. Interestingly, the job centers are finding many young people who also need basic computer skills. There was also discussion about negotiating with the technical colleges for shorter term training and how this might work with the new DWD policy on getting a recognized credential or degree. Other funding sources need to be explored as well. The Bay Area WDB needs to communicate with DWD to make sure their policy aligns with the real needs of our area employers. Ms. Gregory-Paasch and Mr. Golembeski will develop an issue paper on training issues and DWD policy.

Mr. Golembeski had hoped to share the Business Plans developed by the five comprehensive job centers, but time had not allowed that to happen at this meeting. Mr. Pelon spoke briefly about the need to create a regional Business Services Committee and the steps that have been taken to make that happen.

The meeting adjourned at 12:30 PM.