

MINUTES
SOUTHWEST MINNESOTA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD
JUNE 4, 2020
VIA ZOOM MEETING
4:00 P.M.

Members Present: Andy Easley, Carla Goedtke, Melissa McGinty-Thompson, Tim Paulson, John Roiger, Diana Anderson, Eric Austin, Terry Gaalswyk, Tim Jones, See Moua-Leske, Dawn Regnier, Mimi Schafer, Dawn Schnell, Chuck Swanson, Beth Wilms

Members Excused: Len Bakken, Robyn Leese, Brad Vaughn, Jeffrey Varcoe

Members Absent: Anne Johnson, Rahn Larson, Curtis Rethwisch, Dave Rogers, Rhonda Brandt, Kirby Kruse, Reggie Worlds

Staff Present: Carrie Bendix, Eriann Faris, Luke Greiner, Wanda Hebrank, Jessica Miller

Guests Present: Nathalie Nkasharma and Miguel Rivas

John Roiger, Chair called the meeting to order at 4:05 p.m.

Welcome & Introductions

John Roiger welcomed all guests, members and staff. He explained the process used for conducting the ZOOM meeting and the process for taking role call for the motions.

Miguel Rivas, of Worthington was introduced. Miguel has submitted his nomination to fill the Minority Owned Business position on the Southwest Minnesota Workforce Development Board. Miguel is the Owner of the Metro by T-Mobile Franchise and AT&T Dealer in Worthington.

Carrie Bendix reported that Len Bakken, Nobles County Private Sector Representative on the Southwest Minnesota Workforce Development Board has recently accepted a new position in Cottonwood County. She also reported that Rahn Larson, Cottonwood County Private Sector Representative has decided not to seek re-appointment to the Board. Based on this, Len Bakken is seeking appointment to fill the Cottonwood County Private Sector Representative.

Carrie introduced Nathalie Nkashama, of Worthington who has submitted her nomination to fill the Nobles County Private Sector Representative position on the Southwest Minnesota Workforce Development Board. Nathalie reported that she is the owner of World Mart, the first African Grocery Store in Worthington, which has converted into a store on wheels during COVID-19 to meet the needs of the community. She is also employed by Nobles County Community Services as a Child Protection Social Worker.

Agenda Additions

John Roiger asked if there were any additions to the agenda. Carrie Bendix reported that she would like to add a Computer Policy Approval to the agenda. She noted that she e-mailed the draft policy out to members earlier in the day.

Member Updates – Open forum for members to share best practices within the business and/or activities occurring within their communities. John Roiger asked members to share any information from their communities or any information on how their business/organization/agency is handling COVID-19.

Terry Gaalswyk reported on the recent very powerful and peaceful protest in Worthington. Terry Gaalswyk also reported on the event that was scheduled by the Students of Color Coalition at SMSU, in Marshall. Due to evidence that some outside influences were coming into the community the students took it upon themselves to cancel the event.

Diana Anderson reported that the Southwest Initiative Foundation has been working with the Worthington, Marshall and Willmar Chambers to create videos in several languages to help business owners who want to reopen their restaurants by providing information on complying with the guidelines. She noted that the videos are available on their website and the Chamber websites. In addition, there is also printed materials available to provide information for small businesses wanting to reopen. She requested that members share this information with others.

The State of Southwest Minnesota – Luke Greiner, Labor Market Analyst

Luke Greiner, Labor Market Analyst provided an update on the state of Southwest Minnesota and what the economic data for our area shows. The information included unemployment trends in Minnesota noting that currently there are about 4,000 unemployment claims in our region with approximately 90% being temporary layoffs. Luke also provided information on the cumulative UI applicants as a share of the labor force noting that over 20% of the labor force has filed for UI since March 16. Claims in our region in April are up about 2,000% from the previous April. Luke shared information on who is filing for UI claims reporting that 21% of the claims were filed by food prep and serving workers and 17.4% of the claims filed by sales and office workers.

Minnesota West Community & Technical College Update – Dr. Terry Gaalswyk, President

Terry Gaalswyk, President of Minnesota West Community & Technical College provided an update on the school's three priorities which include; 1) ensuring the safety & well-being of our students, faculty, staff, and communities; 2) assuring our students advance their educational plans; and 3) committing to the economic continuity of our communities and college.

This is being done by offering online classes enhanced with simulations and engagement strategies, flexible programs that blend online and essential face-to-face education (hybrid/flex), and small-group on-campus courses delivered with personal safety protocols & social distancing expectations. He noted that the school also provides student support functions which are fully accessible to all students and have been expanded to include food pantries, social & mental health services, and emergency grants.

President Gaalswyk noted that through a Grant from the Southwest Initiative Foundation for \$600,000 the school was able to offer emergency grants to students ranging from \$275 to \$600, which was independent from their financial aid.

Partner Updates

Reggie Worlds – Job Service

Reggie Worlds was not available to give a report.

Mimi Schafer – Rehabilitation Services

Mimi Schafer reported staff continue to work from home and provide remote services. She indicated that their Department has been instructed to work remotely whenever possible through the end of the year – maybe longer. No specific date has been set beyond that.

Committee Reports

Executive Committee – John Roiger

John Roiger, Chair reported that items on the Executive Committee agenda would be discussed later in the meeting.

Youth Committee – Eriann Faris

Eriann Faris reported that the Committee has not met since May.

Career Pathways Committee – Dawn Regnier

Dawn Regnier reported that Minnesota West had to suspend holding face-to-face instructions, thus the CNA classes had been put on hold, but plan to start holding classes in June and July. She also noted that the Community Interpreter Program is set to begin on August 10, with 24 participants. Dawn also reported that a Pilot Program for Diesel Powertrain & Hydraulics Certificate Program had four students complete the first segment of the class this spring and they will be returning in the fall to complete an additional certification. She also reported on the OSHA 10 Industrial Class in which five seniors completed the on-line training.

Marketing Committee – Eriann Faris

Eriann shared the “About Us” the Southwest Minnesota Workforce Development Board video, which will be linked to our website and the Southwest Minnesota Careers website as part of the Board’s marketing campaign. Pages from the video will be posted daily as part of the marketing campaign. Currently the Southwest Minnesota Facebook Page has 847 followers with 796 likes, with hopes that these would increase to 1,000. Another component of the campaign is having a day where board members are introduced. An example was included in the agenda packet. Eriann indicate that she will be sending out a link for members to complete a short survey to use in the development of these pages for Board Members.

Business Items/Action Items

WIOA Memorandum of Agreement between CareerForce Partners

Carrie Bendix reported that the purpose of this Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is to define the roles and responsibilities as mutually agreed by the parties for the operation of the One-Stop Service Delivery System in Local Workforce Development Area #6 as required under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014 (WIOA).

Southwest Minnesota Private Industry Council, Inc. Service Contract Review

Carrie Bendix highlighted proposed changes to the current Service Contract with the Southwest Minnesota Private Industry Council, Inc. to include wording regarding the services provided to adults, low-income adults, dislocated workers and youth in our 14 county area, which the Southwest Minnesota Private Industry Council has been providing these services for 35 years. One other key change is to propose changing the contract from a one-year to a two-year contract to align with our other contracts for the period of July 1, 2020 to June 30, 2022.

Appointment of Nominating Committee

John Roiger reported that Dawn Regnier and Dawn Schnell have agreed to serve on the Nominating Committee in addition to one other potential member.

Computer Policy

Carrie Bendix reported on the proposed Computer Policy, which was developed to establish a policy for providing financial assistance for the purchase of computer hardware, software, and/or other necessary technology tools.

Business Items – Approval

A motion was made by Andy Easley to approve the following:

- Consent Agenda
- WIOA Memorandum of Agreement between CareerForce Partners
- Southwest Minnesota Private Industry Council, Inc. Service Contract
- Appointments to the Nominating Committee
- Computer Policy

Diana Anderson seconded the motion.

The motion passed, including confirmation from, Andy Easley, Carla Goedtke, Melissa McGinty-Thompson, Tim Paulson, Diana Anderson, Eric Austin, Terry Gaalswyk, Tim Jones, See Moua-Leske, Dawn Regnier, Mimi Schafer, Dawn Schnell, Chuck Swanson, and Beth Wilms all joining via ZOOM. John Roiger abstained from voting.

Informational Items

Carrie Bendix reported that the following members are seeking reappointment to the Board:

- Andy Easley – Private Sector – Lyon County
- Carla Goedtke – Private Sector – Murray County
- Rahn Larson – Private Sector – Cottonwood County
- Dave Rogers – Private Sector – Big Stone County
- Dawn Schnell – Private Sector – Jackson County
- Brad Vaughn – Private Sector – Rock County
- Jeff Varcoe – Private Sector – Yellow Medicine County
- Terry Gaalswyk – Education
- See Moua-Leske – Education
- Tim Jones – Community Based Organization
- Chuck Swanson– Sovereign Nation/Community Based Organization

Carrie noted that the following members would not be seeking reappointment to the Board:

- Rahn Larson – Private Sector – Cottonwood County
- Rhonda Brandt – Secondary Education – Eriann is working on securing an application

Current Board Vacancies include:

- Minority Owned Small Business Representative – Miguel Rivas
- Nobles County Private Sector – Nathalie Nkashama

Director Updates

Carrie Bendix updated the Board on the following items:

Reopening CareerForce Locations – Carrie highlighted the e-mail from Commission Grove directing CareerForce locations not to open until safety plans and phase in steps have been developed by the State.

Requested Waivers – Carrie noted that several waiver requests have been submitted to the Department of Labor to provide flexibility in virtual online training. Currently the Department of Labor is reviewing these requested waivers.

Department of Labor National Emergency Grant – Carrie reported that the State has asked the Department of Labor for an additional \$3,000,000 to provide dislocated worker services. Tim Jones will be attending a meeting next week to learn more about the National Emergency Grant (NEG). Carrie also noted that the additional \$600 per week in Unemployment Insurance, as part of the CARES Act would end at the end of July.

Adjourn

The next meeting is scheduled for June 4, 2020 from 4:00 – 6:00 p.m. Hearing no other business, the meeting adjourned at 5:04 p.m.

Approved by:

Approved by:

Robyn Leese, Secretary

Wanda Hebrank, Recording Secretary