

MINUTES
SOUTHWEST MINNESOTA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD
MAY 7, 2020
VIA ZOOM MEETING
4:00 P.M.

Members Present: Len Bakken, Andy Easley, Carla Goedtke, Rahn Larson, Robyn Leese, John Roiger, Jeffrey Varcoe, Brad Vaughn, Diana Anderson, Eric Austin, Terry Gaalswyk, Anne Johnson, Tim Jones, Kirby Kruse, See Moua-Leske, Dawn Regnier, Mimi Schafer, Dawn Schnell, Chuck Swanson, Beth Wilms

Members Excused: Tim Paulson, Dave Rogers, Rhonda Brandt

Members Absent: Melissa McGinty-Thompson, Curtis Rethwisch, Reggie Worlds

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

John Roiger, Chair called the meeting to order at 4:00 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.

Consent Agenda Items

A motion was made by Terry Gaalswyk to approve the consent agenda, including the Minutes of the February 6, 2020 Southwest Minnesota Workforce Development Board Meeting; the Minutes of the February 6, 2020 Executive Committee Meeting; the Minutes of the February 6, 2020 Youth Committee Meeting; the Minutes of the February 6, 2020 Marketing Committee Minutes; and the Southwest Minnesota Private Industry Council Report. The motion was seconded by Dawn Regnier and passed.

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

Carrie shared a page from DEED’s website that showed the cumulative UI applicants by county from March 16 to May 6, 2020. The state had a range of UI applicants to population of 6.6% in Lincoln County to 32.6% in Cook County; with an average unemployment rate in southwest Minnesota of 11%. Locally in our 14-county area, approximately 10,270 individuals have applied for unemployment.

Jeff Varcoe shared that their direct retail sales are at a record high level, with record pizza sales. He noted that the food service portion of the business that supplies schools, restaurants, etc. is experiencing lower sales. Jeff noted that Schwan’s is in the hiring mode for front line production workers and indicated that there have been no employees furloughed. They have also implemented safety precautions that they continue to monitor. He also noted that sales in grocery stores are well above normal and they are having a hard time keeping the freezers full. They are promoting safety at home to be safe at work activities.

Rahn Larson indicated that their local newspaper laid off one or two individuals early on in the process. He noted that their newspaper is about half the size as before COVID-19 and their local shopper had dropped dramatically. Currently one-third to one-half of their employees are working from home and doing most of their work by phone. Rahn noted that industries in the area such as Toro and Prime Pork continue to be up and running.

Partner Updates

Reggie Worlds – Job Service

Reggie Worlds was not available to give a report.

Mimi Schafer – Rehabilitation Services

Mimi Schafer reported that several staff have taken leave to care for their children and the other staff are currently working remotely from home. Staff are taking applications, working with employers, and working with individuals with job placement activities.

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 – Rhonda Brandt

Eriann Faris reported that the Committee met earlier in the day. The Committee members shared things they are observing and experiencing through COVID-19. They noted that there appears to be an increase in the number of seniors staying in the community for school. The Youth Committee approved the appointment of Mckayla Conrath, Job Corps Admission Counselor to the Committee. Eriann reported that the Youth Committee also discussed funding for the WIOA Youth Program, which has been reduced by approximately \$20,000; the Youth Plan which was due April 10, 2020 and has tentatively been approved; the PIC was awarded a CP3 grant in the amount of \$250,000 for the entire region (MN WIOA Region 5) \$125,000 for LWDA 6; and the PIC has been invited to partner on a Construction Pathways project. Eriann also reported that the PIC has been asked to participate in an Apprenticeship Ready grant by DEED's Office of Youth Development to create apprenticeship ready programs across the State of Minnesota. Eriann also noted that all Youth events have been canceled and discussions were held regarding how they might look in the future.

Career Pathways Committee – Dawn Regnier

Dawn Regnier reported that the Career Pathways Committee meets the first Friday of the month. She noted that Minnesota West is not holding face-to-face instructions, thus the CNA and Welding classes have been put on hold. She noted that a report of the Career Pathway Program outcomes was included in the agenda packet. She also noted that a Community Interpreter Training is set to begin in June.

Marketing Committee – Brad Vaughn

Brad Vaughn reported that the Marketing Committee met on February 6, 2020 and approved the logo for the Workforce Development Board. The Committee is also working on an “About Us Flyer” as a means to promote CareerForce services to job seekers and employers and materials for a social media campaign. The Committee will be meeting following the full board meeting.

Business Items

WIOA Memorandum of Agreement

Carrie Bendix reported that the WIOA Memorandum of Agreement between the CEOB & the Southwest Minnesota Workforce Development Board would expire on June 30, 2020. The Workforce Development Board was asked to review and approve the Agreement through June 30, 2022. She noted that the CEOB would review the Agreement at their June 15, 2020 meeting.

Proposed Bylaws Changes

Carrie Bendix reported that the Executive Committee of the Board reviewed and approved the proposed changes to the Bylaws of the Southwest Minnesota Workforce Development Board. She noted that the Board reviewed the changes at their last meeting and due to the required two-week notice the Board was not able to approve the changes at that meeting. Thus, the Board will need to take action on the proposed changes at this meeting.

Unified Local Youth Plan – Program Year 2020 WIOA Youth and MN Youth Program

Approval

Eriann Faris reported that the Youth Committee of the Workforce Development Board has prepared and approved the Unified Local Youth Plan for Program Year 2020 WIOA Youth and MN Youth Programs. She noted that there are no significant changes to the plan, which was due to the State on April 10, 2020. The Plan was submitted to the State, to meet the required due date, noting that the Board would take action at this meeting. Eriann also provided preliminary budget information. She also noted that staff would be negotiating the performance levels with the State.

WIOA Regional Funding

Carrie Bendix reported that DEED has granted the Southwest Minnesota Private Industry Council \$14,984.82 to implement the WIOA Regional Workforce Development Plan. She noted that the Board would have to go on record to approve the receipt of these funds.

Policy Letter – Transitional Jobs

Carrie Bendix reported on the regional Transitional Jobs policy. She noted that this establishes a policy to govern transitional jobs for adults and dislocated workers. A local policy is required and this policy was drafted regionally as part of our regional goal to align administrative processes between South Central and Southwest Minnesota Workforce Development Boards. The policy identifies appropriate employers, amount of reimbursement for the job, durational limits and support services.

Pathways to Prosperity (P2P) On-Ramp Grant Monitoring Report

Carrie Bendix reported that DEED monitored the P2P On-Ramp grant for the quality of services, proper documentation, correct data entry into state system, and proper expenditures/records. This is a joint project with South Central and the SW MN PIC serves as the Fiscal Agent. Carrie noted that there were no corrective action, but the State did have some recommendations regarding Workforce One data entry.

Career Pathway Pilot Program (CP3) Proposal – Proposal Funded

Carrie Bendix reported that DEED issued a Request for Proposals for a Career Pathway Pilot Program. The RFP timeline was short, so staff proposed to collaborate with the South Central Workforce Council and apply as a region. The funding is for career pathway training and on-the-job training to eligible youth across the region. It includes carpentry skills training and on-the-job training in partnership with the Lower Sioux Community. Carrie noted that this project was one of three grants awarded by DEED for \$250,000. She noted that the Board should go on record as supporting this project.

Department of Labor Youth Apprenticeship Grant

Carrie Bendix reported that DEED's Office of Youth Development invited the Southwest Minnesota Private Industry Council to be a part of a statewide proposal to the U.S. Department of Labor's Employment and Training Agency to develop new or expand upon existing registered apprenticeship programs for in-school and out-of-school youth ages 16 to 24. Only five of the 17 local workforce development areas were invited.

Business Items – Approval

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

- the WIOA Memorandum of Agreement between the CEOB and the Southwest Minnesota Workforce Development Board through June 30, 2022;
- the proposed Bylaws of the Southwest Minnesota Workforce Development Board, as presented;
- the Unified Local Youth Plan for Program Year 2020 WIOA Youth and MN Youth Program for submittal to DEED;
- the receipt of \$14,984.82 to implement the WIOA Regional Workforce Development Plan.
- the Dislocated Worker Eligibility Terms Policy as presented.
- the SFY18 P2P On-Ramp Program Monitoring Report.
- the receipt of \$250,000 as a region with South Central Workforce Council for the Career Pathway Pilot Program.

- to submit a proposal to DEED for a Youth Apprenticeship Readiness Grant.

The motion was seconded by Diana Anderson. The motion passed, including confirmation from Len Bakken, Andy Easley, Carla Goedtke, Rahn Larson, Robyn Leese, John Roiger, Jeffrey Varcoe, Brad Vaughn, Diana Anderson, Eric Austin, Terry Gaalswyk, Tim Jones, Kirby Kruse, See Moua-Leske, Dawn Regnier, Mimi Schafer, Dawn Schnell, Chuck Swanson and Beth Wilms, all joining via ZOOM.

Board Membership Re-Appointments

Carrie Bendix reported that the Southwest Minnesota Workforce Development Board Members with terms expiring on June 30, 2020 include:

- Len Bakken – Private Sector – Nobles County
- 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
- Rhonda Brandt – Education
- Terry Gaalswyk – Education
- See Moua-Leske – Education
- Tim Jones – Community Based Organization
- Chuck Swanson – Sovereign Nation/Community Based Organization

Carrie noted that nine of the 13 members have indicated an interest in reappointment. She noted that reappointments would be made by the CEOB at their June 15, 2020 meeting. A Minority Owned Small Business Representative vacancy still is open on the Board. Members were encouraged to notify Carrie of any potential candidates for this position.

Director Updates

Programing during COVID-19

Carrie Bendix reported that all PIC Staff are working from home except for one receptionist in each of the offices along with several DEED staff at the Marshall location. She noted that Federal Regulations have changed regarding the Public Assistance program to lift sanctions and making services provided by staff voluntary. She also noted that the Dislocated Worker Program expects an increase in clients in June and July. The Youth staff have developed about 15 Job Shadow videos that can be accessed on the PIC website.

Employer Survey

Carrie Bendix reviewed the initial results of the “COVID-19 Employer Survey for LWDA 6.” She noted that the survey would be sent to all members.

Preliminary WIOA Allocations

Carrie Bendix shared initial WIOA Allocations noting the WIOA Adult and WIOA Dislocated Worker Programs will see a \$3,771 decrease in funding, and the WIOA Youth Program will see a decrease of \$22,188. Carrie noted that the State Allocations are not available at this time.

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