

NORTHWEST INDIANA WORKFORCE BOARD MINUTES
The Center of Workforce Innovations Office
March 20, 2014

Present:

Deb Baughman, Michael Berta, Maria Becerra, David Broad, Adam Collins, Tom Coley, George Douglas, Kris Emaus, Kevin Kieft, Kristine Lukowski, Mary Lewis, Gary Miller, Karen Morlan, Dan Murchek, Gary Olund, Arlene Pearson, Arnold Ransom, Barbara Sacha, Bob Schaefer, Gerry Scheff, Ron Schlatter, Judith Stanton, Dennis Wimer

Absent:

Tom Hargrove, Melvyn Harding, Keith Kirkpatrick, Joe Medellin

Proxies:

Frank Cardello, Rick Rondinelli,

Staff:

Linda Woloshansky, Sue Bublitz, Robyn Minton, Tammy Stump, Crissy Dooley

CALL TO ORDER – 2:10 pm

Chair Adam Collins opened the meeting by welcoming Deb Baughman and Karen Morlan. The members then went around the table and introduced themselves as well as the company they were with and what functional role they played.

1. CONSENT AGENDA

The consent agenda including the minutes of the last Board meeting, the dashboard, and performance information was presented to the Board.

Motion: A motion was made by Bob Schaefer and seconded by Arlene Pearson to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. **The motion passed.**

2. REPORTS**Dennis Wimer – Indiana Legislative Update**

The House Bill for Unemployment Insurance that was passed eliminates the burden of proof requirement in UI appeal hearings and will allow the Judge to make decisions based upon the merits of the case. It also eliminates unnecessary drug testing definitions with regard to an individual's eligibility for benefits. It also clarifies severance pay, vacation and holiday pay, and when employers must begin to pay UI taxes.

The economic development bill that passed provides grants to eligible school corporations and charter schools to support partnerships with businesses for training students.

The House Bill that passed for Regional Economic Development was also a Governors Agenda Bill and it requires that the IEDC to conduct an assessment of Indiana's most productive regional metropolitan areas. It also provides that this assessment must analyze the economic potential of each of Indiana's regional cities and report back the needs of each regional city along with recommendations on initiatives and improvements that will lead to regional economic growth.

The Governor's Agenda Bill, House Bill 1198 allows for a single point of contact with the state for businesses. It requires the DOR and DWD to coordinate with the Secretary of State to use an Internet website to share information with other state agencies to provide a single point of contact with all state agencies for a person to accomplish various requirements to transact business in the state.

The Senate Bill titled Better Skills for Adult Learners is a Governor's Agenda Bill provides that SWIC shall allocate a percentage of funds made available to Indiana under WIA adult and dislocated worker training for performance based funding training that leads to occupations that the DWD has categorized as high demand, high wage jobs and that are tied to existing employer demand in the region in which the training is offered.

DWD Monitoring

Linda Woloshansky states there were Monitors at CWI last week reviewing information regarding operations and policies from December 2012 until the March 10 of this year, their arrival date. They paid particular attention to the financials surrounding the temp services we used as an intermediary during the transitional hiring process. Linda is pleased to report that the Monitor said that everything was in order and verbally reported to her that all policies and procedures were in place.

Region 1 Works Council – Kris Emaus

The 2nd major Works Council report was due to the state. Councils were given 11 questions to answer and all the results from all the regions will be posted on the state's website. Region 1's report was only 10 pages this time. The report focused on the following high wage/high demand jobs: Electrical and Mechanical Technicians, Engineers, Machinists, Process technicians, Welders, CDL Drivers, and Lab Technicians within Healthcare.

To identify these specific high wage/high demand jobs the Council took data they obtained from CWI, the NWI Forum, and compiled information from employers currently in the region and employers that have in the past considered moving to NWI. It is also important to note that the Council has a lot of different business sections represented on it and each person can give input on the jobs that are still going unfulfilled in our region.

Overall our Region's Works Council continues to focus more on broad skill sets rather than individual jobs. They are also looking to get the schools to focus on career awareness at middle and high school levels. Kids just do not know what opportunities are out there. Our region needs career coaches for teachers and counselors to make them aware of the jobs available in our region and allow them to pass that knowledge onto the students. We are also looking into creating a Teacher and Councilor academy for ongoing learning, and funds to further develop business partnerships in our region. The Council is also recommending that schools and businesses add internships into their curriculum. Other ideas given by our Council are: project based learning in science and math, image

improvement for Career and Tech Ed – currently it is seen as a lesser opportunity, and increasing assistance for programs like JAG. The Council's most important recommendation is realignment of the funding model is the most important. The way the dollars currently flow does not support the best choices for the students.

The Center of Education and Career Innovation came out with a grant. 4 school corporations - Lowell, Tri Creek, Hammond, and Michigan City are putting together a cooperative plan for this grant. The grant states that for every 1 business dollar for they can receive 3 grant dollars. It is clear that the state is looking to solicit more business partnerships and looking for better models.

3. OLD BUSINESS

Northwest Indiana Professional Network

Board Member Judy Stanton asks about the development program and where the participants stand at this point in time. Robyn says that out of the 27 chosen, 25 people were taken on to the program but only 19 continued through the program because the others found jobs. The 19 that remained had to fight through issues regarding tardiness and attitude, but eventually through the use of tough love we continue to progress through these issues.

Youth Provider Recommendations

On January 20th a request for proposal (RFP) for Youth Services was sent out for services in 4 categories. It was posted in numerous places. On February 3rd letters of intent were received from WDS, JobWorks, and ProResources. The proposals were due February 28th. JobWorks and ProResources bid on multiple aspects of the RFP whereas WDS only bid on one portion. The reviewers were a very diverse group of readers and all recommended that we eliminate ProResources as a service provider.

Motion: A motion was made by Judy Stanton and seconded by Arlene Pearson to move forward with JobWorks and WDS as Youth Service Providers. **The motion passed.**

Addition of State JAG Funding to Policies

Governor Pence wants to improve the graduation and literacy rates of Indiana residents and has set aside state funds for JAG. The NWIWB is requested to approve the addition of State JAG to the following WIA Youth and JAG policies - Work Experience, Work IN Training, Supportive Services such as transportation and child care, as well as Youth Provider Services.

Ms. Stump states that she would also recommend the following be added to our list of youth providers: Calumet High School and Knox High School – both provide secondary education completion; Calumet Welding Center – provides welding training.

Motion: A motion was made by Arlene Pearson and seconded by Gerry Scheff to approve the addition of State JAG to WIA Youth and JAG policies. **The motion passed.**

Motion: A motion was made by Gerry Scheff and seconded by Bob Schaefer to move forward with the addition of the 3 youth service providers. **The motion passed.**

Michigan City WorkOne Office - Opening

Board Member Bob Schaefer gave a brief review of the Michigan City WorkOne Office Opening. It is a nice office that is scheduled to be open 3 days a week. At the official opening there was standing room only because so many people showed up. Not only were there many political figures present but there was also a few people that represented success stories from WorkOne.

Transition – Robyn Minton

CWI has hired 32 people, 13 of which are new. 8 of the previous staff from JobWorks will not continue on to this process and 4 vacancies remain. While it's been difficult and fun but there is nothing like a challenge to bring people together.

Mrs. Woloshansky noted an issue with the temporary service from Manpower. A week into bringing on a new group of employees Manpower decided that people needed to work 90 days before they were eligible to have health insurance. Because we assured staff there would be no lapse in health care coverage, CWI had to find an alternative.

We went back to the RFPs that were received back during the beginning of this process and found that Express Employment professionals were able to provide healthcare benefits to the temp employees. We contacted with Express Professionals within 3 days to honor our commitment.

Certified Production Training

The Certified Production Training program in Newton County was a success and we are looking to re-launch that program in mid-May in another County.

4. NEW BUSINESS

Linda Woloshansky begins to talk about combining efforts to Bridge the Skills Gap here in Northwest Indiana. So far everyone has played a role in the success of our Region. The list of organized groups includes the NWIWB, CWI, the Adult Education Consortium, READY NWI, and the Works Council.

In each group we have seen efforts to revitalize education, fill long gaps in employment histories, provide remediation while capitalizing on existing education, promotion of and funding of skills training. We have also need to have honest conversations about employer readiness. She states that we have a window of opportunity where they are listening in Indianapolis and they actually care about what we have to say.

In the past the WIB was the only formalized regional group working in this effort. Now we have multiple groups working towards the same goals working on the various tasks. If we take this moment in time and clearly define the roles of each team we could get further faster. It would be ideal to bring the chairs of each group together so that we can discuss our common goals. It would then be determined if there was benefit in developing a regional strategy plan that incorporates all regional initiatives.

Board Member Gary Olund says that if this is brought back to the groups listed on the slide (above) they will want to know what the end game is; what is the goal? A workforce which is meeting the needs of employers, skill sets which are transferable and is moving further faster as a region.

5. STAFF REPORTS

JAG Career Development Conference

The Career Development Conference on February 7th was a great success. Board Member Dennis Wimer points out that that if you attended you sent a message to these kids that they are important.

Closing

Linda Woloshansky thanked everyone for working to make the Michigan City office opening a success. She also thanks the Board members that participated in the JAG conference. At this time it is also noted that it was great to see so many people at the board meeting. She also thanked all of the staff for all the good work that they are doing through all this transition; she is truly grateful.

Adjournment

With no further business to discuss, the meeting adjourned at 3:35 p.m.

George Douglas, Secretary

Crissy E. Dooley, Recording Secretary