

**NORTHEAST MINNESOTA OFFICE OF JOB TRAINING
ELECTED OFFICIAL BOARD**

Thursday, April 9, 2015
Virginia Workforce Center

Chair Eichorn called a regularly scheduled meeting of the Local Elected Official Board to order at 1:08 p.m. with the following in attendance:

Brian Napstad
Pete Walsh

Garry Gamble
Kevin Adee

Tom Rukavina
Rusty Eichorn

Excused: Tom Proulx

Staff: Michelle Ufford, Renee' Marconett

Motion was made by Walsh, supported by Adee to approve the revised April 9, 2015 agenda as written, with the addition of agenda item – Polymet Discussion. Motion carried unanimously.

Motion was made by Rukavina, supported by Gamble to approve the minutes of the February 19, 2015 meeting with no additions or corrections; motion carried unanimously.

Handout #1 – February 2015 Funding Summary was reviewed. All current grants and expenditures are in place.

The Virginia Workforce Center remodeling project is almost complete. The workforce center has downsized space, which will save approximately \$20,000 each year in rent. Board members will be notified prior to the lease expiring in 2016, so they can participate in negotiating terms of the new lease.

The National Association of Workforce Boards conference was held in Washington DC last week. The Notice of Proposed Rule Making (NPRM) on the new federal workforce act came out two days after the conference ended, which was poor timing. Ufford was able to connect with other service providers from across the country to discuss more efficient ways to assess talent/skill gaps and visited with Senator Amy Klobuchar and US Representative Rick Nolan's staff regarding the forthcoming layoffs at US Steel mines. Board members will be updated on necessary program changes once the vast NPRM document on new Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) is reviewed.

Director Ufford gave a presentation of program performance measures for the Office of Job Training for the last program year. State and Federal funding streams were outlined for Adults, Youth and Dislocated Workers; along with the MN Family Investment Program (MFIP). Demographics and Outcomes for PY'13 include total participants served, number in training, total entered employment and wages. Below is a summary of NEMOJT program YEAR 2013 performance as presented to the Board:

PROGRAM/MEASURE		PERFORMANCE	
Federal (WIA) Dislocated Worker		Planned	Actual
	Entered Employment	85%	86%
	Employment Retention	92.5%	90%
	Average Earnings	\$14,845	\$18,612
	Employment & Credential/Certificate	69%	73%
State Dislocated Worker		Planned	Actual
	Entered Employment	85%	90.1%
	Employment Retention	92.5%	93%
	Average Earnings	\$14,845	\$16,456
	Employment & Credential/Certificate	69%	86.8%
Federal (WIA) Adult		Planned	Actual
	Entered Employment	81.5%	96%
	Employment Retention	86%	88%
	Average Earnings	\$9,501	\$19,815
	Employment & Credential/Certificate	73%	82%
WIA Younger Youth (ages 14 – 18)		Planned	Actual
	Retention Rate	83%	98.1%
	Diploma Rate	88%	90.9%
	Skill Attainment Rate	94%	97.3%
WIA Older Youth (ages 19-21)		Planned	Actual
	Entered Employment	75%	71%
	Employment Retention	87%	91.3%
	Earnings Change in Six Months	\$4,800	\$10,432
	Credential/Certificate Rate	58%	47%*
<i>*measure low because of data entry issues; actual performance exceeds planned goal</i>			

Board members were updated on the State legislative bills. The House released their budget, the target for which and was low with quite a few decreases. There is a significant increase of proposed spending from the Workforce Development Fund which was originally the Dislocated Workforce fund, which funds mass layoff projects, such as US Steel. The proposal also includes a \$1 million increase for Labor Market Information activities and Career EdVenture outreach to schools, \$2 million for Adult job training programs, and incumbent worker training as an allowable expense through the Dislocated Worker program. The Senate budget is not out yet.

The Office of Job Training has been in contact with DEED and local union officials at US Steel facilities in Keewatin and Mt. Iron regarding the impending layoffs of approximately 1,100 people. The Agency will be receiving a \$20,000 Early Readjustment Assistance Grant (ERAG) to assist dislocated workers prior to the layoff and prior to the receipt of dislocated worker project funds. Preliminary meetings have been held with Rapid Response, Trade Adjustment Act (TAA), UI, company and Union representatives. If certified under TAA, US Steel dislocated workers are eligible to receive up to two years of TAA services if they are attending post-secondary training, including the extension of unemployment benefits while in training. Once layoff lists are determined, staff will work with the state to schedule informational and enrollment meetings with affected worker and project funds will be applied for. The Office of Job Training will consider hiring a dislocated worker liaison from the group of affected workers to assist in

providing services to laid-off workers and will ensure that staff in the neighboring Workforce Centers of Hibbing, Grand Rapids, and Virginia are engaged in serving workers.

The Office of a Job Training has developed a training offering on Generations in the Workplace, aimed at helping managers and their staff to gain a greater understanding of the different generations that make up the current labor force. The purpose of the training is to help employers develop effective inter generational communication strategies, recognize how generational differences can affect team and interpersonal dynamics, and strategies for recruiting, managing, and retaining workers from the younger generations. Staff from the Office of Job Training have presented this workshop for numerous organizations across the region and will be at the upcoming MN Energy Conference.

During the past few months, there have been a number of regional workforce events with which Office of Job Training staff have been involved. Around 800 job seekers and 72 employers attended the Virginia Job Fair which was held in a new venue this year, the Virginia Armory. Office of Job Training staff conducted a 'speed interviewing' workshop where job fair attendees cycled through three career counselors who asked typical interview questions and gave professional feedback during a timed process. Staff have volunteered at a new event called Construct Tomorrow where 500 students from regional schools sampled 13 different trades at the DECC and will lead groups of 7th and 8th grade students through the upcoming Science and Engineering Festival at the Discovery Center. The Northland Foundation's second Career Expo will take place in the fall of 2015 at the DECC and will feature a workshop for students who have not yet determined career goals designed by Agency staff. Staff are also participating at the Nett Lake Job Fair and Northwoods School Career Fair and conducting workshops on writing resumes and student job search.

Commissioner Napstad lead a discussion about formal board support for the PolyMet project, which is in their 9th year of obtaining permits along with numerous other projects mentioned by Napstad that are also in the environmental review process. He is requesting the Northeast Minnesota Office of Job Training LEO Board pass a resolution supporting the Polymet project on the basis of job development for the area. Ufford will obtain draft a resolution and circulate to members for comments and suggestions prior to the next meeting.

The meeting concluded with board members reporting on relevant county and workforce-related activities occurring in each county.

Next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, June 11, 2015.

Motion made by Napstad, supported by Rukavina to adjourn meeting at 3:20 p.m.; motion carried unanimously.