

NORTHEAST MINNESOTA OFFICE OF JOB TRAINING
ELECTED OFFICIAL BOARD
Virginia Workforce Center
Thursday, October 9, 2014

Chair Eichorn called a regularly scheduled meeting of the Local Elected Official Board of the Northeast Minnesota Office of Job Training to order at 1:05 p.m. with the following in attendance:

Pete Walsh	Kevin Adee	Garry Gamble	Brian Napstad
Mike Forsman	Rusty Eichorn		

Excused: Tom Proulx

Motion was made by Napstad, supported by Adee to approve the October 9, 2014 agenda as written; with Performance Achievement being moved to next month's agenda. Motion carried unanimously.

Motion was made by Adee, supported by Gamble to approve the minutes of the June 12, 2014 meeting with no additions or corrections, motion carried unanimously.

Financial Director Marconett reviewed Handout #1 – August 2014 Funding Summary. All current grants and expenditures are in place. Mesabi Community College was awarded a new FastTRAC Grant A.I.D.E– “Assist, Inspire, Dream, Educate” which began on July 1, 2014. This program will be for low-income or underemployed workers, who are ABE eligible, with a basic work history and deemed “employable”. This population is most in need of training and access to high-demand, well-paid jobs.

Following the review of Northeast Workforce Investment Board membership nominations; **motion was made by Forsman, supported by Walsh, appointing Stan Paczynski, Bricklayers and Allied Craftworkers; and Darik Carlson, IBEW Local #242; motion carried unanimously.**

The building which houses the Virginia Workforce Center has recently been sold. The partners are in the process of meeting with the new owners to renegotiate remodeling issues and reconfigure space. A new quote has been requested for some remodeling at the Grand Rapids Workforce Center. The original quote was over \$18,000 to enclose a corner.

The Aitkin office is moving into the 8th Street Market building as of January 1, 2015. New partners will include Aitkin County CARE (4 offices) and Access North (1 office); along with one other space yet to rent to an additional partner. Remodeling costs will be built into the lease over the next five years; which is still lower than the current space.

The Office of Job Training received \$250,000 from a legislative appropriation from the workforce development fund which allowed us to nearly double the youth participant enrollments for all work experience, summer and year round activities. Cromwell, Cloquet, Chisholm Indus, Greenway-Nashwauk ALP, and Northwoods schools will participate in the eMentors program. A total of 125 students will learn about career skills and raising career awareness; business writing skills, gain an understanding of post-secondary education; and connect with business professionals. Last week, Career Counselors attended tool kit training by the Minnesota Department of Education. Planning for students' successful transition to post-secondary education and employment legislation requires all students beginning no later than 9th grade to have a Personal Learning Plan around several key elements. School districts must assist all students by no later than grade 9 to explore their education, college and career interests, aptitudes and aspirations and develop a plan for a smooth and successful transition to postsecondary education or employment. Schools are not equipped with this information, and this

would be a tremendous opportunity for Career Counselors to incorporate the Northeast Career EdVenture program both locally and statewide.

Director Ufford is the new chair of the Minnesota Workforce Council Association (MWCA) operations committee. The allocation for the Minnesota Youth Program is around \$2 million and legislation is asking for \$10 million, so a portion of the funds can be utilized locally for Career EdVenture activities. DEED has been watching the Career EdVenture pilot project. Ufford is proud the project was started in our region and we've been able to demonstrate how this works with interest all across the state.

Marie Shanks has been hired as a Career Counselor in the Virginia office. She was previously employed with AEOA and is a licensed educator. Marie will be involved with youth programs, and specifically Career EdVenture activities in northern St Louis County. Amanda Voller has been hired as a Career Counselor at the Aitkin office. She is assigned to work with WIA programs and youth in the schools. Jolene Goodman has been hired part-time to fill the clerical position of a long term employee in the Virginia office who retired in July.

Upcoming contract negotiations will begin in October. Clare Balow from the Cloquet office is the new union steward. Healthcare costs are increasing 14.9%. It would have been a 32% increase if we were not a member of the NE Service Cooperative. There will not be an increase in Dental insurance. Ufford will update board members at the November meeting regarding progress on negotiations.

The Office of Job Training is working with IRRRB to pilot a job shadowing protocol in Virginia schools. We will provide forms, activities, expectations, etc. and work with students pre- and post-experience along with participating teachers. This will give students more employment opportunities across the region, with additional schools to pilot this project in the spring.

The 3rd annual Iron Range Miners' Expo was held September 10-11 at the Discovery Center in Chisholm. 240 eleventh grade students from 11 area schools participated who were identified as potentially interested in mining and related careers. The Office of Job Training participated in the Expo and gave students a Career Assessment booklet outlining specific careers in mining, along with career and education resources for youth.

The MWCA is working on a statewide marketing campaign with DEED. We need broader, better outreach strategies to influence those who need services in order to fully meet employer demand in the labor market. The marketing committee plans to start a strategic rebranding initiative that includes an innovative, modern name, signage, collateral and look/feel at each Workforce Center location.

After ten years, the Senate and House have reached an agreement in reauthorization of a new law, Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), effectively replacing the current Workforce Investment Act (WIA). Youth services under WIOA places a greater priority on out-of-school youth, requiring that 75% of funding is spent on out-of-school youth and work-based learning activities. Additional changes include more emphasis on enhancing efforts to serve the disabled population, developing effective technology strategies, and stimulating employer engagement. Ufford will update the board as additional information is received.

The meeting concluded with board members hearing relevant activities occurring in their counties, including updates on local economic development projects.

Meeting adjourned at 2:55 p.m. Next Local Elected Official Board meeting is scheduled for Thursday, November 13, 2014.