

Northeast Minnesota Office of Job Training  
WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD MEETING  
Iron Range Resources – Eveleth MN  
Tuesday, November 29, 2016

Regularly scheduled meeting called to order by Chair Stone at 10:05 a.m.

**WIB members present:**

Bud Stone, Darik Carlson, Dave Debevec, Wayne Kangas, Lynn Krall, Terri Nystrom, Stan Paczynski, Allen Rasmussen, Roland Root, Todd Scaia, Roy Smith, Kelly Zink

**Excused:** Paul Carlson, Betsy Harmon, Jeff Lee, Bill Maki, Jason Quiggin, Al Rudeck, Dave Ulrich

**Absent:** Kelsey Johnson

**Guests:** Julie Greenly and Tracy Chase, AEOA

**Staff:** Michelle Ufford, Heath Boe, Renee' Marconett

**Motion was made by Rasmussen, supported by Nystrom to approve the September 28, 2016 minutes as written; motion carried unanimously.**

Chair Stone began meeting by introducing Tracy Chase, Instructor for Adult Basic Education at AEOA. She has replaced Beth Peterson.

**Election of Officers**

**Motion was made by Nystrom, supported by Kangas to approve Bud Stone, Chairperson; Kelly Zink, Vice-Chair; and Allen Rasmussen, Secretary; motion carried unanimously.**

**Regional Planning Updates**

Under the new Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) federal funding stream, workforce service areas must complete a regional plan in conjunction with contiguous workforce service areas where there are important commonalities, such as a shared labor pool, interdependent industries, or economic dependencies. The Northeast region is paired with the Duluth Workforce Council to ensure both service areas develop a regional workforce strategy that coordinates the efforts of both workforce service areas.

A draft of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for Region 2 was distributed to board members for review. The purpose of the MOU is to establish an agreement among the Northeast Minnesota Workforce Investment Board and the City of Duluth Workforce Development Board to meet employer and job seeker workforce development needs in the context of regional planning through the coordination of resources; collection and analysis of regional labor market data; development and implementation of sector initiatives; leveraging of funding for the region; and collaboration on development and management of grant submissions. After discussion and feedback from board members, **motion was made by Rasmussen, supported by Debevec to approve the MOU as written; motion carried unanimously.**

A timeline of the Workforce System Asset Mapping was distributed outlining how the project is moving along. The project has involved more work than previously planned, and is somewhat behind in what the timeline displays. The final draft of the survey should be completed by the first week of December. Arrowhead Economic Opportunity Agency and Department of Rehab Services will be pilot survey participants, along with a smaller organization to get a better idea what services are offered to make this tool effective. The Leadership Committee has been in contact with United Way 211 to get information that is contained in their Information and Referral data base system.

The Career Pathway Committee will meet on December 8<sup>th</sup>. Discussion will include understanding the needs of the Skilled Trades and if this sector should be pursued at this point. Ufford met with Craig Olson, president of Duluth Builders Council, and was informed union halls are currently not finding a need for workers.

The 1<sup>st</sup> annual Iron Range Construct Tomorrow event took place in October and was a great success. Fourteen trade unions, three technical schools, and 18 high schools participated. Over 483 high school students attended the event. Questionnaire responses from students included – 48% were interested in a career in the skilled trades both before and after the event; 20% were not interested before the event, but now are after coming; 96% would recommend the event to others; and 7.92% average rating of the event (1-10 scale). Feedback from Teachers and Guidance Counselors – Two thirds had activities before the event, and are planning activities after the event as well. 81% believe this event should be held every year and 9.19% average rating of the event (1-10 scale). This will be annual event in the fall, and Duluth will host the event each spring. Scaia commented there has been a Scholarship Fund established at the Hibbing/Chisholm high schools for individuals interested in pursuing a career in the Skilled Trades. International Falls staff is putting together a Health Career Day. There was a question asking where Law Enforcement information would be categorized for one of these events. Ufford will research and update board members.

A Regional joint meeting with the Northeast Minnesota Workforce Investment Board and City of Duluth Workforce Development Board is being planned in Duluth. A timeframe and topics of interest are being worked out. A survey will be sent out in the next few months to establish a convenient meeting day for board members to attend. There will be a separate orientation meeting arranged for new board members.

### **Talent Development Fund**

The Talent Development Program (TDP) is business driven funding assistance for qualifying Minnesota businesses to provide skills training to full-time permanent employees. The program is meant to offset the employer costs to train and upgrade the skills of current workers by providing reimbursement to eligible businesses for specific training costs accrued during the course of training. Eligible businesses must articulate that by receiving funding assistance through the program that their business will not only improve the skills of their workforce but also improve their business processes and competitiveness and/or avert a layoff.

Eligible employees must be at least 18 years of age, work at least 32 hours per week and be committed to attending all trainings; must earn an hourly wage above the state minimum wage and agree to cooperate with data collection requirements.

Businesses must contribute a portion of the training costs through direct cost contribution or in-kind contributions based on employer size. Examples of in-kind contributions include: Expenses associated with the use of on-site space and equipment during the training; trainee wages, including benefits; required travel/lodging, and direct training costs. The maximum award per employer each grant year is \$25,000 (may be adjusted based upon funding available each program year). Initial training duration may not exceed twelve months, and funds will be awarded on a first come-first served basis.

### **Youth Committee Development**

Under the past federal funding stream (WIA), stand-alone youth councils were required outside the WIB structure. WIOA does not require youth councils but suggests that WIBs develop youth committees. This committee would maintain awareness of issues and initiatives related to youth workforce development such as career planning and exploration resources/initiatives, gaps in existing youth programming, opportunities to align youth development services and the pursuit of funding for developing additional resources and initiatives. One of the main goals for discussion will be to strategize how to connect with parents to dispel/industry/occupation myths, provide resources for guiding their student through the career planning process and postsecondary training/apprenticeship opportunities.

Ufford will send out an email to see who is interested in serving on the Youth committee. Kangas and Smith have volunteered to participate. This agenda item was then tabled until the next WIB meeting.

### **Recharge the Range**

Roy Smith gave a brief overview of the Recharge the Range. In June, members of the public from across the Iron Range attended "Recharge the Range" forum at the Discovery Center in Chisholm. The event was the fourth in a series of forums aimed at generating momentum around new and existing projects and ideas to help improve quality of life and diversity of the economy in Iron Range communities. Smith feels the WIB is a good parallel and can be helpful in providing resources for various businesses and industries to participate.

### **Miscellaneous**

WIB members are invited to attend the Minnesota Workforce Council Association (MWCA)/Governor's Workforce Development Board (GWDB) winter meeting on December 14<sup>th</sup>. It will be held at the Depot in St Paul.

Next meeting date is scheduled for Wednesday, January 25, 2017. Meeting adjourned at 12:07 p.m.