

## November 2012 WIB minutes

**Northeast Minnesota  
WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD MEETING**  
Iron Range Resources – Eveleth MN  
Wednesday, November 28, 2012

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

**WIB members present:**

Bud Stone, Betsy Harmon, Paul Carlson, Jill Anderson, Kelly Zink, Dave Hart, Mike Valentine, Kevin Pietrini, Sue Collins, Allen Rasmussen

**Excused:** Roland Root, Al Rudeck, Janet Eichholz, Craig Pagel, John Grahek, Terri Nystrom  
**Absent:** Mitch Robertson, Tom Jamar, Mark Adams  
**Guest:** Roy Smith

**Motion made by Pietrini, supported by Valentine to approve the October 31, 2012 minutes as written; motion carried unanimously.**

**Regional STEM Collaborative Update**  
**Michelle Ufford**

Ufford informed the board a STEM Collaborative meeting was held on November 8<sup>th</sup> with over 100 attendees from across the region. The mission of the STEM Network strengthens collaborating among business, education, civic, and community leaders to increase the appeal of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics and communicate its importance to Minnesota's future; promotes opportunities for students and their families to engage in high-quality STEM experiences; and fosters continuous improvements in STEM teaching and learning. A number of goals were discussed at the meeting which included how to develop a clear common definition of STEM for the region with the purpose of developing engagement in the communities and how to align K-plus initiatives, partnerships and pathways for STEM while providing a complementary system of informal opportunities to secure and retain student engagement, develop passion and careers that meet the needs of our workforce and economy, and develop a plan that leads to collaboration, problem solving skills, and opportunities for effective learning. Ufford is on the leadership committee and encouraged WIB members to become involved on the committee. The board will be updated on the progress of this project.

**GWDC Skills@Work Project**  
**Michelle Ufford**

A handout was distributed outlining the Skills@Work draft report from the three full day meetings held to develop an action plan and address skills gaps in northeast Minnesota. Two strategies were developed. Pilot Solution 1: Early-Start Career Navigating and Awareness with an initial outcome for students, from an early age, to have an awareness of career opportunities and pathways, as well as how their own skills and interests fit into the world of work. The strategy is to increase exposure and awareness of the *Career EdVentures* Program with employers, educators, parents, and professional associations. Pilot Solution 2: Scaling Up Adult Career Pathways (ACP) to develop new, focused career pathways at each regional community college which will increase the number of skilled workers in high demand jobs across the region. One goal is to pair each college with a targeted group of participants to be assigned to a FastTRAC-like model. Funding for this project is an issue. Ufford added the NE Minnesota Office of Job Training and Duluth Workforce Council will jointly lead oversight of the implementation process. She will be in contact with Don Hoag, Director of the Duluth Workforce Council to discuss a combined meeting with the NE Minnesota and Duluth Workforce Investment Boards.

**All Hands on Deck - Final Report**  
**Michelle Ufford**

Last spring, The Northeast Minnesota Workforce Investment Board undertook an initiative to compare regional workforce development efforts with the recommendations made by the Governor's Workforce Development Council. Ufford has finalized a report of those findings and some strategies for local action to further strengthen our alignment with these recommendations. The report includes the following elements: The Northeast perspective on each recommendation, local initiatives and experience that support the advancement of these recommendations, and

strategies for local action the Northeast WIB is considering for implementation over the coming year(s) but that also may easily translate to other workforce service areas.

### **Strengthening the Skills of our Current Workforce – Strategies for Local Action**

- *A concerted effort to pair local colleges with groups of targeted participants in a FastTRAC-like process.*
- *Expanding upon the success of professional career counselors as ‘program navigators’ to ensure prospective students are entering the appropriate programs that best suit both their own interests and the needs of the business community.*
- *Develop and promote resources for customer service/soft skills training for incumbent workers, job seekers, and students.*
- *Identify transferable/common skills in key industries like healthcare, IT, and others in order to build stackable credentialing based on common skill sets rather than linear, traditional programming.*
- *Increases visibility of WFC services and resources.*

WIB members received an informational handout on a Customer Service workshop for Business Owners, Manager and employees. The workshop will be held on November 29<sup>th</sup> and December 12 in Virginia. All interested individuals are encouraged to attend.

### **Creating Work and Lifetime Learning Options for Aging Workers – Strategies for Local Action**

- *Identify local organizations that serve an older demographic that could be convened to discuss strengthening the region’s ability to capitalize on the expertise of older works and create a system of supports and strategies to help lengthen the life of the workforce and promote benefits of hiring older workers.*
- *Research and develop strategies to capture and document the tacit knowledge of a retiring workforce; identify potential role for Workforce Center system in delivering such a service.*
- *Identify and promote all available funding resources for adult/older workers, including but not limited to programs typically available through the Workforce Center system.*

### **Expanding Work Opportunities for Minnesotans with Disabilities – Strategies for Local Action**

- *The WIB should research methods of addressing and dispelling the myths surrounding hiring disabled individuals as well as promote, support, and retrofit resources to the business community.*

### **Ensuring all High School Graduates Are Ready for Success – Strategies for Local Action**

- *Continue to grow the Northeast Career EdVenture project by encouraging business and school engagement. Seek supplemental funding to continue the establishment of this important effort to align resources.*
- *Further develop and promote the notion of a common set of expectations between the business community and a successful school environment; identify and promote policies used by secondary schools to model and teach the proper behavioral expectations of the workplace.*
- *Work towards development of a continuum of curriculum and career exploration opportunities from early grades on by connecting existing resources and developing new protocol and resources where gaps exist.*
- *Understand rate and impact of post-secondary options throughout the region as way of potentially identifying candidates for special programming to inspire local talent to pursue professional occupations important to the regional economy such as engineering and advanced healthcare.*
- *WIB members should visit schools participating in the Applied Learning Institute to see the relationship which was developed between students and instructors, equipment investment, and what students are learning.*
- *Identify and expand successful models of increasing the engagement of off-track students in thoughtful and deliberate career and job readiness.*
- *Continue to engage multiple partners in developing post high school transition strategies for individuals common between state rehabilitation services and WIA & State youth programs.*
- *Monitor impact of U of M’s Ramp Up to Readiness and other career preparation programming used in area schools to identify roles for the Workforce Center system to supplement and support this curriculum; ask representatives from districts to present lessons learned, pros/cons, etc., to WIB in order to determine potential for supporting this curriculum on a regional basis.*
- *Working relationships should be developed between high school faculty and college instructors to align who is teaching foundational and pre-professional curriculum.*
- *Determine role for WIB in the further development of the Northeast STEM Collaborative.*
- *Resurrect the Regional Applied Math Project (RAMP) model to provide teachers with the opportunity to learn how academic subjects are applied.*
- *Develop strategy to engage parents in thoughtful, educated career planning for their students.*

A lengthy discussion was held on strategizing what local action the WIB can take to move forward in helping strengthen the local workforce.

**Motion was made by Rasmussen, supported by Collins to approve the WIB work on two strategies over the next 12 months. 1. Work towards development of a continuum of curriculum and career exploration opportunities from early grades on by connecting existing resources and developing new protocol and resources where gaps exist and, 2. Develop strategy to engage parents in thoughtful, educated career planning for their students. Motion carried unanimously.**

Educators/administrators/principals/faculty will be contacted and invited to attend the January meeting. Discussion will focus on parental involvement in career planning and how to communicate with their children.

WIB members gave brief updates of activities and ongoing projects in their area.

Meeting was adjourned at 11:58 a.m. Next meeting will be Wednesday, January 23, 2013.

Posted: Jan 23rd, 2013 1:50 PM