

October 3, 2012 Minutes

**Northeast Minnesota
WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD MEETING**
Iron Range Resources – Eveleth MN
Wednesday, October 3, 2012

Regularly scheduled meeting called to order by Chair Stone at 10:00 a.m.

WIB members present:

Bud Stone, Mark Adams, Jill Anderson, Betsy Harmon, Dave Hart, Allen Rasmussen, Al Rudeck, Mike Valentine, Kelly Zink

Excused: Paul Carlson, Sue Collins, Tom Jamar, Terri Nystrom, Craig Pagel, Kevin Pietrini, Roland Root

Absent: Janet Eichholz, John Grahek, Mitch Robertson

Guests: Roy Smith, Iron Range Resources; Drew Digby, DEED

Staff: Michelle Ufford, Renee' Marconett

Motion made by Rasmussen, supported by Valentine to approve the July 25, 2012 minutes as written; motion carried unanimously.

Motion was made by Rudeck, supported by Hart to appoint Bud Stone, Chairperson; Sue Collins, Vice-Chair; and Allen Rasmussen, Secretary; as elected officials on the Workforce Investment Board for 2012-2013; motion carried unanimously.

Regional Labor Market Information Update

Drew Digby, DEED

Ufford informed the Board that Digby has accepted a new position with Carton County as Director of Special Projects and Long Term Recovery. Appreciation was extended for the valuable information Digby has provided to the Board over the years.

A handout was distributed outlining the 1st Quarter Census of Employment and Wages for WSA #3, which includes all of Northeastern Minnesota with the exception of Duluth. Employment in the region is up, with mining showing its best numbers since 2001. Overall, in the last year, the mines have hired over 1,200 employees. Healthcare and residential care jobs have recently declined and DEED is in the process of reclassifying these positions. Local Government employment has increased in this region due to funds available through Iron Range Resources. Manufacturing is surviving by changing their business model and finding more efficient ways in becoming more productive. The total labor force population has been stable, but is growing. The annual average labor force in 1990 was 103,488 and 125,795 in 2011. Labor force numbers include individuals who are working or actively looking for employment, within the age range of 16 years old through retirement age. The overall population hasn't been increasing, which is good for labor force numbers.

NE Career EdVenture Update

Michelle Ufford

Ufford updated the Board on the new Northeast Career EdVenture project which will provide career guidance and planning services for secondary students throughout the region. An important component of the project is engaging students with the business community to provide opportunities to learn about workplace expectations and what local business and industry are all about.

A copy of the electronic employer survey was given to Board members for review and input. The responses to this survey will be kept in a database for use when schools indicate interest in particular project resources that could involve the business community. Ufford walked through the survey outlining the major bullet points – Job Shadowing, Business Tours, One-on-one 'eMentoring', Mock Interviewing, Career Fairs and Job Fairs, Work Experience/Internships, Class Presentations, Host a Teacher Intern, and Donate to the Cause. Once the survey is complete, the link will be emailed to all Board members. All types of organizations (public, private, non-profit, etc.) are encouraged to get involved.

The next phase will be to connect with students, work on marketing materials, and present the schools with a menu of different services available and how employers can get involved with schools.

Grand Rapids Chamber Straight Talk Series
Bud Stone

Stone updated the Board on the Straight Talk Series project, with the main goal of bringing employers and educators together and discuss their needs. The first stage entailed going to the business community and ask what skills/talents are missing in the current workforce. The "Successful Worker" document was established outlining employers expectations along with the issues educators encounter with students. Employers number one challenge is employees showing up for work on time and educators stated attendance/tardiness problems with students. Input from students is also needed to confront what difficulties they face in learning in the school system along with lack of communication from parents.

Regional STEM Collaborative
Michelle Ufford

On November 8th, 2012 stakeholders in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) from multiple sectors in northeast Minnesota will come together to discuss the value of a system approach to strengthen STEM education and workforce development. The objectives of this meeting will include networking (meeting STEM stakeholders across sectors), initial discussion of a regional needs assessment, begin sharing best practices in STEM programming , and announce the intent to form a leadership team to move the regional network forward. Network Participants come from business and industry, K-12 and higher education, nonprofit STEM organizations, youth development, workforce development, STEM professionals, and cultural community organizations. Ufford and Smith are on the STEM Planning Committee.

Due to time restraints, agenda item "All Hands on Deck" will be discussed at the October 31st meeting.

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

Meeting was adjourned at 12:03 p.m.

Posted: Oct 31st, 2012 1:10 PM