

## October 31 2012 Minutes

**Northeast Minnesota  
WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD MEETING**  
Iron Range Resources – Eveleth MN  
Wednesday, October 31, 2012

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

**WIB members present:**

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

**Excused:** Dave Hart, Teri Nystrom, Tom Jamar, Craig Pagel, John Grahek, Al Rudeck

**Absent:** Mitch Robertson, Mark Adams, Janet Eichholz

**Guest:** Marla Beatty, DEED Business Service Specialist

**Motion made by Collins, supported by Rasmussen to approve the October 3, 2012 minutes as written; motion carried unanimously.**

**Business Service Specialist Report**

**Marla Beatty, DEED**

Board members were given copies of the DEED 2012 Annual Report of Business Service activities outlining the Job Service mission to inform, educate and connect job seekers, career changers and employers through innovative, effective and customer-friendly services. Beatty is assigned to work with the business community in the Northeast region and evaluate what services are needed by employers and businesses. Key customer needs include fast, friendly, accurate service prioritizing filling vacancies and posting jobs, establishing a Minnesota Works account, searching for job candidates in their field along with creating job orders, referrals to other business resources such as Local WFC partners, LMO, Work Opportunity Tax Credit, employment law, and economic development. 194 consultations were made in 2012, with Mining, Manufacturing, and Service industries the largest population. Beatty will provide the Board with updates as needed.

**GWDC Skills@Work Update**

**Michelle Ufford**

Ufford updated the Board on the GWDC Skills@Work Project. The Skills@Work is a statewide campaign to ensure Minnesota has the skilled workforce it needs to compete in the global economy. Three team meetings were arranged with the Northeast MN Regional Action Session–Round 2 held on October 19, 2012. The objective of this session was to develop draft work plans for pilot solutions. The group discussed and determined regional priority issues related to the skills gap and identified two proposed pilot solutions to address regional skills gap priorities - Early-Start Career Navigating and Awareness; and Scaling up Adult Career Pathways (ACP). Draft work plans were developed for each pilot solution including desired outcomes, strategies, and actions to meet those outcomes. Ufford expressed a need to promote what services are already available through our agency and expand on what can be provided without duplicating services. A third meeting will be held on November 9, 2012 to discuss specific strategies and who will be play specific roles. Ufford will then pull together the NE WIB and Duluth Workforce Council to review desired outcomes and related strategies.

**Northeast Career EdVenture Project Update**

**Michelle Ufford**

The Northeast Career EdVenture project is underway. An electronic employer survey has been emailed to various types of organizations (public, private, non-profit, etc.) with 20 businesses already responding. The project is being promoted through the local Chambers, Rotary groups, AMFA, radio stations, and newspapers in hopes of establishing a strong partnership between the K12 system, the public workforce development system, and the business community. Through Northeast Career EdVenture, the business community has the opportunity to become involved with local schools, influence their future workforce, share their business expertise and give back to the community.

## **All Hands on Deck Update**

### **Michelle Ufford**

Last spring, the Northeast Workforce Investment Board undertook an initiative to compare regional workforce development efforts with recommendations made by the Governor's Workforce Development Council "All Hands on Deck" Handbook. Ufford noted the Northeast WIB is the only one in the State to move forward and put a regional/local perspective in place to strengthen our workforce.

#### ***Strengthening the Skills of our current Workforce***

The Board discussed a need for customer service/soft skills training for incumbent workers, unemployed/underemployed job seekers and students, along with identifying transferable/common skills in healthcare, IT, and other key industries akin to Roy Smith's work for industrial careers. More marketing of WFC services and resources is needed. Collins suggested a master definition be developed to fully describe what "soft skills" include.

#### ***Creating work and lifetime learning options for Minnesota's aging workers***

More focus is needed on older workers as a valuable resource for the business community; promote flexible scheduling to the business community, the benefits of hiring older workers, identifying training opportunities for older workers, and looking at strategies for retention in the workforce.

#### ***Expanding Work Opportunities for Minnesotan's with Disabilities***

Itasca Strategic Alliance, which includes ODC, MDI, Hired Hands, and Access to Employment, indicated business communities shy away from hiring disabled people. Employers need to become more educated when hiring a disabled individual, and not think of it as a physical issue but more of an attitude perception. The WIB should research what impact could be made for more accessible opportunities to retrofit businesses in serving this population and outline the definition of "disability" to employers.

#### ***Ensuring All High School Graduates are ready for Success***

A good relationship needs to be developed between high school faculty and college campus instructors to ensure the best interest of students. K12 and upper division faculty need to meet and discuss who is teaching the foundational and pre-professional curriculum to develop trust between instructors to transcend mentoring and credential ideas. WIB members should visit schools participating in the Applied Learning Institute to see the relationship which has developed between students and instructors, equipment investment, and what students are learning.

Resurrect the Regional Applied Math Project (RAMP) model to provide teachers with the opportunity to learn how academic subjects are applied.

There also needs to be an effort which includes parents in thoughtful, educated career planning for their students. Research the Student's Pathways to Success in Itasca County and explore ways to better integrate parents in addition to the NE Career EdVenture.

Ufford is working on a report and strategic planning document that will be used to both report back to the GDWC as well as help outline the work of the WIB in the coming year. The board will review this document and discuss prioritizing goals at the next meeting.

The next step will be to look at strategies for 2013 and how the WIB can confront these initiatives and the opportunity to move forward.

Meeting was adjourned at 11:55 a.m. Next meeting will be held on November 28, 2012.

Posted: Nov 28th, 2012 1:40 PM