

Northeast Minnesota
WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD MEETING
Iron Range Resources – Eveleth MN
Wednesday, September 24, 2014

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

WIB members present:

Bud Stone, Jill Anderson, Darik Carlson, Paul Carlson, Jason Quiggin, Betsy Harmon, Dave Hart, Barb Hilde, Tam Jamar, Terri Nystrom, Stan Paczynski, Craig Pagel, David Ulrich, Mike Valentine, Kelly Zink

Excused: Sue Collins, Allen Rasmussen, Roland Root, Allan Rudeck, Jeff Lee

Guests: Lori Thorpe, Drew Digby, Roy Smith, Jeremy Hanson Willis

Motion was made by Valentine, supported by Ulrich to approve the June 25, 2014 minutes as written; motion carried unanimously.

Chair Stone began the meeting by introducing new WIB members Stan Paczynski, Bricklayers and Allied Craftworkers Union 1 MN/ND; and Darik Carlson, UBEW Local 242. Jason Quiggin, Plumbers and Pipefitters Local Union #589, is replacing John Grahek on the board.

DEED Update

Jeremy Hanson Willis, DEED Deputy Commissioner of Workforce Development

Deputy Commissioner Hanson-Willis is in the process of visiting workforce centers and meeting with Workforce Investment Boards to explain the challenges that lay ahead and setting context for future activities. 162,000 jobs have been created in Minnesota since January 2011 and 200,500 jobs since the low point of the recession. By 2020, it is predicted there will be 86,000 more jobs, which will result in more openings than people to fill them. The unemployment rate is 4.3% with 36,000 individuals currently unemployed across the state. Minnesota is the third best state to make a living, sixth best place to do business, third highest labor force participation rate (70%), and fourth highest state (92%) with a High School diploma or more. Hanson-Willis outlined the challenges facing the workforce growth include employment disparities, youth unemployment, long-term unemployment, social networks, and wages.

One of DEED's strategies is to establish three pillars of Minnesota Economic Competitiveness – Talent, Innovation & Trade. A strategic service delivery process currently underway will assess, identify and explore opportunities to better serve customers; maximize use of technology; better align resources with needs; and better outreach and marketing of the Workforce Center system. There needs to be more focus on customer needs along with state-local alignment with informative and on-going conversations at the local level.

Hanson Willis next discussed the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). After ten years, the Senate and House have reached an agreement in reauthorization of a new law, 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. Discussion continued with board members participating in a question and answer session.

Twin Metals Minnesota

David Ulrich, Vice President

Twin Metals Minnesota has approximately 40,000 acres of property interests on the northern edge of Minnesota's Iron Range with the potential to be a global epicenter for strategic metals mining. There are more than an estimated 4 billion tons of copper, nickel, platinum, palladium, gold and other metal resources contained in northern Minnesota's Duluth Complex, the largest known undeveloped deposit of strategic metals in the world. The Twin Metals project is based on a 30-year underground mine plan focused on the development the Maturi and Maturi SW mineral deposits, located nine miles southeast of the city of Ely, Minnesota. It is estimated an average production rate of 50,000 tons of mineralized ore per day will generate marketable copper and nickel concentrates. Twin Metals Minnesota will create thousands of construction jobs and hundreds – potentially thousands – of long-term mining jobs. Approximately 850 full time jobs will be created when the mine is in operation, and will generate some 12 million labor hours during a roughly three year construction period. According to a University of Minnesota Duluth study, the project would generate approximately 1,700 – 1,900 additional indirect jobs in the region's economy.

When in production, all waste rock generated from underground mining activity will be used as underground backfill. Approximately 50% of the tailings produced by the concentrator in the processing of mineralized ore will be returned to the underground mine as paste backfill.

The underground mine will generate significant tax and royalty revenue for state and local governments as well as local school districts.

Grand Rapids Chamber Update

Bud Stone

Rita Olness and Teri Dudley, Career Counselors from the Office of Job Training, gave an introductory workshop on "Generations in the Workplace" at the Grand Rapids Chamber luncheon in September. The presentation outlined the multiple generations in the workforce today as well as provided opportunities for the group to interact with the speakers regarding their insight and experience with this topic. The presentation was very well received and Stone encouraged WIB members to have the presentation in their communities.

The TeenWorks 2014 program is in its fifth year, which is a collaborative effort between Itasca County Health and Human Services and the Grand Rapids Chamber. The intense, ten-day program assists 13-15 year old teens on how to obtain employment, become an effective worker, and make successful life choices that better prepares them for the future. Eleven teens were chosen to participate in and completed the entire program and earned a Certificate of Completion. The program curriculum is an integrated model concentrating on the five strands of: working, learning, connecting, leading and choosing.

Due to time restraints, additional agenda items were moved to next meeting.

Meeting was adjourned at 12:03 p.m.