

EASTERN WASHINGTON PARTNERSHIP

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL

956 S. Main • Colville, WA 99114 • (509) 684-8421 • Fax (509) 685-6094 <http://www.ewpartnership.org>
TDD/TTY (800) 833-6384 or 7-1-1

Serving the Counties of

Asotin • Columbia • Ferry • Garfield • Lincoln • Pend Oreille • Stevens • Walla Walla • Whitman

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL AND REGIONAL BOARD MEETING

SPOKANE, WA

February 23, 2017

Attendance:

WDC: Bill Clemens, Jerry Anhorn, Kathy Covey, Scott Habenicht, Jeff Koffel, Teresa Kutsch, Kenneth Maestas, Butch Van Dyk, Jennie Weber, Tessa Wicks, Deana Zakar, *By Phone:* Jim Drake, Desiree Sweeney, Kim Witt

Regional Board: Scott Hutsell, Jim Jeffords, Art Swannack, Mike Talbott

Contractors and Guests: Kelly Charlton, Noelle Colby-Rotell, Jaclyn Jacot, Heidi Khokhar, Debra Hansen, Doug Loney, Ajsa Suljic, Beth Thew,

Staff: Rod Van Alyne, Dayna Brown

Bill Clemens brought the meeting to order at 12:35 p.m. and introductions followed.

Bill Clemens called for a motion to approve the December 8, 2016 meeting minutes. Kathy Covey and Ken Maestas clarified that they called into the December 8th meeting. The December 8, 2016 meeting minutes were changed to reflect the members that called in.

Kathy Covey made a motion to approve the December 8, 2016 meeting minutes. Scott Hutsell seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Regional Board Chairman's Report

Scott Hutsell welcomed Commissioner Todd Kimball from Walla Walla County to the Regional Board. Todd is replacing Perry Dozier.

Chairman's Report

Bill Clemens welcomed Todd Kimball to the Board. Bill reported at the December meeting a draft of changes to the Bylaws was shared with members and Rod requested that if anyone has input to please contact him. No one requested additional changes.

Art Swannack made a motion to approve the changes to the Bylaws. Mike Talbott seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Bill Clemens reported that the Executive Committee met for the purpose of acting on a recommendation from the Youth Committee to request proposals from the youth providers for PY17. A motion was made to approve the recommendation from the Youth Committee to request proposals for PY17 from Blue Mountain Action Council and Rural Resources.

Scott Hutsell made a motion to approve Executive Committee's approval of the Youth Committee's recommendation. Jim Jeffords seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Quality Assurance Committee Report

Teresa Kutsch reported that the Quality Assurance Committee met on February 15 to review the service providers' performance for the period ending December 31, 2016, to make a recommendation to the WDC to request proposals to extend service provider contracts for the Adult and Dislocated Worker programs, and to discuss barrier and access solutions. Teresa went through the information on each of the graphs on the Monthly Contractor Report. Enrollments in the Dislocated Worker and Adult programs are doing fine, with the exception of Rural Resources Adult program running a little low, but they are strategizing how to connect with and enroll more seekers that are interested in training. The Youth programs are fully enrolled and the outcomes are above target. Expenditure levels are fine for this time of year.

Teresa explained the Dislocated Worker and Adult program contracts were awarded last year to Employment Security Department, Blue Mountain Action Council and Rural Resources for two years with a review after one year to determine progress. The service providers, Jennie Weber, Doug Loney, Kathy Covey and Kelly Charlton, excused themselves from the meeting at 12:44.

Art Swannack asked if it is concerning that Rural Resources is running behind; Rod explained that Kelly has a corrective action plan to get on track and by the May meeting everything should be better. Every month the WDC runs reports to watch the progress. Teresa reported that the committee reviewed the contractor's progress and agreed to recommend that the WDC exercise its option to extend the service providers contracts for the program year beginning July 1, 2017. Teresa asked for a motion to allow Employment Security, Blue Mountain Action Council and Rural Resources to develop proposals to continue their contracts.

Ken Maestas made a motion to seek information from Employment Security, Blue Mountain Action Council and Rural Resources to extend adult service. Art Swannack seconded the motion. The motion passed.

The service providers returned to the meeting at 12:47.

Teresa explained that Rod provided a nine county rollup of the barrier information that was presented at the December 8th WDC meeting. The informational covered six of the fourteen barriers identified in WIOA and the State Workforce Board's Talent and Prosperity for All (TAP) plan. The committee agreed that the information was useful and is interested in looking at data for all barrier populations as data sources become available. The information will be used to assess how the workforce development system is doing in serving these populations. Teresa added that Teesha Kirschbaum, Executive Director of the Washington State Rehabilitation Council, and member of the Workforce Boards Accessibility and Barrier Solutions Committee will be joining the May Quality Assurance Committee meeting as part of a "listening tour" that has already been to several WDC's in the state.

Youth Committee Report

Rod Van Alyne reported that the Youth Committee met on January 6th, 2017 to review the PY16 progress of the youth service providers and make a recommendation to the Executive Committee regarding PY17 youth services. Kathy Covey from Blue Mountain Action Council and Kelly Charlton from Rural Resources reported on current progress and shared success stories with the committee. Rod reviewed the Monthly Contractor's

Report, stating that enrollment, performance and spending are on track. A motion was made to approve the continuation of services for PY17 based on the submission of acceptable proposals from the providers.

Rod reported that the Youth Committee met on February 17th, 2017 to review the PY17 proposals submitted by Blue Mountain Action Council and Rural Resources. The Youth Committee reviewed the proposals, with Kathy Covey and Kelly Charlton present to answer questions from the committee. Eric Hoyle asked about the impact on the programs from changes to the minimum wage. Both Kathy and Kelly responded that the changes will impact the Work Experience (WEX) programs and the result will be few hours or fewer places for youth. Rod stated that after discussion the Youth Committee agreed to recommend that the WDC extend Blue Mountain Action Council and Rural Resources for PY17 youth services. The service providers, Kathy Covey and Kelly Charlton, excused themselves from the meeting at 12:57.

Mike Talbott made a motion to extend youth services for Blue Mountain Action Council and Rural Resources to extend service. Art Swannack seconded the motion. Jennie Weber abstained. The motion passed.

The service providers returned to the meeting at 1:01.

Director's Report

Rod reported the discussions are ongoing with service providers and partners for the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) and it should be ready to review at the May meeting. Rod stated that the area is putting together business services teams with partners and service providers. If anyone has employers as their customers, we would like to have them be part of the team. The kickoff for business services meetings will be March 10th in Colville, March 21st in Walla Walla, and one upcoming in Clarkston/Pullman.

Rod spoke about the WDC working with the Community Colleges of Spokane on a project to bring a welding class to Newport. Jaclyn Jacot reported that the Community Colleges of Spokane has applied for a USDA Rural Business grant for a one year welding certificate available in Newport. The class will be held at the high school starting in January 2018. There will be scholarships to help with people that aren't eligible for financial aid, help with gas vouchers, and childcare among other services. Jaclyn stated that a portion of the grant will provide a program navigator and have a local advisory group. Kathy Covey asked how many students they will have; Jaclyn stated the grant can help with 12-15 students on scholarships and up to 20 students will be enrolled. Deana Zakar asked when they will know the results of the grant application; Jaclyn said they should know by late spring. Art Swannack asked if this will go into the southern counties; Jaclyn stated if there is an industry need, they would look into it and it would go through the Pullman campus. Rod mentioned if there is a local high school that could partner with the college; it would make a seamless partnership. Jerry Anhorn from Walla Walla Community College stated that they have partnered with Clarkston High School as well and that the college has a six station, portable welding classroom. Rod mentioned that two of the USDA grant requirements are that the partnering employers need to have less than 50 employees and less than \$1,000,000. in revenue, and the business needs to be in Washington State (which makes it harder in Pend Oreille County).

Rod added that the WDC is participating with the Rural Spark Grant, which is Career and College Readiness in rural areas. There is collaboration with Community Colleges of Spokane and rural school districts, including Colville, Mary Walker (Springdale), Reardon-Edwall, Grand Coulee and Riverside.

Rod mentioned that in March, he will be traveling to Washington DC with Bill Clemens and Jennie Weber to attend the NAWB conference. During their time there, they hope to have an opportunity to meet with Senators Murray and Cantwell and Representative McMorris Rodgers.

Rod reported that the WDC applied for the Upskill-Backfill Initiative Grant opportunity from the Workforce Board. The proposal requires the WDC to be the lead or co-lead for any application in from the area. Rod explained the proposal is similar to the old incumbent worker program, with an added backfill piece that will create new opportunities for jobseekers as workers upskill. There will be a match requirement for employers, which could be in-kind.

Regional Economist Report

Ajsa Suljic, Regional Economist with Employment Security, presented the labor market report. Ajsa reported the unemployment rates are seasonally higher throughout the state. Labor force has increased 3.1% in the last year, showing that confidence is looking up.

Ajsa reported that non-farm employment is growing, it is estimated at 72,440, up from last year. Transportation and warehousing is leading the growth and manufacturing is expanding, some more rapidly than the labor force supply. Government continues to be the major industries by county.

Walla Walla has the highest household income by county at \$50,120. Overall, there has been a consistent decrease. The largest decrease was in Columbia County, in 2013-2014 there was a significant project in the county that raised the income and now it is getting back down to where it was before. Ajsa stated the largest increase in population was in Whitman County and the largest decrease was in Garfield County. Mike Talbott asked how the population is counted with people that have cabins or second homes; Ajsa said the census counts the primary residence, not secondary residences. Ajsa stated that typically during the months of November and December there is a decrease in demand, but in 2016 both supply and demand increased. More people are coming into centers doing job search and more people are entering the labor force. Ajsa added that employers are still struggling to find skilled workers. Art Swannack asked if the data only shows individuals that come through WorkSource; Ajsa said yes, and added that some of the demand doesn't show (agriculture), because they often don't put their listings on line.

Ajsa's full PowerPoint presentation can be accessed at: <http://ewpartnership.org/reports>

WorkSource Report

Jennie Weber reported the new unemployment benefit system has launched, adding that the journey getting people through the Secure Access Washington (SAW) site has been a challenge but staff is working diligently through it.

Jennie stated that the new veterans care center has opened in Walla Walla. It will draw residents from three counties and is the greatest forward thinking center in the nation.

Jerry Anhorn reported that Walla Walla Community College is pursuing a \$125,000 grant to enhance its adult basic education services. The grant will support High School completion, GED, High School 21+, and I-Best programs. The grant application will be submitted March 2nd and should know if it is approved by the end of March.

Doug Loney reported that WARN notices have been sent out for Kinross mine and mill, the Buckhorn mine will cease operations in March and large scale employee layoffs will follow in April. A small number of employees will stay off temporarily to assist with decommissioning. WorkSource employees will be going up to Kinross to work with the employees and make sure they know how to access their benefits. The company is putting together a job fair that will take place in late April.

Doug informed the Board that Hearth and Home Technologies in Colville has announced its decision to permanently close the plant. The company plans to shift all production to its facility in Halifax Pennsylvania, resulting in job losses for approximately 90 employees, with a small number of the product engineering and technical services employees remaining in Colville. WorkSource staff will be onsite to survey the workers to see what their needs are. Bill Clemens asked if the employees can relocate; Doug said that some will relocate. Art Swannack asked why they chose to move; Doug stated that was simply a corporate decision to consolidate the operations. Rod added that they purchased a facility in Pennsylvania and looked at the efficiencies and chose to move the whole line.

Debra Hansen – WSU Stevens County Extension

Debra Hansen reported the WSU Extension has joined a statewide conference partnering with the Governor's summit to equip business, industry and education leaders with examples, connections and knowledge about career connected learning. There will be two workforce development events that people are encouraged to participate in through partner recruitment, financial support, attending the summit and sharing the information with others in the community.

Rural Development Initiatives

Heidi Khokhar and Noelle Colby-Rotell made a presentation for Rural Development Initiatives. Heidi explained Rural Development Initiatives is a non-profit organization in Oregon that helps communities struggling with the loss of industries in their areas. The organization committed to cultivating leaders in communities and creating groups that will work together to accomplish the goal.

Noelle explained that the project is community led the entire way through. They select a project together, apply for grant money and carry the project out together. It is a minimum three year investment from start to finish, and community members stick with the program. They recognize what works effectively in their area. Noelle stated that people have to recruit for the class. Kathy Covey asked how to find companies in our area; Noelle said that they can help find them and then see if the organization is interested. Bill Clemens stated that he know several people that have been through the class and have went on to be more active in their community.

Beth Thew informed the board that in April there will be a Business Engagement meeting in Moses Lake, if anyone is interested they are welcome to attend it.

Old Business:

None

New Business:

None

Bill announced the next meeting will be held on May 25, 2017.

The meeting adjourned at 2:24 p.m.