

EASTERN WASHINGTON PARTNERSHIP

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL

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WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL AND REGIONAL BOARD MEETING SPOKANE, WA February 22, 2018

Attendance:

WDC: Bill Clemens, Jerry Anhorn, Kathy Covey, Larry Frick, Scott Habenicht, Teresa Kutsch, Jennie Weber, Kim Witt, *By Phone:* Jim Drake, Jami Gecas, Kenneth Maestas
Regional Board: Scott Hutsell, Jim Jeffords, Todd Kimball, Steve Kiss, Art Swannack, Mike Talbott,
Contractors and Guests: Kelly Charlton, Jaclyn Jacot, Doug Loney, Angela Merritt, Darlene Snider, Ajsa Suljic, *By Phone:* Dawn Smith
Staff: Rod Van Alyne, Dayna Brown

Bill Clemens brought the meeting to order at 12:40 p.m. and introductions followed.

Bill Clemens called for a motion to approve the Agenda, the September 28, 2017 and the January 5, 2018 minutes.

Scott Hutsell made a motion to approve the agenda. Kathy Covey seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Jim Jeffords made a motion to approve the September 28, 2017 meeting minutes. Mike Talbott seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Kathy Covey made a motion to approve the January 5, 2017 meeting minutes. Art Swannack seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Regional Board Chairman's Report

Scott Hutsell reported that in December Desiree Sweeney stepped down as a board member and Rod has reached out to Rob Willford to determine if he was still interested in being on the WDC. Rob had been the representative from Tri-County Economic Development District (TEDD) before leaving his position to become the Director of Finance and HR for Hewes Marine Company in Colville. Rob is interested in returning to the board.

Art Swannack made a motion to appoint Rob Willford to the WDC board. Steve Kiss seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Scott stated that Rod has reached out to Aaron Edwards from Ferry County Public Hospital District to determine if he or one of his staff would be interested in filling the vacant position created when Deana Zaker left the board.

Chairman's Report

Bill Clemens reported that during the September 2017 meeting the Quality Assurance Committee was asked to prepare a proposal to form an ad hoc group to be the Barrier and Access Solutions Committee (BASC). The proposal was to be approved at the December meeting, but there wasn't a quorum at that meeting.

Scott Hutsell made a motion to approve the ad hoc Barrier and Access Solutions Committee. Art Swannack seconded the motion. Jennie Weber abstained. The motion passed.

Prior to the conversation regarding the RFP process; Kelly Charlton, Kathy Covey, Jennie Weber, and Doug Loney were excused from the meeting due to having a conflict of interest in the service provider contract award discussion.

In January, the WDC and Regional Board approved hiring Tom O'Brien to oversee the RFP process. In a recent discussion with Tom, it was pointed out that when the RFP was written for PY 16 and PY 17 it included language to extend the contractors for an additional two years. The language is the same for both the Youth and Adult/Dislocated Worker RFP's and would allow for the contract to be extended two additional years dependent on acceptable performance.

In previous years the Youth council would review performance and make a recommendation to the board to proceed with asking the contractors to submit proposals for the next year. The Administrative committee would do the same for Adult and Dislocated Worker. Providers will need to respond to questions developed by the two committees and submit a statement of work, enrollment schedules and budgets. The committees would then make a recommendation to the full board to continue.

Bill reported that Rod had asked that instead of contracting with Tom this year, we consider extending the providers and proceed with reviews by the Youth and Administrative committees.

Art Swannack asked if there was anything in the packet concerning this; Rod said that there was nothing in the packet, that an email had been sent earlier in the week; he is asking to rescind the action from the January meeting. Rod added that the difference would be that the RFP would not be opened to additional bidders, and that historically the WDC has not had any other bidders. Mike Talbott asked if the State auditors would find any problem with not doing a full RFP; Scott Hutsell added that there was a provision in the previous contract that it could be extended for two years.

Art Swannack made a motion to rescind the action from the January meeting and to proceed with reviews for the Youth, Adult and Dislocated Worker programs to extend service provider contracts pending a review of performance. Scott Habenicht seconded the motion. The motion passed.

The service providers rejoined the meeting and Rod informed them that the board agreed to extend their contracts pending a review of performance and their responses to service delivery proposals.

Quality Assurance Committee Report

Teresa Kutsch reported that the Quality Assurance Committee met on February 14, 2018 to review current service provider performance through January 31, 2018 and to discuss the Barrier and Access Committee (BASC).

The percentage of planned registrants for the youth measure is doing well, adult enrollments are increasing as both Rural Resources and Blue Mountain Action Council have amped up enrollments, and the dislocated worker program is just over 50% and working on increasing their numbers.

Teresa explained that spending is a little low for all programs, with the exception of Blue Mountain Action Council's Adult program, which could turn out to be a good thing due to budget issues this year. The Dislocated Worker program also have Rapid Response funding and the Hearth and Home layoff became Trade Act certified, which increases resources for the impacted workers. They are a little behind on spending, but they are still serving the population through other funding. Teresa added that Jennie Weber shared with the committee that they have a new comprehensive strategy to invite more people in through a pool that will help bring up the numbers.

Chart B shows that Rural Resources is a little behind and Blue Mountain Action Council is a little ahead in Youth placement in employment or education, Teresa added that the Youth degree and certificate rate should go up in June with graduations.

Teresa explained that during the December WDC meeting, the board was unable to vote on the Barrier and Access Committee because there wasn't a quorum. During the Chairman's report it was discussed and voted on. Teresa stated that the committee needs to be thinking about who to have on the sub-committee.

Director's Report

Rod Van Alyne reported that with the cycle of continuing resolutions, funding has been a bit of a mystery. We are planning based on the previous years' allocation and are not expecting significant changes.

The WDC has been doing service provider monitoring, one week was in Walla Walla the end of January and one week in Colville in February. The monitoring was done earlier this year in preparation for the state monitoring in March. Rod stated that no critical issues were found; most of the issues are easily remedied and relate to changes in ETO and under WIOA. Employment Security's monitoring team will be in Walla Walla the end of March to review files from Blue Mountain Action Council and WorkSource Walla Walla. In October the monitoring team came to Colville and completed the Fiscal and Admin piece. They had no issues and will give the final report after the visit in March.

Regional Economist Report

Ajsa Suljic reported that unemployment rates are seasonally adjusted, with Ferry County having the highest unemployment rate of 14.1, which is an increase of 2.8. The Eastern Washington partnership area has over 97,000 people in the labor force, an increase of 2.2%, which is following national trends.

Labor force participation rate in the Eastern workforce area shows individuals 16 years of age and older employed or actively looking for work. The highest rate in the area is Whitman County at 68% and the lowest rate in the area is Ferry County at 42.6%. Kelly Charlton asked where the participation rate comes from, is the "actively looking for work" data drawing from Worksource.wa; Ajsa said that it is from surveys in those counties along with the database.

Ajsa stated that nonfarm changes throughout the area show an increase in government jobs and a decrease in construction jobs. An increase in the government jobs can be in education, and forest service. The information comes from surveys from employers and shows where the company is located, employees can be living in another county and traveling to other counties for work. Kim Witt stated that 50% to 60% of the employees at the Teck Resources in Pend Oreille County come from Stevens County or Montana.

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

WorkSource Report

Jennie Weber reported that over 48% of seekers are self-service only, 28% are staff assisted only and over 23% are both staff assisted and self-serve. Basic services are the most common services, including an assessment service which looks to see if the seekers have the skills needed for the jobs or training that they are seeking.

Doug Loney reported that the companion case management system to Worksource.wa, has fallen short of specified requirements and left the state struggling to achieve required federal reporting and the ability to query for local ad hoc data. Staffs across the state have also complained about the speed and design of the system for day to day business applications. Over the next 12 – 18 months, ESD and system partners will be working with Monster to develop and implement a replacement system. An incremental rollout is planned with some elements of the system potentially ready for cutover before the end of 2018. The design team has begun hosting “Voice of the Customer” sessions all across the state. These sessions are intended to capture design input from a mix of system staffs and program experts, so that user needs are better understood, and incorporated during the redevelopment effort.

Doug stated Hearth and Home Technologies met the criteria for to be certified as eligible to receive adjustment assistance under the Trade Act. The certification covers workers separated on or after September 28, 2016 and provides up to 115 individuals the opportunity to apply for TAA / TRA services.

The original TAA certification for workers impacted by closure activities of the Echo Bay Minerals / Kinross Mine and Mill operations expired in 11/4/17. A new certification was approved to begin 11/5/17 to eliminate any lapse in eligibility coverage. Doug reported there are about 48 individuals that are served with TAA.

Board Development Presentation

Rod reported that when DOL visited in September, they recommended that we do a board development refresher, there are some new members on the board that might benefit from it also.

The Eastern Washington Partnership Workforce Development Council is a 19 member board, with the majority of the members from the private sector. The board designs and administers workforce development system to meet the needs of employers, workers, job seekers and youth in the Counties of Asotin, Columbia, Ferry, Garfield, Lincoln, Pend Oreille, Stevens, Walla Walla and Whitman under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunities Act of 2017 (WIOA).

The Regional Board is made up of nine County Commissioners, one from each county, that have an Inter-Local Agreement that forms a partnership to implement WIOA. The County Commissioners are the grant recipients and they appoint members to the workforce board.

Rod explained that WIOA was signed into law on July 22, 2014 and is designed to help job seekers access employment, education, training and support services to succeed in the labor market as well as to match employers with the skilled workers they need to compete in the economy.

WIOA Title I authorizes the delivery of workforce services to youth, adults, and dislocated workers. The service providers for Title I in the Eastern Washington Partnership are Employment Security, Blue Mountain Action Council and Rural Resources Community Action.

WIOA Title II authorizes funding for adult education and literacy activities in local areas, the local providers in the WDA are Community Colleges of Spokane and Walla Walla Community College. WIOA Title III makes amendments to the Wagner-Peyser Act, the services are delivered by Employment Security Department. It requires the employment services to be co-located in one-stop centers. Title IV includes amendments to the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. It authorizes funding for vocational rehabilitation services through Division of Vocational Rehabilitation and the Department for Services for the Blind. WIOA Title V is the general provision for the Act.

Rod stated that the major changes in WIOA are placing emphasis on career planning, shifting youth focus to older out-of-school youth, creating one performance measure system, placing emphasis on coordination of funding streams and integrated service delivery, and it emphasizes business as a customer.

The performance measures in WIOA measure employed in second quarter after program completion, employed in fourth quarter after program completion, median earnings during second quarter after completion, percentage of participants enrolled in training or education that received a recognized credential during participation or within one year after program completion, percentage of participants enrolled in training or education leading to a recognized credential or employment who during the program year make measurable skills gains, and effectiveness in serving employers. Rod added that service providers enter what they know, but the numbers come from Federal data, which isn't reported back for 180 days.

Art Swannack asked if there has been statistics done showing what it costs to do the program and what the participants get out of it; Rod said that there has been statistics done and it has shown mixed results. In the old system we were able to see the amount of participants that went to work and what the actual income was. There are studies that pop up occasionally. Art stated that it would be good to have something that legislatures understand. Rod said that it would also be good to have stories about how participants and employers benefit from services.

Rod reported that the strategic plan listed out goals of Integrated Services, Youth Services and Business Services. Partners provide an integrated service delivery system that aligns the available resources to seamlessly address the needs of both job seekers and business. Youth will have the basic educational and workplace skills and career pathways knowledge that is necessary for them to succeed in education, post-secondary training and employment.

Rod stated that there has been a Memorandum of Understanding that is better defined and partners agree to meet to evaluate progress. The team is looking at a customer services model that is seamless. The WDC is developing tools to provide local labor market information to youth to help them identify high demand/high skill occupation in the region. They are reaching out to dropout prevention programs at the local level and continue collaboration with the Job Corps, as well as increasing opportunities for youth work experience/internships through Pre-ETS, Career Connected Learning and a Forest Service project. Bill asked if there have been any skills panels planned; Rod said there is nothing in writing, but they are looking into natural resource development, hospitality, and retail. Kathy Covey said that she would be interested in the I-Best model for energy systems; Rod said that the WDC could work on that. There are talks going on with the timber industry and the colleges to have a program set up that will include the first year going through basic skills such as how systems in a plant work together, and the second year will go plant management.

Old Business: None

New Business: None

The meeting adjourned at 2:23