

EASTERN WASHINGTON PARTNERSHIP

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL

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WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL AND REGIONAL BOARD MEETING February 27, 2020 Spokane, Washington

The meeting of the WorkForce Development Council and Regional Board was called to order at 12:30 PM by Chairperson, Bill Clemens.

1. Attendance and Introductions

WDC Members: Bill Clemens, Gabe Coates, Larry Frick, Scott Habenicht, Barry Lamont, John Little, Brian St. Clair (new board member), Jennie Weber, Tessa Wicks and Rob Willford. Jim Drake participated via phone.

Regional Board Members: Mike Talbott, Scott Hutsell, Steve Kiss, Wes McCart and Arthur Swannack. Todd Kimball participated via phone.

Partners and Guests: Kelly Charlton, Doug Loney, Jaclyn Jacot, Bryan Raines, Ajsa Suljic, Julia Havens, and Doug Tweedy.

2. Approval of Agenda

Bill Clemens called for a motion to approve the agenda. *Scott Hutsell made a motion to approve the agenda as presented. Scott Habenicht seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.*

3. Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes

Bill Clemens called for a motion to approve the minutes from the December 12, 2019 meeting. *Art Swannack made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. Mike Talbott seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.*

4. Regional Board Report

Scott Hutsell presented the Regional Board Report. He began with the introduction of Brian St. Clair from Columbia Pulp. Scott asked for a motion to approve Brian to be a member of the Board of Directors. *Mike Talbott made the motion to approve Brian St. Clair as a member of the Eastern Washington Partnership WDC Board of Directors. Steve Kiss seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.*

There was a question on election of officers of the Regional Board. Rod replied that he thought that would occur at the September meeting, but he will check to clarify.

5. Chairman's Report

Bill Clemens welcomed Brian St. Clair.

Bill went on to share that the RFP had been posted for the Coordinator. He asked that approval be given to the Executive Committee to move forward with selection of a candidate for the Coordinator position. Rod added that, due to the timing of the posting and subsequent review and selection process, there would not be ample time to allow for this matter to be brought back to the Board and still meet deadlines. He shared that there have been several requests for information and some interest in the position. *Rob Willford made a motion to allow the Executive Committee to approve a candidate for the Coordinator position. Barry Lamont seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.*

Bill reported that several members of Workforce Development Councils met on Monday with Steve Ross, Market Information Director for ESD. Rod added that the intent was to assist in understanding what is happening in the labor market as an effort to be able to plan better and stay ahead of the curve. This is important especially in training of potential employees. It was determined that the counties in the SW corner of the Eastern Washington Partnership had a common labor market with Benton Franklin (tri-cities) as well as the counties bordering from Idaho and Oregon. There is a need to consider and understand from a regional perspective. The primary take-away from the meeting was "even though we have often planned by looking at the past, now is a time to plan by looking towards the future". It is also important to support and include those in the regional areas – they live in and know their communities.

6. Quality Assurance Committee Report

Tessa Wicks provided that the Quality Assurance Committee had met via phone on February 19, 2020. She read the minutes from the meeting. There were no questions or comments. Tessa reported that they had been presented with a revised Report. The Committee had suggested several changes, but for the most part were pleased with the revisions. Rod added that the number for enrollment looked fine, with a few minor issues. The exit numbers were a little lower than expected, but not of concern at this time.

The report that was provided to the QA Committee, along with the revised report, was presented for discussion. It was noted that a column that represented "Current Participants" had been removed. Art Swannack asked about the purpose of the change. Rod replied that the numbers in that category were easily skewed. He and the committee felt that it could cause unrealistic numbers and may be confusing. Jennie Weber stated that she felt the data presented in that column may be helpful to the Board. Art agreed and it was decided to stay with the original format.

7. WorkSource Report

Jennie Weber presented the Eastern Washington Partnership report. She shared statistics regarding Job Seeker Services, Employer Services and the demographics of Job Seekers. Bill Clemens asked where the numbers presented are compared to the previous year. Jennie will check on that. Jennie also pointed out that they are finding that employers are looking for more help with recruitment and that they are seeing more job seekers that are employed looking at other opportunities.

Doug Loney spoke regarding the additional layoffs in the retail business that have been happening. The Macy's layoff in downtown Walla Walla will have far reaching repercussions, as this leaves a large empty building in the middle of the downtown area and approximately 80 employees looking for work. It was added that the Sears in Moscow, Idaho is closing and reminded that Shopko and K-Marts had closed in the area in the previous year. This is an ongoing issue as retail shopping changes to on-line rather than brick and mortar.

Kelly Charlton reported on a new partnership with the Education Service District 101. The program, Open Doors in School, will allow Rural Resource Employment Training staff to create a new workshop series for students in the Northeast region of the state. Workshops will be provided along with paid work experience. This program is designed to increase Out of School youth and young adult enrollments by providing the education and training needed for them to make informed decisions on their future work goals.

Bryan Raines reported on a new partnership with the Spokane Tribe in the expansion of the Chewelah Casino. This will include a new 70 room hotel that will be hiring 40 employees and a CEO to manage the facility and (in the future) an improved casino. Groundbreaking will be happening soon, especially since the winter weather is dissipating. There are still some infrastructure issues that are being worked on, but they are resolvable.

8. Local Planning Session

Rod began the Local Planning Session with an explanation of what happened with the transfer from WIA (WorkForce Investment Act) to WIOA (Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act). The primary difference is that WIA gave permission to work together as partners but did not provide the tools necessary to make it happen. WIOA makes the system more integrated and includes all partners. It is meant to serve employment seekers to self-sufficiency, but it is dependent on the labor market. WIA was more of a placement program, while WIOA builds a continuum and works towards "career building"

WIOA requires that Regional Plans be created, updated and adhered to. Rod asked the Board for guidance on information that should be updated. Rod added that prior to the Board Meeting the EWP Partners had met to review the Vision and Goals. He would share the outcome of that meeting with the Board as they review each goal.

The Board was presented with the goals and reviewed each individually, taking into consideration the suggestions made by the partners. The suggestions and changes provided will be applied to the current Goals and a draft will be presented to the Board (via email) for further review. Rod went over the time schedule, which is very short and includes a 30-day public

comment window. Final approval of the plan will be requested at the May 28, 2020 Board meeting.

9. New Business (and Round Table)

There was none.

10. New Business (and Round Table)

Aja Suljiic shared information on the upcoming 2020 Economic Symposium to be held in Pasco. The meeting will be April 14, 2020. However, there are Pre-Symposium Tours being offered on April 13. This is a great opportunity, as there will be a representative from the Federal Reserve speaking on the outlook of the economy. She also added that this event has not been held in Eastern Washington for a very long time.