

EASTERN WASHINGTON PARTNERSHIP

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL

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Workforce Development council and Regional Board Meeting May 28, 2020

1. Introductions

Due to constraints because of COVID19, the May 28, 2020 meeting was called to order via Zoom teleconferencing at 12:37 PM by Chairperson, Bill Clemens. In attendance were:

WDC Members – Jerry Anhorn, Jr., Bill Clemens, Gabe Coates, Jim Drake, Leslie Druffel, Larry Frick, Scott Habenicht, Jeff Koffel, Tony Maiorana, Angela Merritt, Brian St. Clair, and Jennie Weber.

Regional Board Members – Brian Shinn, Mike Talbot, Scott Hutsell, Wes McCart, and Art Swannack.

Contractors and Guests – Kelly Charlton, Elizabeth Guera, Julia Havens, Jaclyn Jacot, Chad Miltenberger, Susie Pearson, Bryan Raines, Dawn Smith, Ajsa Suljic and Tom O'Brien.

Staff Members: Rod Van Alyne and Tracy Ferrell

2. Approval of Agenda

Chairperson Bill Clemens requested a motion to approve the Agenda. *Scott Habenicht made a motion to approve the agenda as presented. Mike Talbot seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.*

3. Approval of February 27, 2020 minutes

Chairperson Bill Clemens requested a motion to approve the minutes from the previous meeting. *Art Swannack made a motion to approve the minutes from the February 27, 2020 meeting as presented. Tony Maiorana seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.*

4. Regional Board Report

The Regional Board Report was presented by Scott Hutsell. He began by welcoming new Board members Brian Shinn representing Asotin County and Howard Hambleton representing Ferry County. Scott then recommended that the Board approve new members WDC Jeff Koffel, who is replacing Barry Lamont as the Executive Director of Tri-County Economic Development District and Leslie Druffel, Outreach Coordinator at the McGregor Company. *Wes McCart made a motion to approve the addition of Jeff Koffel and Leslie Druffel as WDC members. Art Swannack seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.*

5. Chairman's Report

Bill Clemens gave the Chairpersons report. He noted that during the month of February the draft of the revised Local Plan was completed. That draft was distributed for review and made available for public comment in the month of March. However, the onslaught of COVID19 and subsequent office closures delayed any further action. Further approval is now on hold pending additional direction to the state board by the Department of Labor (DOL). Preliminary review by

the Workforce Board did not indicate that there would be changes needed. A response from the Employment Security Department (ESD) is pending. Art Swannack asked why there was still a delay. Rod Van Alyne explained that the hold-up is due to COVID19. Originally the DOL provided guidance for the plans pre-COVID19 and currently the Workforce Training Board is waiting for directions to proceed and if there will be any changes to the planning process as a result of COVID19. When ESD contracts with local areas they generally get some information from the local plans as a result ESD is asking for certain information that is needed to continue as a "Workforce Board", primarily the make-up of the Board, Interlocal agreements and audit results. Grant packets may supply further information. It was noted that there could be more extensive changes requested for the plan.

6. Executive Committee Report

Bill Clemens presented the Executive Committee Report. The committee met on March 13, 2020 (by teleconference). In attendance were Bill Clemmons, Scott Hutsell and Art Swannack as well as Rod Van Alyne. The purpose of the meeting was to select a Procurement Coordinator for the PY20/FY2021 Youth, Adult and Dislocated Worker Programs. The Request for Proposals had gone out with only one person responding, Tom O'Brien. After review of his proposal the Executive Committee voted to select Tom O'Brien as the Procurement Coordinator.

Tom O'Brien provided a presentation to the WDC meeting attendees starting with the RFP process that was used to seek contractors that could provide WIOA employment services for the Youth, Adult and the Dislocated Workers. Tom drafted an RFP and published it in local newspapers on April 1, 2020. The RFP information was also emailed to the 11 other Workforce Development Boards in Washington State. On April 11, 2020, a bidder's conference was held allowing for questions to be asked of Tom.

The due date for proposals was May 1, 2020. On or before that date, there were four proposals received as follows:

- Rural Resources Community Action (RRCA) presented a proposal to provide youth services in the north (4) counties.
- RRCA and Blue Mountain Action Council (BMAC) jointly submitted a proposal to provide youth services in the south (5) counties.
- The Employment Security Department (ESD) joined with RRCA and BMAC to form a consortium to submit a proposal to provide Adult and Dislocated Worker services in the southern (5) Counties.
- ESD and RRCA jointly submitted a proposal to provide Adult and Dislocated Worker services in the northern (4) counties.

Although there was only one submittal for each of the RFP's, all needed to be thoroughly reviewed by Tom to assure they met legal requirements as well as all other requirements as stated in the RFP. After assuring that the requirements had been met, Tom sent the results to the Youth Council and the Administrative Committee for further review and approval. Tom met with the Administrative Committee on May 15th and the Youth Council on May 19th. During the meetings, an Evaluation Form was utilized to determine the number of points awarded out of 100 given points. All proposals scored very well. During the council and committee meetings there was allowance for questions and open discussion on items such as how the contractors would work with other partners, performance measures per WIOA, and program management.

7. Administrative Committee Report

Bill Clemens represented the Administrative Committee, concurring that there was a meeting held on May 15, 2020 with Scott Habenicht, Larry Frick, Tom O'Brien, and Bill in attendance. The RFP process and the outcomes were presented to the committee by Tom. The Administrative Committee was satisfied with the process and agreed to recommend service contracts as proposed for the Adult and Displaced Workers.

Administrative Report - Regional Board Approval

Wes McCart made a motion to approve the Administrative Report as presented. Brian Shinn seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Administrative Report - Workforce Development Council Approval

Jerry Anhorn made a motion to approve the Administrative Report as presented. Scott Habenicht seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Approval of Service Contracts (Southern) – Regional Board

Art Swannack made a motion to accept the recommendation of the Administrative Committee to contract with the Employment Security Department, Rural Resources Community Action and Blue Mountain Action Council as a consortium in order to provide employment services to Adults and Dislocated Workers in the counties of Walla Walla, Whitman, Garfield, Columbia and Asotin. Wes McCart seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Approval of Service Contracts (Southern) – Workforce Development Council

Jeff Koffel made a motion to accept the recommendation of the Administrative Committee to contract with the Employment Security Department, Rural Resources Community Action and Blue Mountain Action Council as a consortium in order to provide employment services to Adults and Dislocated Workers in the counties of Walla Walla, Whitman, Garfield, Columbia and Asotin. Jim Drake seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Approval of Service Contracts (Northern) – Regional Board

Art Swannack made a motion to accept the recommendation of the Administrative Committee to contract with the Employment Security Department and Rural Resources Community Action jointly in order to provide employment services to Adults and Dislocated Workers in the counties of Stevens, Pend Oreille, Ferry and Lincoln. Wes McCart seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Approval of Service Contracts (Northern) – Workforce Development Council

Jeff Koffel made a motion to accept the recommendation of the Administrative Committee to contract with the Employment Security Department and Rural Resources Community Action jointly in order to provide employment services to Adults and Dislocated Workers in the counties of Stevens, Pend Oreille, Ferry and Lincoln. Jim Drake seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

8. Youth Committee Report

Angela Merritt reported that the EWP Youth Council had met on May 19, 2020 with Jim Kowalkowski, Eric Hoyle, Tom O'Brien, and herself in attendance. Angela noted that Tom provided much the same report as presented in today's meeting. The Youth Council agreed that the contracts to provide Youth Employment services should be awarded as presented.

Approval of Service Contracts (Northern) – Regional Board

Wes McCart made a motion to accept the recommendation of the Youth Council to contract with Rural Resources Community Action in order to provide employment services to Youth (In School and Out of School) in the counties of Stevens, Pend Oreille, Ferry and Lincoln. Art Swannack seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Approval of Service Contracts (Northern) – Workforce Development Council

Jeff Koffel made a motion to accept the recommendation of the Youth Council to contract with Rural Resources Community Action in order to provide employment services to Youth (In School and Out of School) in the counties of Stevens, Pend Oreille, Ferry and Lincoln. Jerry Anhorn, Jr., seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Approval of Service Contracts (Southern) – Regional Board

Mike Talbott made a motion to accept the recommendation of the Youth Council to contract with Rural Resources Community Action and Blue Mountain Action Council jointly in order to provide employment services to Youth (In School and Out of School) in the counties of Walla Walla, Whitman, Garfield, Columbia and Asotin. Art Swannack seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Approval of Service Contracts (Southern) – Workforce Development Council

Jeff Koffel made a motion to accept the recommendation of the Youth Council to contract with Rural Resources Community Action and Blue Mountain Community Action jointly in order to provide employment services to Youth (In School and Out of School) in the counties of Walla Walla, Whitman, Garfield, Columbia and Asotin. Tony Maiorana seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Scott Hutsell extended his thanks to Tom O'Brien and all that were involved with the RFP process. The good work is greatly appreciated.

9. Director's Report

Rod Van Alyne reported that there has been mention of the possibility of Dislocated Worker's Disaster Funding becoming available. This could be as much as \$12M but is still in the very early stages. The funding would be specific to those that have been impacted by COVID19, such as those who lost jobs due to the pandemic. It could also bolster support in communities through food banks, the health district, etc. The funding would be for "RECOVERY" in our area. Rod sees opportunities to retrain employees in new jobs/careers. He is waiting for more news, but hopes that it will hit the ground soon so that those that have lost jobs can be brought back into the workforce rapidly. Scott Hutsell asked where the funding would be coming from. It was noted that it could be from second funding that is within CARES funding. The first funds that were provided originated from "Disaster" funds that had been set aside specifically for that purpose. Scott commented that the time frame regarding CARES funding has been very short (for counties and cities). Rod noted that he is meeting with the state Workforce Board to discuss areas that could be covered by the funding. They have been anticipating barriers. One of those may be that non-profits are not able to provide the incumbent training for workers. This is an unfortunate as it makes funding not as user-friendly as hoped. Scott feels that the funding will go out as fast as possible.

There is still being work done on the allocation formula for the contracts that were awarded earlier in the meeting. It appears that there will be a 17% overall increase with as much as 24% in the Adult and Youth programs and 1% in the Dislocated Workers program.

Rod also shared that the new Performance Targets are being set by the Washington State Workforce Board. However, they are still waiting for responses from the Department of Labor. Once the targets have been set, EWP will be able to see if our numbers meet the targets provided. Rod noted that there have been four new targets, including targets for income and median earning as well as measurable skills gained based on quarterly numbers. Previous tracking of the targets was not consistent in the ETO components, causing numbers to be low.

Rod explained that typically monitoring of files is done in April by him and staff. However, COVID 19 delayed this from happening. It has been determined that the in-house monitoring will occur in the 2nd week of June and will be done virtually with the service providers. Beginning on June 22, 2020, the ESD monitors will virtually do their monitoring of files.

10. Labor Market Report

Ajsa Suljiic presented the Labor Market report noting that there were no big increases by the time of this meeting. The last 12 weeks will demonstrate the effects of COVID19 on 2020. The biggest effects will be seen in leisure and food service providers due to social distancing rules. This could cause a ripple effect that will be felt for years. Ajsa reported that she has seen the biggest loss of jobs in many years. How this will ultimately affect local businesses is unknown. At the time of the report, unemployment had risen to at least 11%. If there is strong recovery in 2021, unemployment may go back to as low as 4.1%. She anticipates some rebound in jobs during the recovery. Ajsa then provided many statistics supporting her report, including the number of those that have applied for unemployment insurance (1.1 million at time of report). The number of those applying for unemployment for the first time has increased by 103%, with 177,000 jobs being lost. Again, those jobs were mostly in leisure and food workers as well as construction contractors throughout the state. In Eastern Washington, the businesses hit especially hard have been 1) construction, 2) manufacturing, and 3) warehousing.

11. WorkSource Report

- Jennie Weber presented the WorkSource System Report. A data sheet was provided. Jennie noted that in mid-March service delivery changed as businesses adjusted to virtual service. Employment Security staff have been dealing with unemployment insurance claims that are all being done electronically.
- Jennie then reported on the layoff of 60 employees at Crest (cold storage). These layoffs will be permanent. In addition, there are still affects from the Macy's closures, the closure of a cinema and some restaurants and several companies that have required individualize services. There is serious attention given to tracking along with to assisting as shared-work or whatever is needed to reopen some facilities. Offering resources and transitioning, as needed, is imperative at this time.
- Kelly Charlton spoke on the narrative that she had provided. Her staff is mostly working from home. They have been able to enroll some new clients and assisting those that are participating in OJT with essential employers. It has been a learning process for all and has made her and her staff humbler as they learn to use new technology in moving forward.
- Larry Frick reported that the programs offered by DSHS are in high demand at this time. The number of Basic Food cases have exploded and in the South Counties. The Workfirst (TANF) program has grown by approximately 20%. DSHS's number one priority is responding to support service requests, which have all been COVID19 Exempt Caseloads. DSHS has been able to create a Disaster Cash Program to assist those that do not fall into any other established program. It will be mostly a one-time payment program. He and his staff are currently planning for the future, with the understanding

that the service delivery will not be the same. There will be an emphasis on tele-working and virtual customer service. In the process, there have been concerns expressed regarding those clients that have limited home phone/internet services. It will be important to find a way to address the needs of these folks.

- Angela Merritt shared that there is nothing new with DVR, and that they are also working on planning for the future. They will be making exceptions when needed but are mostly in a holding pattern at this time.
- Jaclyn Jacot agreed that service delivery is going to start looking very different from now on. In addition, using shops and labs for education has had to change with rules regarding social distancing. The college continues to provide on-line classes. There are currently no set plans for the Fall term. The school is basically closed but providing customer service via the phone. They are hoping to have some opening of services in July.
- Jerry Anhorn, Jr., agreed with Jaclyn's report, stating that his college campus was the same, only on a smaller level. Delivery is the challenge. He did state that at this time, WWCC does plan to offer face to face classes in the fall. The final decision will be made in late July, and they are preparing, should there be the need to switch to on-line classes. Chad Miltenberger concurred.
- Rod asked about the nursing and healthcare programs. It was explained that the schools have simulation equipment and are using online classes with that equipment. The summer NAC classes in the skills lab will be running, with anticipation of the full nursing program back on campus as well. Jaclyn added that SCC funded simulation labs 2 years ago, so there is little to no in-person time required. Multi-care classes will start taking students again soon for rotations.

12. Old Business

Art Swannack asked to continue the conversation on how tele-commuting will affect colleges. Is this being encouraged? Jaclyn explained that higher education facilities are being treated like the rest of the state regarding phasing back to normal. However, there are some differences. The biggest difference is that the state higher education facilities will be working as a whole and not by county. Jerry added that his school is trying to align with the local counties, but it is all in very draft form. Art referred to Governor Inslee's State-Wide Emergency Proclamation status and that it is due to expire. If it is cancelled upon expiration, the responsibilities of managing COVID19 will fall back on the Board of Health within each county.

13. New Business

- Rod asked for discussion on what experiences are or will be upon recovery. Art stated that he is not sure what the states plans are from week to week and it is frustrating. There have been no answers on Phase 3, so there is a lot of chaos. It is known that smaller counties with smaller businesses are hurting, but there does not appear to be good reporting on this. Brian Shinn agreed. Brian stated that his county is looking at going to Phase 3, but there is no definition of what Phase 3 is. It is felt that the governor needs to continue with "reorganization". Mike Talbot is also hoping that his county will go to Phase 3 next week, but there are no set rules to follow. Art added that there is an upcoming conference call with the Washington State Association of Counties to discuss Phase 4. However, Art does not believe it will be possible to go to Phase 4 in 2020 due to the inability to vaccinate and the lack of tracking.
- Jerry Anhorn, Jr., shared that he was recently notified by the State Office of Financial Management that there would be a 15% reduction in revenue this year due to a lack of tax income. This means that state entities will be "cutting to the bone". They have been given one month to present a revised balanced budget to their boards. For Jerry this would be a \$1.23M cut. Jaclyn shared that the cut at SCC would be \$5M.

- Tony spoke regarding small businesses. While it appears that the leaders understand the affect that the closures have had on small businesses, it is necessary to get back to work. The full affects have not even been heard yet. Those businesses that consist of 1 – 2 people are getting crushed.
- Brian Shinn spoke regarding elected officials. He stated that it is fundamental to train and help people with work skills. Funding needs to be allocated to training with extra funding aimed towards small counties. In addition, opening needs to be encouraged.
- Rod spoke on the process of those groups that are working with the Workforce Board. Those include the Association of Washington Businesses (AWB), the Department of Labor and other state agencies. They have been focusing on how to “recover”. However, they are not hearing from the small businesses that are really being impacted the most because most of them are not members of the AWB. It was reported that the number of small business loans has been overwhelming. To make matters worse, there is not support of the trade act or a training program to assist these very small businesses. It is going to be necessary to determine what skill sets are going to become obsolete and what new skills are going to be needed – what can transition and what cannot. The current direction of things may not payoff in the short term.

Rod ended the meeting by asking for any feedback on the virtual meeting held today. There was none, but Rod encouraged any suggestions on how to improve the new way of meeting – just in case.

The meeting adjourned at 2:20 PM.