

**CEP Board of Directors Meeting  
Wednesday, February 24, 2016 – 10:30 a.m.  
CEP Office – Ashland, WI**

**Meeting Minutes**

**Present:**

Dee Kittleson  
Jeff Muse  
Steve Sather  
Dee Gokee-Rindal  
Donna Williamson  
Dave Willingham  
Emmett Byrne  
William Voight  
Joe Pinarci  
Brent Blomberg  
Lew Martin  
Mary Jesunas  
Doug Finn  
Rollie Thums

**Excused:**

Bill Kacvinsky

**Others:**

Brad Gingras  
Jennifer Decker  
Delores McFaggan  
Mari Kay-Nabozny  
Beth Meyer

**Call Meeting to Order/Report of Public Meeting Notice**

Doug Finn, CEP Board Vice Chairman called the meeting to order. Everyone introduced themselves.

It was reported that the public meeting notice was published in two class A newspapers in the WDA. The Board sang Happy Birthday to Brad Gingras.

**Approval of 12/15/15 Meeting Minutes**

**Lew Martin made a motion to approve the 12/15/15 minutes as presented. Seconded by Emmett Byrne. Vote taken, carried unanimously.**

**Mission Statement/Success Story**

The mission of CEP is to improve the economy by providing efficient and effective workforce development services. The success story Brad discussed was from a CEP supervisor. This story came from a client named Lisa who started a new job with an electric company, and she thanked Sandy Lang for giving her the confidence and wisdom to help her get her new job.

## **Director's Report**

### **Job Center Customer Impact**

Jenny Decker discussed the Job Center customer counts and noted that there was an increase in traffic in Ashland and other locations due to seasonal workers who have been unable to waive work search for their UI benefits, and other increases in traffic were due to some area lay-offs. It was also noted that area lay-offs increased the traffic in the Job Centers, along with some recent business closings.

### **Dislocated Worker Report**

Brad noted that there have been a number of dislocations in our region. Brad noted that there are two reports that were included in the meeting packet from this year and last year.

Target and Kmart in Superior are closing, affecting 89 employees. He noted that most Target employees are being offered employment at the Duluth Target store. Caterpillar in Prentice is closing but there is the possibility of a third party buyer. If not, there could be the loss of 220 jobs. CEP staff were there Monday to provide rapid response services. RJS Construction in Superior is closing which was just announced today. Brad asked the Board if there are any other closures in their areas. None were noted.

### **Regional Employment Report**

Brad discussed the regional employment report which covers unemployment numbers in northern Wisconsin and other areas in the state. Brad reported that Iron, Sawyer and Burnett Counties' unemployment has increased. This is not seasonally adjusted. Our area is still higher than other parts of the state. Brad noted that our area has the second highest in unemployment rates next to the Milwaukee area. Wisconsin is doing ok nationally.

### **WIA OJT & H1B Report**

Brad discussed the WIA OJT report which was distributed and noted that this handout is a new format through our new case management system called TESSA. CEP had 25 OJTs. The average wage was \$13.50 per hour, training hours were at 235 and training costs at \$1,500.00 per person.

Brad explained that the H1B OJT report is staffed by the Workforce Investment Board in partnership with two other workforce boards in Wisconsin. He noted that CEP has no role in this other than being the fiscal entity. That project which was a federal grant will be coming to an end on April 1, 2016. They reached all their goals and objectives for this grant in healthcare occupations.

### **Grants & Revenue Generation Update**

Brad reported that grants and revenue generation take up much of his time. Brad reported that CEP received the Otto Bremer grant for \$55,000 for technology upgrades, marketing and outreach efforts. He explained the importance of marketing our programs since there are many people in the community who do not know what we do, along with creating a new logo and targeting relevant audiences. CEP contracted with Swim Creative out of Duluth to help

with the development of our marketing plan. It was suggested to provide a demonstration at the next meeting about this marketing plan. Brad noted that we have a lot of old outdated computers that need to be updated and this grant will supply many of our staff with a new machine. He also noted that our case managers have become more mobile going to meet clients in other counties, where they will receive a laptop that hooks into a dock station with a screen. In addition, this grant will supply digital signatures and portable scanners.

Brad reported that we received a grant from the Duluth Superior Community Foundation which would provide occupational skills workshops in area high schools. The grant amount was for \$9,000 which we received to expand the CEP's HIRED program that focuses on occupational and soft skills in some area high schools. CEP has been providing this program already, but we're expanding it to other schools in the DSCF area. The schools were selected by location based on criteria by the Duluth Community Foundation. It was suggested to train others to provide this program.

Brad reported on the Connecting Kids to Coverage grant through CMS which is comparable to the Affordable Care Act grant by getting more children in the state's BadgerCare program. CEP is writing this grant with two other workforce areas and ABC for Health covering 27 counties. The minimum amount to apply for is \$250,000 to one million dollars. CEP applied for a one million dollar grant. We'll find out more about this grant in May. Brad has reached out to the four area CESAs in the area who can work with the schools to disseminate information to the schools about this grant.

Brad discussed the Transitional Jobs program grant opportunity which CEP has applied for. CEP operated this program in 2010 to provide employment for individuals with a high unemployment rate in subsidized employment. Brad noted that six of the counties eligible for this new grant are Ashland, Bayfield, Iron, Sawyer, Taylor and Rusk. This will get people ages 18-29 into subsidized employment, typically people who have children who are not paying child support or also people who are not currently on the W2 program. The challenge is getting them in and keeping them employed. This is a three and a half year grant and we need to find 98 people total during that time frame. He explained how the money is received through pay for performance. The total employment period is 1,400 hours in which we will receive more funds. The subsidized employment provides minimum wage. CEP could receive up to \$1,257,000.00 dollars if we receive this grant and meet performance objectives. This grant is from the Department of Children and Family services. We should know the status of this grant by July 1<sup>st</sup>.

Brad discussed the TechHire grant that CEP applied for which is federal funds that funded the H1B program. This grant would help to train more people in the IT industry through OJT opportunities, and will be written in conjunction with the Central MN Workforce of Training office. This grant would be a four year funding grant and would serve somewhere between 50-75 people. We are currently working on the budget. Brad noted that Mari Kay-Nabozny, NWWIB CEO is writing a similar grant with other workforce areas in the state. A question was

raised on if we receive this grant, will we hire more staff. Brad noted that we're hoping we can bring on an additional staff person in Douglas County.

### **Performance Incentive Award Update**

Brad discussed the handout in the packet which is a letter that the Executive Committee instructed staff write to DWD that expresses our disappointment in not receiving the state WIOA performance award due to missing one performance measure by 1%. Brad noted that this is a FYI. A concern is with DWD's lack of transparency. One area in the state received the total award, which was \$100,000. It was noted that Ray Allen is the new DWD Secretary. It was suggested to send this letter to the new DWD Secretary expressing our concerns.

### **FSET Program Update**

Brad introduced Delores McFaggan, Food Share Employment and Training (FSET) Workforce Readiness Specialist for Ashland, Bayfield and Iron counties. She explained that she works with employers in those counties helping to get people hired somewhere or for volunteering. Brad noted that the FSET program has been going on for a year now. Delores distributed some folders for Board members to follow along with. Lori explained that the highlighted areas indicate how many people are on these individual caseloads. She explained the referral and enrollment process. The clients are referred to us by the consortium who is Health and Human Services and FSET and they are enrolled by a process of watching videos. She explained how they got the word out to eligible individuals for this program and as an incentive, they will get a \$10 gas card if they go through their orientation and employment plan. She explained that she has to go to a large number of businesses in her three county area. She wrote a letter to businesses about the program and how they can help us. When she goes to a worksite, she needs to set up a worksite agreement. She noted that FSET holds Job Clubs once a week and this is provided to everyone who comes in.

### **Crex/DVR Relationship Update**

Brad reported that that CEP is in a second year partnership with DVR. There are two DVR regions CEP works with and an additional DVR region that we've been working with to send DVR eligible youth to Crex Meadows which they pay for. Due to In School Youth (ISY) funds decreasing under WIOA, this is a way to keep the camp active for ISY youth. It will be about a 50/50 split between WIOA clients and DVR clients.

### **WIOA Plan Approval Process**

Mari Kay-Nabozny, NWWIB CEO distributed a handout which is a part of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) local plan which includes the salient points. She noted that the entire document is 400 plus pages long. She explained, under the new WIOA legislation, there are some new changes in strategies and initiatives. She explained the handout that includes the regional scan, the economy, local workforce needs, demographics which we synthesize for the WIB's strategic plan. The CLEOs always have a role in the plan process, by reviewing it. There's a 30 day public comment period. This is due to DWD by March 31, 2016. She encouraged the CEP Board members to review it and let her know if they have any

questions. There will be hard copies available in each Job Center. She noted a full hard copy can be sent, if requested.

**Other Business**

Jenny distributed a calendar for the CEP Board meetings for 2016 and their sub-committee meetings as well.

State Representative Beth Meyer thanked the CEP Board for their work and asked to be included on emails for when the CEP Board meetings take place.

**Next Meeting Date and Location**

The next CEP Board meeting will take place on Thursday, April 21, 2016, at the Chequamegon Food Coop Community Room in Ashland or at the call of the Chairperson.

**Adjournment**

**A motion was made by Emmett Bryne to adjourn. Seconded by William Voight. Vote taken, carried unanimously.**

The meeting was adjourned at 11:55 a.m.