
Rural Minnesota CEP, Inc.
WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD MEETING
803 Roosevelt Avenue, Detroit Lakes, MN
February 27, 2024

Members present: Carol Anderson, Jerry Arneson, Jeff Bjornson, Kathy Cottew, Troy Haugen, Nick Heisserer, Duane Johanning, Darrell Lende, Julie Sachs, Tammy Schatz, Leigh Shebeck and Sandy Voigt

Members excused: Terry Blake, Ed Bolas, and Amanda Hanson

Members unexcused:

Staff present: Heather Bergseid, Arlyce Cucich, and Tina Jaster

Guests: Curtis Anderson (Workforce Impact)

MINUTES

Business Committee Meeting – Arlyce Cucich

Ms. Cucich reviewed the reports for the month ending January 31, 2024. This included the Program Progress, MFIP County Performance Standards, WIOA Performance Standards, SNAP, and Ticket to Work reports.

Program Progress

All current programs were reviewed. Overall, there are no concerns.

MFIP/DWP County Performance Standards

- MFIP:
 - Entered Employment: 2 counties are meeting and 7 are exceeding goal.
 - Successful Placements: 9 counties are exceeding goal.
 - Wage at Placement: 1 county is meeting and 9 are exceeding goal.
- DWP: Enrollments are at 113.

WIOA Performance Standards

The WIOA Dislocated Worker, WIOA Adult, WIOA Youth, and State Dislocated Worker program performance outcome reports were reviewed. Overall, there are no concerns.

SNAP Slots

- Region IV is at 3 of 37 slots enrolled.
- Region V is at 20 of 28 slots enrolled.

Ticket to Work

There are currently 19 active enrollments with 58 cumulative enrollments. Revenue to date (DEED and ADEN) is \$351,091.68. Remaining Ticket to Work funds are \$144,626.34. Two additional tickets have been assigned and one has been unassigned since the report was created. A three-hundred-person telephone campaign has begun.

Call to Order – Carol Anderson, Chair

Ms. Anderson called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

Nick Heisserer was welcomed to the Workforce Development Board and the group conducted self-introductions.

Agenda Additions: None

January 23, 2024, Minutes – Ms. Anderson

Moved by Leigh Shebeck and seconded by Duane Johanning to approve the minutes from January 23, 2024, meeting as presented. Motion carried.

Youth Key Priorities for 2024 – Ms. Cucich

The Youth Council approved the 2024 Youth Key Priorities at its January 22, 2024, meeting and is recommending approval by the Workforce Development Board.

Youth Key Priorities for 2024:

- 1) Trauma-informed support: Staff will be trained to recognize the causes and impacts of trauma and provided the knowledge to respond appropriately and coach participants with a trauma-informed toolkit that will help them navigate its long-term effects on employability.
 - Professional development will include information on Equity, Access, and Inclusion outreach and guidance to assist in navigation, particularly for those facing barriers associated with historically marginalized populations.
- 2) Financial Literacy practices will be embedded within the Individual Employment Plan.
- 3) Staff will prioritize personal advocacy and employability skills with participants to enhance success in their entry into the workforce. This will include discussion, promotion, and work with the youth to identify one caring adult relationship which models responsibility and success in meaningful and relevant activities and roles.
- 4) Participants will engage in Career Planning Activities to include conversations on Local Labor Market Information (LMI) and post-secondary employment and training options.

A motion was made by Troy Haugen, seconded by Julie Sachs, to approve the Youth Key Priorities for 2024 as recommended by the Youth Council. Motion carried. It will now be brought to the Board of Directors for approval.

SCSEP Update – Ms. Cucich

Ms. Jaster and Ms. Cucich have been working with DEED staff to understand and implement changes to the Senior Community Service Employment (SCSEP) Program. RMCEP participants in the SCSEP program being served in counties without assigned Authorized Positions will need to be transitioned to the Center for Workforce Inclusion by June 30, 2024, for services.

Ben Rudrud Youth Events – Tina Jaster

Motivational speaker, Ben Rudrud, has been contracted to present Youth Outreach events at the following schools:

- March 18, 2024: Little Falls and Pierz School Districts
 - March 19, 2024: Wadena and Staples School Districts
 - March 21, 2024: Battle Lake and Underwood School Districts
 - March 22, 2024: Brainerd School District
 - March 26, 2024: Clearbrook School District
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IFA/MOU Update – Ms. Jaster

Infrastructure Funding Agreement (IFA) negotiations are progressing. A meeting with partners is scheduled for March 1, 2024.

Regional Planning/Career Advising – Ms. Jaster

Mike Fisher, Regional Coordinator, resigned from the agency on February 2, 2024. Recruitment for a replacement has begun.

Rural Career Counseling Coordinator (RC3) Program

The RC3 program will be monitored soon. Chrys Kirschbaum, Detroit Lakes Youth Services Coordinator, will assist with data collection.

Career Advising

The agency is currently in ten schools providing Career Advising services. With the increase in youth funding, services were offered to schools free of charge for the 2023-2024 school year.

Regional Planning

The Regional Plan (Plan) is due for submission to the State on May 31, 2024. The Regional Plan for Region 1 is a collaboration between RMCEP and Northwest PIC. A Workforce Strategy Survey was sent to stakeholders to capture data for the Plan. The survey results were shared and will be reviewed by the Regional Workforce Alliance at its March meeting.

The draft Plan will be presented to the Workforce Development Board at its March 19, 2024, meeting. Following approval, it will then be posted for 30-day public comment.

County Outcomes – Ms. Cucich

Ms. Cucich provided an overview of MFIP services for 2023. A sampling of participants that left the MFIP program to Unsubsidized Employment was reviewed.

Director's Report – Ms. Jaster

Summary of Recent Accomplishments and Current Activities

- Earned Sick and Safe Time was implemented with Work Experience participants.
- Implemented a wage increase as of February 5, 2024.

- WIOAPY21 reallocated funds have been accepted and obligated.
- Program Job Function Groups have been scheduled for staff.
- All Leadership Team members attended email correspondence training.
- Ty Bement is working to streamline the availability and use of marketing materials.
- New radio advertising has been released in the Bemidji area.
- Movie theater advertisements are running in Little Falls, Detroit Lakes, Fergus Falls, Bemidji, Alexandria, and Wadena.
- Working with DEED to understand and implement changes to the SCSEP program.

Staffing Updates

New

- Shelby Fitch, Job Counselor, Brainerd
- Brandon Larson, Team Leader, Brainerd
- Leisha Vance, Youth Services Coordinator, Little Falls

Exiting

- Evie Fowler, Team Leader, Wadena, retiring March 31, 2024.
- Mike Fisher, Regional Coordinator, resigned February 2, 2024.

Outreach

Center 2 developed a presentation for area high school students with motivational speaker, Ben Rudrud. Ben has incorporated eight required youth elements that will focus on services available at RMCEP/CareerForce.

Team News Updates

Team events overview for January/February 2024.

Member Updates – Roundtable Contribution

Troy Haugen

Mr. Haugen will attend the ACTE seminar in Washington, D.C., and has asked Deb Bahr, The City of Minneapolis Employment and Training Program Director, to speak about WIOA.

Julie Sachs

A new refrigerator is planned to be purchased for the Brainerd office with DOL Veterans Service Award funds.

Jeff Bjornson

Vocational Rehabilitation is recruiting for an open position in Moorhead.

Sandy Voigt

The Women's Business Alliance will be holding a She Leads Conference focused on women entrepreneurs in our region. It will be held at Madden's on Gull Lake on April 4, 2024.

Jerry Arneson

The bank has been seeing an increase in fraud activity.

Nick Heisserer

Central Lakes College, Brainerd Chamber, and Sourcewell are partnering on a Career Exploration Day to be held at the Brainerd campus on March 8, 2024.

Celebrate Wins – Ms. Jaster

Several Success Stories were shared in the packet.

Adjourn – Ms. Anderson

A motion was made by Leigh Shebeck, seconded by Duane Johanning, to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried.

Ms. Anderson adjourned the meeting at 11:37 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Terry Blake". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

**Terry Blake, Secretary
Workforce Development Board**