

**WASHINGTON COUNTY
WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD MEETING
Washington County Workforce Center
Woodbury, MN
January 17, 2018**

Members Present

Sharon Blomgren	Christine Dressel	Christopher Eng
Susie Evans	Jennifer Hassebroek	Stan Karwoski
Michelle Kemper	Mike Lang	Ann Lindquist
Steve Moeller	Lee Okerstrom	Wayne Sarappo

Workforce Center Staff Present

Robert Crawford	Tina Dudzinski	Rachel O'Connell
	Mark Pozzini	

Guests

Abby Dalzell, Andersen Windows
Robin Giguere, Gebhard and Giguere, Ltd.
Khrisslyn Goodman, District 622
Jeff Klemmer, EXIT Realty Springside
Tim Lawrence, City and County Credit Union
Christine Osorio, District 622
Robert Rutscher, GED Testing Service
Laurie Staiger, Woodbury Area Chamber of Commerce
Laura Vitzthum, Vocational Rehabilitation Services
Khadija Zeig, American Nursing & Technical Institute

WDB Members Not Present

Tom Colosimo	Lee Ann Cox	Peg Killen
Beth Mathiason	Lee Miller	Sonja Simpson
	Lori Tapani	

1. Call to Order and Introductions – Vice-Chair, Chris Dressel

Vice-Chair Chris Dressel called the meeting to order; members, partners and guests introduced themselves.

2. Adopt Agenda – Chris Dressel

A Motion was made to approve the Agenda; it was seconded, and the Motion carried.

3. Approve December Minutes – Chris Dressel

A Motion was made to adopt the December 20, 2017 minutes, it was seconded, and the Motion was approved.

4. Dislocated Worker Program and Return on Investment – Mark Pozzini, Employment Counselor, Washington County Workforce Center

The Dislocated Worker Program (DW) is for people who have lost their jobs through no fault of their own and are eligible for unemployment benefits. Through the program, customers upgrade their skills through short term training or certifications at area colleges.

Mark Pozzini started keeping records the first day he started his job. He has worked with a total of 683 people and 638 got jobs. The difference includes those who quit the program or dropped out due to health and other reasons. Over this time period, over \$1.2 million was spent on training or \$1,884 per person. An average of \$276 per person was spent on support dollars. Over 93% of participants got jobs with total salaries over \$30.7 million or \$48,247 per person. This is a government program with an impressive return on investment. Robert Crawford added he hired Mark because he came from the business field and had a better sense of what business people were looking for.

Questions and Comments:

Khadija Zeig: What is the difference between long term unemployed versus dislocated worker?
There is not much difference. Once unemployment ends after 26 weeks, people are no longer counted as unemployed (which applies to half his caseload). The real unemployment rate is probably double the official rate. *Would a new immigrant be counted as long term unemployed?*
A person would have to be eligible for unemployment to get funds for training; however, they can attend our workshops. Other programs such as WIOA Adult or MFIP may have money for training.

Susie Evans: Adult Basic Education works with immigrants, refugees, underemployed, etc. and through the Workforce Development Board, many connections have been made which have helped find resources and jobs for their customers.

Stan Karwoski: Do you help people who are underemployed get a better job? There is no funding through the DW program, however people can use our Resource Room and attend workshops to get help with resumes, etc.

Jeff Klemmer: What are the top categories of training for people choosing a different career?
The Workforce Center's Career Exploration class offers personality and interest testing to determine suitable fields. IT certification and PMI project management certifications are popular options.

Robert Crawford: The Washington County unemployment rate is 2.7% and the national rate is 4.1%. It would appear everyone should be working; however, counselors are finding people have multiple barriers that have to be solved before they can hold a job.

Tim Lawrence: How long can people be on this program? Some people are on the program for a few weeks up to two years if they are completing a degree. They must be in training and working less than 32 hours a week.

5. Board Member Update – WDB Members

Michelle Kemper, Washington County Community Services: The County Board approved 10 new positions for 2018.

Sharon Blomgren, St. Paul College: This year there will be nine high school summer camps including Scrubs Camp, culinary, welding, IT, philosophy, and manufacturing. Scholarships are available for students who qualify for free student lunch and have a 2.5 GPA. This is an excellent way for students to discover what they are like or dislike before they commit to a training program. <http://www.saintpaul.edu/wtce/highschoolcamps>

Stan Karwoski, Washington County Commissioner: He met with Robert Crawford, Chris Eng, Christine Osorio and other area school superintendents to discuss what the schools were doing with career pathways and how the Workforce Center can partner with them.

Christine Osorio, District 622: At the meeting there was discussion about using a website or e-mail blast to publicize companies' open houses and other events to students. *Robert Crawford* commented they will continue to advance the conversation with the superintendents to coordinate the innovative programs at their schools.

Steve Moeller, Specialty Manufacturing: Companies are interested in the Gen Z program through White Bear Lake High School. <https://www.plasticstoday.com/injection-molding/mold-craft-battles-manufacturing-skills-gap-gen-z-connection-program/57667258857334>. Bridges Career Academies is another model for connecting with students: <https://www.bridgesconnection.org/>

Susie Evans, South Washington County Schools ABE: The RFP for the Pathways to Prosperity (P2P) program was released by DEED. Their Adult Basic Education Program called ACCESS took over the Hastings ABE program. They will apply for a consortium at their south site.

Ann Lindquist, Washington County Community Development Agency: She works with Washington County's Heading Home program to end homelessness. On January 24th, a "point in time" count of homeless people will be done by volunteers; last year 172 people were identified as homeless in Washington County. Those who are homeless are connected to homeless programs through non-profits and the County. They were just renewed for the Continuum of Care funding through Housing and Urban Development (HUD) which provides funding to address long term homelessness. The focus is on the hardest to serve because that cuts costs in many areas.

Abby Dalzell, Andersen Windows: They expect the same level of hiring as last year with hundreds of openings for production, technicians, and professional level. They hire more for competency and provide training for the positions.

Tina Dudzinski, Washington County Workforce Center: Mini job fairs are replacing on site hiring events. Yesterday, there were five employers at Cottage Grove which attracted 71 job seekers.

Steve Moeller, Specialty Manufacturing: The Company can't find qualified workers and people are working overtime.

Khadija Zeig: What is causing the shortage?

Abby Dalzell: Parents are not encouraging their kids to go into manufacturing even though their jobs range from entry level to professional with four year degrees. There are large numbers of people retiring and not as many people entering the workforce to replace them. The supply and demand of jobs creates a high degree of turnover, 30% in the first 90 days.

Susie Evans: Adult Basic Education can partner with employers to address employees' educational needs and help them retain their jobs. People are having difficulty getting work visas contributing to the labor shortage.

Lee Okerstrom, Veteran's Employment Representative, DEED: Manufacturing courses are offered at three state prisons; however, background checks can block people from employment.

Steve Moeller said hiring agencies will not accept anyone with a violent crime. Their company looks at applicants with a record on a case-by-case basis.

6. Announcements

Robert Crawford said a meeting was held with Adesewa Adesiji from DEED to talk about engaging healthcare providers in Washington County. There needs to be a pipeline of workers for both manufacturing and healthcare to meet labor needs. *Steve Moeller* announced the Vadnais Heights Economic Development Corporation received the 2018 Partnership Award for the Gen Z program. That program just won the statewide award. <https://www.vhedc.com/blog/vadnais-heights-economic-development-corporation-vhedc-receives-2018-partnership-award-economic-development-association-minnesota-edam/>

7. Motion to Adjourn – Vice-Chair, Chris Dressel

A Motion was made to adjourn the meeting, it was seconded, and the Motion was approved.