

**WASHINGTON COUNTY  
WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD MEETING  
Washington County Workforce Center  
Woodbury, Minnesota  
December 19, 2018**

**Members Present**

Christine Dressel	Christopher Eng	Susie Evans
Jeff Klemmer	Mike Lang	Sara Murray
Lori Tapani		Khadija Zeig

**Action Team Members**

Tom Colosimo	Heather Felderman	Jordan Fry
Drew Hamilton	Stan Karwoski	Michelle Kemper
Ann Lindquist	Lee Miller	Steve Moeller
	Sarah Shanley	

**Workforce Center Staff Present**

Tina Dudzinski	Rachel O'Connell	Karen Ritter
Rick Roy		Sheng Xiong

**Guests**

Adesewa Adesiji, DEED  
Lori Drolson, Forest Lake Area Public Schools  
Mike McCauley, Sheet Metal Worker's Local Union #10  
Dave Mogren, St. Paul College  
Tim O'Neill, DEED  
Dr. Monica Ramirez, Century College

**WDB Members Not Present**

Peg Killen

**1. Meeting Called to Order by Chair – Christine Dressel**

Chair Christine Dressel called the meeting to order. It was determined a Quorum of business members was in attendance. A Motion was made to approve the September 19, 2018 Minutes, it was seconded, and the Motion was approved. A Motion was made to adopt the Agenda, it was seconded and the Motion was approved.

**2. Welcome and Introductions**

WDB Members, Action Team Members, and Partners introduced themselves.

### 3. Action Team Updates

#### Oversight Action Team – Rick Roy:

- **DEED Policy Regarding Board Certification:** The policy is out for 30 day comments. Not much has been changed but four items were added which were not required by law. There is concern the state does not have the authority to add these items and Local Workforce Development Boards (LWDB) and Chief Elected Officials (CEO) are being asked to review them.
  - **Diversity:** *“Members of the LWDB must reflect the race, ethnicity, gender, disability and geographic diversity of their Local Area. This must be considered when making appointments to the LWDB.”* The general opinion of the Minnesota Workforce Council Association (MWCA) was this is too restrictive in combination with the other requirements. WIOA law requires board members to be in decision making positions which makes it even more difficult. Local boards are addressing this by inviting more diversity at the committee level. The recommendation is not to support this change without further explicit language from DEED.
  - **Vacancies:** *“Vacancies must be filled within 90 days of the date the vacancy occurs. In the event a vacancy cannot be filled within 90 days, a waiver must be requested in writing to DEED with an explanation of why a vacancy was not filled and a description of the process underway to fill the vacancy”* The MWCA felt this was too restrictive due to the unforeseen changes that create vacancies and 90 days is a narrow timeframe for applications to be approved by the County Board.
  - **Term Limits:** *“A board must have a policy establishing term limits for members and the chair.* The MWCA opinion is to leave this open to the CEO’s.
  - **Attendance:** *A board must have a policy establishing attendance whereby members who fail to attend three unexcused consecutive meetings of the full board must be terminated from the board and replaced.* The MWCA says the policy should not be explicitly defined. Rick recommended the WDB and CEO’s agree on an attendance policy.

*Chris Dressel: What would happen if the Board was in violation?* Rick Roy replied there would likely be a challenge to any type of sanction because the policies are not in WIOA law. The WDB’s money could not be touched. *Jeff Klemmer* commented he is not in favor of making changes if they are unattainable and there is no way to measure them or follow through with a penalty.

The following Motion was made: “Chris Dressel and Rick Roy will draft a letter based on MWCA recommendations and the WDB’s comments on the policy changes”; it was seconded, and the Motion was approved.

- **Workforce Development Board Budget:** A draft of the WDB’s budget which covers staff time, per diems, etc. was submitted to DEED. A Motion was made to approve the budget, it was seconded, and the Motion was approved.
- **Partnership Agreement Update:** The agreements recognizing the relationship between the WDB and the County Board has been updated by County attorneys with some minor changes.

- **Membership Need Update:** Kara Morley, Werner Electric; Katelyn Nowak, St. Therese; and Robin Anthony, Stillwater Chamber, are interested in joining the Board. There should be a full board pending by January.
- **Greater Metropolitan Workforce Council Update – Chris Dressel:** The Council is made up of the managers from Metro area WDB’s and County Commissioners who address regional workforce issues and assist with the Regional Plan. This is a relatively new council and they are working on building their infrastructure, establishing a code of conduct and hiring an executive director. Their focus is on six workforce sectors: IT, manufacturing, healthcare, construction, government, and technical and financial services. Commissioner Stan Karwoski said he and Khadija Zeig are also on the council. A regional approach to development and developing workforce skills may be more successful.

*Chris Eng asked if there is advocacy or a legislative platform.* Not so far. Rick Roy added the big change last year was changing the definition of dislocated worker to include people who have never held a job. People are always getting laid off; however, right now there is ½ person for every job opening. *Chris Eng* said Wisconsin is putting \$6 million into advertising and Minnesota needs money for marketing to attract and retain talent and advertise the CareerForce brand.

**Career Pathways Action Team – Karen Ritter:** The Team met on October 17<sup>th</sup>. Sara Murray is Vice Chair and the Chair will be selected at the next meeting. Adesewa Adesiji and Liz Jennings, Workforce Strategy Consultants, presented on industry sector strategies and career pathways in the six industry sectors. The Central Corridor Anchor Partnership of large healthcare providers and educators are addressing the shortage of nurses and technologists.  
<https://www.centralcorridoranchorpartnership.org/> Adesewa is also working with Washington County and Khadija Zeig to help smaller healthcare providers meet their needs.

MSP TechHire with the city of Minneapolis and industry training vendors are working to close the skills gap and increase diversity <http://www.minneapolismn.gov/cped/metp/TechHire>. The Minnesota High Tech Association held an employer summit. Manufacturing is represented in industry associations and chambers of commerce. Construction is being led by John O’Phelan, Ramsey County Workforce Solutions. The Finishing Trades Institute of the Upper Midwest (FTI-UM) will host an event on March 6<sup>th</sup> during “Women in Construction Week” (March 3<sup>rd</sup> – 9<sup>th</sup>). Washington County Workforce Center and Ramsey County Workforce Solutions will be recruiting for that event, focusing on 16-24 year old women, but all will be welcome.

The Action Team also discussed diversity and inclusion. Sara Murray pointed out how Robert Half Legal has been presenting candidate resumes without gender, names and addresses to avoid potential bias and to focus on the candidates’ skills.

**Question:**

*Susie Evans said the Adult Basic Education program is working with 300 people, including ex-offenders, in their English, diploma and GED programs. How do you find out about these initiatives?* Adesewa Adesiji replied the CareerForce website will eventually have Career Pathways

training posted. Twin Cities RISE has a “Minnesota Employers’ Fair Chance Hiring Guide” for hiring ex-offenders. <http://www.twincitiesrise.org/>

**CareerForce Action Team – Tina Dudzinski:** The Team discussed their role and duties under WIOA law, which include: identifying and establishing promising practices, enforcing and leveraging technology, coordination with education providers, and accessibility for individuals with disabilities. The Minnesota Workforce Center system is undergoing a revamp to become CareerForce. The goal is to have one unified brand creating a culture which is more proactive and engaged in our community, meets the needs of job seekers, workers and businesses, and provides a clearer customer experience for those trying to access services. The largest focus of the new brand is the online website: [careerforcemn.com](http://careerforcemn.com).

The group will be focusing on the new technology that is the [Careerforcemn.com](http://Careerforcemn.com) online platform, and how both partners and employers can leverage this tool for their needs. In order to do this, the group felt they needed to further understand the platform’s functions, capabilities, and limitations so they will be having a presenter walk them through the online tool, and allow some time for Q and A. The overall theme for the first meeting was simplification. The workforce system and its services can be complicated, so how can we simplify our work? A chair and vice chair will be chosen at the next meeting.

**Youth Development Action Team – Sheng Xiong:** Sheng reviewed WIOA law, Youth Program services and his role as a counselor with the Team. Sarah Shanley talked about the Perkins grant in terms of health and science pathways. At the next meeting, a chair and vice chair will be chosen.

#### **4. What You Don’t Know or Think You Know, Can Hurt You!**

- **Changing the Conversation around Educational Attainment – Tim O’Neill:** The Labor Market Information office has over 20 data tools giving information on jobs in demand, job training, graduate employment outcomes, and other topics. <https://mn.gov/deed/data/>

Career Explorers can find the cost of college, cost of living, jobs in demand and different jobs based on educational attainment. There is a correlation between higher education and higher wages. For a person with a high school diploma or GED the median wage is about \$35,000 a year; a person with a Bachelor’s degree earns about \$86,200. However, there are a large number of jobs that only require a high school diploma. “Occupations in Demand” show the wages employers are offering for over 800 occupations. Many jobs don’t require a four year degree but provide decent wages and meet basic needs such as auto service technicians, dental assistants and surgical techs. Tim recently presented at Anoka High School and most of the students expected to go to four year colleges, although they were impressed with the pay of people in manufacturing and the trades.

#### **Questions and Comments:**

*Steve Moeller:* Do you have information on how much is earned per dollar of educational investment? Graduate Employment Outcomes show employment outcomes after completing different degrees.

*Chris Dressel: Is the gap between high school and college educated workers closing with the tight labor market? There has not been much wage growth overall but possibly employers are offering other benefits. There have been significant jumps in lower wage jobs.*

*Sarah Murray: There can be a huge difference in benefits and pay between large and small law firms even though the degree is the same. The Job Vacancy Survey will bring that information out including wages by firm size.*

*Jeff Klemmer: What is driving kids to go to a four year college? The biggest reason is the parents and the expectation this is “what I have to do”.*

*Susie Evans: This is the same discussion they are having at the school district. School counselors’ time is spent dealing with 504 Plans and mental health. Parents, teachers and the community have the most influence on career plans.*

*Jordan Fry: College loan debt brings wages down the first 10 years, whereas, plumbers make over \$100,000 a year.*

*Lori Tapani: Manufacturing has been pushed out of Minneapolis. We need industries in areas that have transportation so people can make a decent wage with a high school diploma. Tim O’Neill added 25% of the jobs that require just a high school degree have a median wage of \$26 an hour or more so there are opportunities for a career pathway.*

- **“Lazy People” or an “Economic Decision”? You Decide – Rick Roy:** The “benefits cliff” happens when people on public assistance reach a pay rate where benefits decline more significantly than the pay increases. Rick created a chart showing a family of three with one adult and two preschool children. Public benefits, cash, food support, child care assistance, housing and healthcare are annualized to equate to a full time wage. For a person who is not working, all public assistance has a value of \$16.44 an hour. When a person starts working, total resources go up until the wage hits \$18.97 an hour. At that point public benefits drop significantly and total resources go down. For example, Medtronic contacted the state to find out why people quit once they were off probation and got a raise. The reason was the loss of benefits created an economic disincentive to working.

*Lori Tapani* commented this is holding people down and creating cyclical poverty. *Tina Dudzinski* added the state is looking at legislation to address this by not requiring MFIP families to report income changes unless income exceeds federal poverty guidelines; however, that amount is quite low. There is one year of transitional child care and then people are forced to go back on public assistance again.

Rick said the cost of living calculator shows a family of three in Washington County needs \$100,000 a year to meet basic needs. The cost of childcare is \$1,200 for one child. It is not poverty living but not middle class either. *Steve Moeller* commented he lost 20-35 people at his company because of the loss of benefits, especially child care.

Rick is working with County leadership to look at a pilot project to get a legislative waiver. Business people can get behind these issues to change the system.

## 5. Meeting Adjourned – Chris Dressel

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