

**WASHINGTON COUNTY
WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD MEETING
CareerForce – Woodbury
Woodbury, Minnesota
June 15, 2022**

Members Present

Christine Dressel	Susie Evans	Christopher Eng
Lori Tapani	Jordan Fry	Eric Riedel
John Burcaw		

Action Team Members

Stan Karwoski	Mike Yanda	Adesewa Adesiji
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CareerForce Staff Present

Rick Roy	Deb Cunningham
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Guest Speaker

Tim O'Neill, DEED

1. Meeting Called to Order by Chair – Christine Dressel

The meeting was called to order by Chair, Christine Dressel. The attendance of Members, Action Team Members, and CareerForce staff was recorded. It was determined there was a quorum. A Motion was made to approve the Agenda, it was seconded, and the Motion was approved.

2. Board Membership Updates

- Business Representatives
 - Lucas Priestley Nomination – Express Personnel, Forest Lake
 - Laurie Levine Nomination – Chamber President, Cottage Grove
- Labor Representative
 - Union Representative Opening
 - Workforce Programs Opening (Family Means Nomination)

3. Action Team Summaries

Business Engagement AT - Rick Roy, Chris Eng: Rick and Chris meet with the area chambers on a regular basis. The Business Engagement AT's focus is on leadership development. With the labor shortage and so many baby boomers retiring it's leaving a void in leadership positions. Candidates may not necessarily have the needed skill sets. The BEAT wants to support businesses and is looking into what types of programs or trainings are available, with an emphasis on DEI (diversity and equity inclusion).

ARPA funds are being used in collaboration with Susie Evans' team in South Washington School District this summer for a Credit Recovery Project for students struggling to graduate. Career exploration activities are part of the project. Cory has been contacting employers and inviting them to talk about careers in their companies and be part of an interviewing board.

The Southeast Minnesota Educational Service Coop developed a platform called Future Forward. It's designed for businesses to profile of what they do. We'll be promoting it this summer and working through the chambers and through all of us here to let businesses know how important it is to engage with students. Rick has been in contact with high school career staff throughout Washington County talking about Future Forward to bring consistency, so schools aren't all using different platforms. Cory Sindt and Justin Yang, CareerForce staff will be the contacts for businesses in Washington County, helping them complete a form for their profile.

Situational Business Advocacy – Washington County Chamber Coalition sent out a survey last fall asking businesses across the County what challenges they found post CoVid. CareerForce, CDA & the Chamber Coalition in collaboration will host a summit to be held this fall for businesses. Attendees will spend 5-10 minutes at each table to talk about their challenges, share what they've learned and done to address the challenges. A note taker will be at each table. Information gathered will be put in a document to be shared.

Chris Eng talked about "What's Next CEO Program." Focus is to coordinate efforts between CEO's to talk about: 1) Challenges and how they've moved through them 2) attracting and hiring a diverse workforce and 3) addressing rising transportation costs for their workforce.

Community Engagement AT – Rick Roy: The team has been discussing revitalizing the "Better Together" initiative and get other community members involved. Better Together began with a grant but faded over time. It was a partnership between Washington County Libraries, CareerForce and ABE (Adult Basic Education).

They are also working on developing a one-page resource guide and having it viewable online. A resource guide does exist but needs to be updated along with the format.

Community Outreach – The County has a cooperative effort between the Public Health Dept. and Community Services and has hired a specialist using ARPA funds to work with communities that have the most need. The Landfall and Cimarron mobile home communities have been identified. The goal is to help families move

toward gaining sustainable wages. Staff with Trio will work to support post high school students and introduce them to education options. The Dept. of Student Services has also been asked to be involved to coordinate activities and work with immigrant and refugee families.

Education Engagement AT – Rick Roy, Susie Evans: The team has not been working on any specific activities or projects at this point but have had a lot of informative and productive sharing of information. It's been a year of learning what each of the area schools are doing. Looking at Cory's position and what he'll be doing with schools. Susie's been identifying contacts in her school district, learn about Perkins funding and planning some things with Sarah Shanley.

4. Labor Market Information Presentation – Tim O'Neill, Regional Labor Market Analyst:

Minnesota's most recent Job Market as of April data: Minnesota gained 11,900 jobs. There was a loss of 417,000 jobs in 2020 but we've gained back 80% of the jobs lost due to CoVid19 through April of 2022. There have been 7800 job postings in Washington County through April. The top posted occupations:

- Heavy traffic trailer truck drivers
- Registered nurses
- First line supervisors of retail
- Retail sales workers
- Customer service reps
- Light truck drivers & delivery services
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(Tim O'Neill's Power Point presentation attached)

5. I-WE Project – Adesewa Adesiji, DEED Workforce Strategy Consultant – Metro Area:

The I-WE project (Inclusive Workforce Employment designation) It was started in the Northwest region. The goal was to provide certification for employers to show other employers and job seekers that they work towards having an inclusive and diverse workforce. It gained a lot of traction and is now being introduced to other regions. Southeast Minnesota region is starting a group as well as Washington County in the metro area.

Once employers are identified that want to be a part of it, they would participate in a series of workshops and activities to gain certification. With their certification, they're provided a symbol to post on their website, use in job descriptions, job fairs, etc.

Stan Karwoski – in 2019 the County approved to hire a management position for inclusiveness and diversity. CoVid delayed the process but in 2020 the position was filled.

Workforce Strategy Consultants created Workforce Wednesdays on the CareerForce website. Minnesota employers, are invited to join in a monthly discussion of current workforce challenges and solutions. Webinars are available the first Wednesday of the month from 11:00-noon, with an “unplugged” session from noon-12:30 allowing the audience to ask questions of the panel. Recordings of past webinars are available on the website.

<https://www.careerforcemn.com/WorkforceWednesday>

6. Board Member & Guest Comments/Updates – no additional comments or updates

7. Call and Vote for Adjournment

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