

Board of Directors' Meeting Minutes

**Wednesday, February 14, 2024
11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.**

**Madison Area Technical College
Truax Campus – Room D1630C
1701 Wright Street
Madison, WI 53704**

Members: Todd Kearney, Ben Breese, Mel Bruins, Pam Christenson, Thomas Cox, Paul Dietmann, Jessica Fox, Cindy Green, Randy Guttenberg, Chuck Klein, Jennifer Klein, Francis Langer, Barb LeDuc, Ann McNeary, Melissa Montey, Elizabeth Roddy, Michelle Szabrowicz, Shawn Tessmann, Mark Thomas, Jr., Calvin White Eagle, Bryan Woodhouse

Staff Present: Becca Collins, Jackie Hall, Becky Kikkert, Seth Lentz, Chris Ziegel

Guests Present: Talitha Cushman; Jon Danforth; Julie Enloe; Jason Frey; Megan Sievers; Dennis Winters, Department of Workforce Development-Employment & Training, Bureau of Workforce Information and Technical Support

Agenda Item 1 – Introductions and Announcements

Kearney welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order at 11:06 a.m. Langer noted that the meeting was properly noticed and a quorum was present. Everyone introduced themselves.

Agenda Item 2 – Review and Approval of the December 13, 2023 Meeting Minutes

Kearney asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the December 13, 2023 Board meeting as presented. Guttenberg moved to approve the minutes as presented. McNeary offered the second. No discussion followed on this motion. The vote was unanimous in favor of the motion.

Agenda Item 3 – Presentation on AI Workforce Impacts

Kearney provided an introduction for Dennis Winters, Bureau of Workforce Information and Technical Support for the Employment & Training Division of Wisconsin's Department of Workforce Development (DWD).

Winters gave a presentation on the Governor's Task Force on Workforce and Artificial Intelligence and its impact on Wisconsin. The presentation covered topics including workers changing skillsets, exposure estimation to AI and occupations affecting information technology and engineering, linking AI capabilities to work, AI exposure by income and metro area, underutilized talent pools such as



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individuals with disabilities, veterans, who are justice-involved or low-income, and broadband internet expansion guidelines for unserved and underserved individuals.

Tessmann asked about projection timeframes.

Winters responded effects are current and ongoing. Machine learning is well established. Oversight will be a requirement.

Christenson questioned AI impacts on management positions.

Winters described the likelihood of AI augmentation to management positions as opposed to direct replacement.

Lentz inquired if other states are reviewing policies that are impacting AI and workforce.

Winters acknowledged states are reviewing and gathering data. Many states will likely have policies in the near future.

Woodhouse surveyed opinions on what the next generation of careers and jobs could entail as AI advancements continue.

Winters commented on an expansion of creativity and innovation. Data analysis is cumbersome and should become more efficient with AI exposure.

Breese stated examples of AI use in employment and pondered if AI may help to offset the decline in population.

Winters replied it is a possibility and may need to be analyzed further.

Kearney inquired on problem resolution when two different AI systems do not agree.

Winters noted specialization of AI implementation to correct for these kinds of situations.

Members thanked Winters for his presentation.

Agenda Item 4 – Report of the Executive Committee

Kearney reviewed agenda items discussed at the January 18th Executive Committee meeting. Discussion included language updates to internal policies, grant pursuits, review of November 2023 financial statements, and the approach to the conception of the PY 2024-2027 Local Plan.

Agenda Item 5 – Report of the Planning & Development Committee

Christenson went over agenda items discussed at the January 30th Planning & Development Committee meeting. Discussion included data and strategy for partnership coordination and co-enrollment, grant pursuits, updates on standardized reports and individuals served in the region residing outside of the



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region, grant updates, and Local Plan labor market information data, business services, and program & service delivery.

Agenda Item 6 – Report of the Youth Committee

Roddy summarized agenda items discussed at the February 1st Youth Committee meeting. Discussion included updates on the 2022-2023 Youth Apprenticeship Grant, 2023-2024 Quality jobs, Equity, Strategy, and Training (QUEST) National Dislocated Worker Grant, grant pursuits, Local Plan youth services delivery, and WIOA Youth Basic Skills Deficient Policy Draft recommendation.

Hall proposed definition updates to the basic skills deficient eligibility criteria. WIOA identifies specific eligibility criteria for youth to participate in WIOA programs. The Basic Skills Deficiency Policy details the policy and procedures for determining basic skills for WIOA Title 1 Youth Programs administered by the Board. WIOA Sec 3(5) defines a basic skills deficient individual as an individual:

1. With English reading, writing, or computing skills at or below the 8th grade level on a generally accepted standardized test
OR
2. Who is unable to compute or solve problems, or read, write, or speak English at a level necessary to function on the job, in the individual's family, or in society.

Hall explained the Board utilizes option 1 for basic skills deficient eligibility. When applying option 2 of the definition, allowable assessments for basic skills for the purposes of eligibility that may be used are outlined in the WDBSCW Program Guide. Examples of less formal screening tools for determining basic skills deficiency for the purposes of eligibility determination may include performance on DWD-DET's Basic Skills Screening Tool, records from an educational institution indicating below average GPA, or demonstration that the individual is unlikely to graduate secondary school. In order to revise the definition to option 2, the Board must establish a Basic Skills Deficiency Policy to support the 2024-2027 Local Plan. The revision provides more flexibility and approachability to engage youth in WIOA programming and allows for more assessment tool options.

Kearney inquired if the TABE assessment is a requirement of DWD.

Hall stated the U.S. Department of Labor sets the requirement. The revision allows for an assessment of six questions typically completed within two minutes compared to the currently utilized two-hour assessment.

Tessmann thanked staff for the evaluation, clarified the impacts of the policy revision, and suggested Board staff will require soft targets for evaluation.

Kearney asked if other Boards in Wisconsin have adopted this revision.

Hall responded that all other Wisconsin Boards continue to utilize the TABE assessment.



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Kearney requested motion to accept the Youth Basic Skills Deficient Definition Policy Recommendation as presented. Guttenberg moved to approve the motion as presented. C. Klein offered the second. No discussion followed on this motion. The vote was unanimous in favor of the motion.

Agenda Item 7 – Local Plan Updates and Discussion

Lentz reviewed the local plan timeline and summarized an overview of service delivery strategies, service volumes, participant profiles, service delivery performance, industry engagement, regional labor force breakdown, jobs by industry, and driver industries for the region.

Kikkert went over DWD’s State Plan Vision 2022 modification and verbiage changes to DWD’s State Plan Vision 2024.

McNeary critiqued the use of “*competitiveness*” as a negative connotation.

Tessmann articulated differences between, “*sustain economic viability for individual and family self-sufficiency*” and “*improving equity, economic opportunity, and sustainability*”.

J Klein and Cox concurred.

Breese observed many manufacturing employers in Wisconsin do not hire workers from Minnesota knowing many will relocate back to Minnesota.

Kikkert juxtaposed DWD’s State Plan Vision 2024 and the Board’s current vision.

Szabrowicz requested the Board’s definition of, “*customer focus*” and, “*valuing people*”.

Kikkert replied customer focus entails creating one talent development system with no wrong door, resulting in a highly qualified workforce, focusing on what employers and employees need. Valuing people necessitates recognizing people in our region are our greatest assets.

Cox commented that vision statements should outline the end product or goal.

Tessmann concurred and suggested broadening specificity.

Szabrowicz agreed.

Kearney asked if there have been alignment issues brought up by DWD.

Lentz answered DWD will want to draw parallels but they cannot govern what the Board’s vision would reflect.

Thomas acknowledged the verbiage aligns with DWD’s State Plan Vision 2024.

C Klein concurred.

Breese advised the inconsequential verbiage can be helpful.



Dietmann recommended using, “*employers*” instead of, “*companies*”.

Kikkert contrasted DWD’s State Plan Strategic Goals 2024 to the Board’s current goals & strategies. Staff have proposed utilizing three strategies with multiple goals in preference to the currently-used five strategies:

- Strategy 1 - assure a regional workforce ecosystem that provides opportunity for flexible, creative innovation space, that is inclusive for economic mobility, and is responsive to the drive and needs of industry, job seekers, and workers.
- Strategy 2 - ensure a quality workforce ecosystem where programmatic and evaluation results are provided to partners and elected officials with data that is reliant on sound fiscal accountability with continuous improvements of system activity.
- Strategy 3 - continue to develop an effective Board that values partnership, creates positive economic change, and acts as a workforce development convener for the region.

Green requested the Board’s definition of, “*quality jobs*”.

Lentz summarized the U.S. Department of Labor’s *The Good Jobs Initiative* eight principles: recruitment & hiring; benefits; diversity, equity, inclusion, & accessibility; empowerment & representation; job security & working conditions; organizational culture; pay; and skills & career advancement.

Szabrowicz inquired if there are specific metrics that must be reported to DWD on the conception of the Local Plan.

Lentz replied there are no review of metrics involved with Local Plan process beyond the WIOA program performance metrics. DWD monitors Board compliance with overall program performance, policy, and guidance to verify Boards adhere to requirements. The Local Plan serves as a self-check for the Board.

Kikkert stressed that innovations provide for best practices.

Lentz went over DWD-identified State Plan strengths and weaknesses. Strengths include relationships, education system, alignment with economic development, and partnerships with K-12. Weaknesses include employer awareness of programming, training inequity, common language, professional development, sharing programmatic & performance information, and innovation.

McNeary recommended employer awareness initiatives should address dislocations that are not reported under a WARN notice.

Christenson asked about certifications for professional development.

Lentz responded there are a few organizations or associations that have established criteria and credentials, but they are not an academic degree or certification requirements for employment in the industry. The State of Wisconsin has not adopted, endorsed or set any sort of threshold. Michigan has a



more robust system called MichiganWorks which is a collaboration between the state and workforce boards.

Kearney suggested stronger collaborations with state partners to provide such a system.

Lentz agreed.

Hall highlighted the emergence of Apprenticeship program offerings through the University of Wisconsin-Stout.

Lentz reviewed staff's analysis of the Board's strengths, weaknesses, threats, and opportunities.

Agenda Item 8 – Meeting Adjournment

With no additional business for the Committee, Kearney moved to adjourn at 1:02 p.m.

Adjourned: 1:02 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted:

Ann McNeary
Board Secretary
Workforce Development Board of South Central Wisconsin, Inc.

Attachments for Board Records:

- Agenda
- Draft Minutes from December 13, 2023
- Board Presentation
- WIOA Basic Skills Deficiency Policy and Guidance Draft Handout
- Dislocation Activity Handout



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