

**WASHINGTON COUNTY  
WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD MEETING  
WebEx Meeting  
May 20, 2020**

**Members Present**

Christine Dressel	Christopher Eng	Susie Evans
Erin Kampa	Jordan Fry	Tara Gearing
Jeff Klemmer	Cynthia Larson	Rachel Perez
Monica Ramirez	Greg Renne	Michael Shaw
Lori Tapani		Tom Yuska

**Action Team Members**

Tom Colosimo	Andrea Dunn	Stan Karwoski
Dave Mogren		Sarah Shanley

**CareerForce Staff Present**

Deb Cunningham	Tina Dudzinski	Robin Hakari
Cindy Hinderks	Rachel O'Connell	Karen Ritter
Rick Roy		Thai Yang

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

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

**2. COVID Updates – Rick Roy**

**Getting Back to Normal Updates – 3 Phase Plan:** Stillwater will open their facilities June 1<sup>st</sup> with limited contact with customers. Our Workforce and Veteran's Services Division will continue to provide services working remotely and meeting with customers virtually, by phone or e-mail. Career Labs will not be open. Each phase will take one month depending upon any increase in cases. In Phase Two, other office locations will open with the same limitations. Phase Three will be closer to normal operations but with PPE in place. This will be flexible based on how things change and decisions from the Governor and the County Board.

Commissioner Karwoski added the Board approved the tax deferment to July 15<sup>th</sup> without penalty or interest if people request it. Increased expenditures for food support and homeless services with reduced revenues are affecting the budget and they are looking for state and federal relief.

**3. RAWA – Relaunching America's Workforce Act Letter of Support – Rick Roy**

RAWA will be rolled into the new HEROS Act which will include additional resources for the workforce development system for people unable to return to their old job. There are funds for Youth, Dislocated Workers, WIOA, programs such as Carl Perkins, and training for

healthcare. The State Director of the Association of Workforce Boards will make some final edits including changing RAWA to HEROS throughout the letter.

**Questions:**

*Jeff Klemmer: Is there data to help us understand the impact on businesses and how many may not return? We won't know what resources are needed without that information.* Rick replied he and Chris Eng are working with the Chambers to get information but the first indicator from data might be the reported wages through the Unemployment Insurance (UI) system. Between the state UI benefits and federal bump of \$600 a week, many people are making more than when they were working. *Chris Eng* added they are hearing from a number of businesses that are closing permanently but it is too early to tell yet.

*Jeff Klemmer: What happens if there are more funds than necessary?* Rick replied federal funding is on a 3 year basis and if funds are not used, there may be an extension or the money will expire.

A Motion was made to approve the HEROS Act Letter of Support, it was seconded, and the Motion was approved.

**4. Documents, Plans and Other Updates**

**Youth Plan – Karen Ritter:** Federal law mandates how we use the funds and we provide services within those guidelines. The Federal WIOA funding of \$129,590 serves youth from April 1, 2020 through March 31, 2021. The Minnesota Youth Program funding of \$94,661 runs from July 1, 2020 to June 30, 2021. Federal funds require 75% be spent on out-of-school youth (including those getting GED services) with 25% going to in-school youth. At least 20% of all funds must be spent on work experience.

This year state staff recommended all funds be spent on out-of-school youth to focus our efforts and build strong relationships. This is a challenging population to connect with and they work with Adult Basic Education, GED services and alternative schools to find them. Youth are also located through corrections, foster care and other agencies who serve high risk youth. Ten youth are currently being served with one finishing work service.

Youth are served through recruiting, case management, career counseling and guidance, post-secondary training funding, apprenticeship training, on-the-job training, and work experience. They assist youth in applying for FAFSA for traditional college programs. Youth are also referred to services through Adult Basic Education and mental health services. DEED will negotiate with the Department of Labor June 6<sup>th</sup> on the standards for 2021 and are proposing standards remain the same because of Covid-19.

*Tom Yuska asked if this was regarding federal funding.* Karen replied the biggest part is federal dollars but the plan also includes Minnesota Youth Program (MYP) funding which will be shared with schools working with District 916 secondary training. Rick Roy added they are looking at options working with Landfall, Cimarron and Tree Trust. The goal is to engage youth throughout the county and not just concentrations. A Motion was made to accept the Youth Plan, it was seconded, and the Motion was approved.

**Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) – Rick Roy:** The MOU is a document we are required to update every three years. During the federal monitoring visit in March,

suggestions were made to change the verbiage regarding partners who provide services onsite and add more description about referrals. Statewide, agencies are referring people directly to partner agencies because people often don't follow through. We are also required to describe better how we will use technology to serve people with disabilities. The MOU must be signed by July 1<sup>st</sup> and Rick is setting up a WebEx meeting with partners to review the changes.

**Infrastructure Funding Agreement – Rick Roy:** Under WIOA, documentation is required of how expenses are covered at comprehensive CareerForce locations, which would be the Woodbury location. All costs are allocated for the operation in cash or in kind contributions. The agreement will be reviewed with our accountant, Thai Yang and partners. Technically, this is part of the MOU and will be reviewed by the WDB at the June 17, 2020 meeting and has to be in place by July 1, 2020.

**One Stop Operator:** A new feature of WIOA law is the requirement of a one stop operator separate from the Board to provide oversight. In Washington County, no applications were received in response to the RFP so a consortium approach is set up with existing partners to operate as the one stop operator: Wagner-Peyser (Job Service), Cindy Larson; Vocational Rehabilitation, Erin Kampa; and Adult Basic Education, Susie Evans. The federal monitor questioned Rick Roy's involvement so the CareerForce Action Team will take a more active role. Minnesota has requested a waiver to remove the competitive process for the One Stop Operator. This will be on the June 17th WDB agenda to have in place July 1, 2020.

**Regional and Local Plan:** The Local Plan due June 30, has been extended for a year because of Covid-19. The Directors do not want to wait a year and will address this by fall to have a plan on how to spend funding and align with the Regional Plan when it gets written.

**Greater Metropolitan Workforce Council:** Rick Roy said the Council has officially dissolved because of the difficulty in creating a structure and it also took time away from other work that needed to be done. A Regional Plan and MOU on workforce development issues is still required by WIOA; there will a meeting in June to address this and the WDB will receive updates.

Commissioner Karwoski said he was the chair of the Council and newly elected commissioners were a factor in the decision. Covid-19 has created a lot of uncertainty which has made it difficult to put the proper emphasis on a Regional Plan. A new organization will be created and include the former council's focus on more private sector involvement and racial equity as an opportunity to strengthen our workforce. He is hoping there will be a true regional balance as well. Chris Dressel added the Council had some major accomplishments and good practices will be rolled into the next organization.

*Chris Eng: Has the grant application submitted by the Greater Metropolitan Council to J.P. Morgan Chase been withdrawn?* Rick Roy replied the application made it through the second round and the handling of the proposal will have to change going forward.

**Customer Feedback for 2019-2020:** Rick Roy reviewed feedback from customers about what makes their job search more difficult. Top answers were employer bias (age

discrimination and disability), and current level of education and training. Career Services staff will work with employers to address these issues.

## 5. Q & A with Board Members

**Stan Karwoski, County Commissioner:** The County Board appreciates what business leaders and County staff are doing and the Board will do as much as they can to help.

**Chris Dressel, First State Bank and Trust, Bayport:** She said the WDB appreciates the work of CareerForce staff right now: Rick Roy said there were many questions about Unemployment Insurance in the beginning. Now staff are staying connected with their caseloads and bringing people onto the Dislocated Worker program. There has been an increase in public assistance.

**Susie Evans, Great Rivers Adult Education Consortium:** They have a GED testing center in Hastings and those needing the GED to get a job are getting priority service. They offer online and virtual sessions for Microsoft Office and are available to help with anything else needed to upgrade people's skills.

**Chris Eng, Washington County Community Development Agency:** Washington County is joining a regional effort called Business for Business where those companies doing well are assisting companies that are struggling. It is 100% funded by corporate donations through a nonprofit. It will give grants and technical assistance to smaller companies and will market the effort through local chambers and Greater MSP.

**Monica Ramirez, Century College:** Summer classes are online but some technical classes are retooling to run this fall using social distancing.

**Jeff Klemmer, Exit Realty:** Real Estate is considered an essential business and they measure activity through showings. Showings are 15% above the numbers prior to the shutdown and only 6.8% below the same period a year ago. More home buyers have gone through the preapproval process and are ready to make a purchase. They were not having traditional open houses but that is changing with businesses reopening.

### **New Board Members:**

**Michael Shaw, 3M:** She works with Human Resources and is working more closely with the community and schools for the next generation of strong contributors.

**Greg Renne, Finishing Trades Institute of the Upper Midwest (FTIUM):** He has worked in workforce development on the local level and workforce development and labor relations for the International Union of Allied Trades. He is now the recruitment and marketing manager of FTIUM.

**Erin Kampa:** She is the acting office manager of the Woodbury Vocational Rehabilitation office after Heather Felderman moved to another office. She was previously a counselor for 10 years in North Minneapolis and managed the South Minneapolis team.

## 6. Meeting Adjourned – Christine Dressel

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