



Business Services/Economic Development Meeting

Date: February 13, 2020

Time: 9:30-11:30am

Location: AMC

Attendees: Rick Roy, Mark Jacobs, Craig Nathan, Jeanna Fortney, Leslie Wojtowicz, Becky Accettura, Lorrie Janatopoulos, Bridgett Backman, Kathleen Gordon

Notes

Agenda item: Updates

Discussion:

Chamber— Not present

Economic Development: EDAM/MAPCED— MAPCED is having their next meeting on February 26th. The agenda includes guest speakers on broadband, Cheryl Glaeser from Launch Your Future Today (LYFT) Pathways, Commissioner Kiscaden on the Governor's Task Force on Housing, and more.

DEED— Lorrie Janatopoulos, CareerForce director at DEED. The office is under a directive to enhance employer services. They have been specifically working with smaller/midsize employers lacking HR departments and employers struggling to fill vacancies. There is an ongoing initiative to upgrade Minnesotaworks.net, which will allow employers to connect better with candidates. DEED has heard positive feedback about the labor market information that is available on CareerForceMN.com. They have also heard that employers would appreciate assistance in recruiting/hiring/retaining employees from diverse and underrepresented talent pools. They would also like more training opportunities for incumbent workers. Virtual career fairs might be on the table as CareerForce expands their digital presence.

- Kathleen Gordon from the Department of Labor and Industry will connect with Lorrie about linking their online presence.

DoLI— Kathleen Gordon. They have completed six community conversations this winter at the PIPELINE program. They try to bring many stakeholders into these events, including employers, educators, and more. At every one of the conversations, day care and affordable housing were mentioned. The community conversations also raised the point that healthcare facilities, including assisted living and community clinics, have been closed due to a lack of staff. DoLI has gotten Salesforce in the past few months and they are trying to use the system to track outreach to employers. Their Youth Skills Training (YST) Program has started 17 new partnerships throughout the state. This is a partnership between a school/district and employers to develop paid work-based learning experiences for 16 and 17-year-old students. They have given \$300,000 in grants this year. Many of the participating employers have set up pipeline programs to keep students on as employees. The employers will pay for their education to advance them within the organization which helps students avoid college debt.

- DoLI could improve awareness of YST Program. There is only one person at DoLI managing the program. It would be helpful to get information out statewide through the

CareerForce locations. Mark Jacobs suggested that Kathleen get in touch with Kay Tracy at DEED – she is the main person for all the youth programs.

- Craig Nathan (Rural Minnesota CEP) mentioned that they are trying to develop a YST program in their area. They have run into roadblocks with taking students out of schools for the programs. Small districts might lose revenue if students are absent for too many hours. Craig heard this information from Troy Haugen, Career & Technical Education Coordinator at the Lakes Country Service Cooperative (thaugen@lcsc.org). It was recommended that we create more connections with the Minnesota Department of Education, Service Cooperatives, and the Department of Labor and Industry to connect these problems and ideas together. Some issues are caused by statute. The resolution will have to come from higher-level administrative conversations.

Local Areas—

Craig Nathan, Rural Minnesota CEP: They are working on an inclusive workforce employer designation pilot program with six businesses. They have also been working with the Workforce Strategy Consultant from DEED and the Region 5 Development Commission (R5DC).

- They are in process of WIOA regional planning.
- 26-county regional workforce alliance is going to have an elected official gathering on March 6th.

Leslie Wojtowicz, Central Minnesota Jobs and Training Services: They are also starting to write a narrative for their regional plan. There is an EPIC event (Exploring Potential Interests and Careers) on February 28th, 2020 which will involve almost 4,000 students. They are also doing in-person prep sessions at local high schools.

Bridgett Backman, Anoka: They have formed their first cohort with the Community Connections grant. Community connections grant, first cohort has formed. They have also started their first Pathways to Prosperity (P2P) grant. They have had a few employers come forward already. They are working with St. Thomas on Certified Professional Project Manager (CPPM) Program and are getting started planning a youth job career fair for the summer.

- [Project Manager course with St. Thomas](#) has been advertised to businesses through their Workforce Development Board, the Chamber, and other partners. St. Thomas has also helped advertise the program. There are 18 people taking the class as a cohort on site at the CareerForce in Blaine. They will meet six Thursdays through March 12. There are employees from many different employers. They bought the class from St. Thomas and then filled it. If they don't get enough registrants, they can cancel with no penalty up until two weeks in advance.
- The [Initiative Foundation](#) has partnered on incumbent worker training. If they have businesses that apply and they want to do training outside of work hours, Initiative Foundation will cover assistive childcare costs.

Rick Roy, Washington County: Tomorrow, they will take a tour of where the P2P grant will be spent. The healthcare career pathways piece is moving along.

Mark Jacobs, Dakota/Scott: Working on hiring events: two parts, panel discussion and time for jobseekers to ask questions (but there are usually no consistent answers from employers). One firm takeaway of these events is that in-person connections are valuable. Jobs HQ is hosting job fairs. There will be an LGBTQ job fair on June 26th at the Radisson Blu -- DEED is a partner on that.

Agenda item: Counting Employer Connectivity**Discussion:**

- At the last Operations Committee, Diane Halvorson recommended that we do some thinking about how to count employer connectivity.
- What does DEED do with tracking employer connectivity?
 - Annually, the performance management team looks at how many employers have been connected and makes this a part of the WIOA report. The commissioner is interested in better and more frequent reporting on employer connection. A question right now: what does “connection” mean? Creating an account with MinnesotaWorks.net? Something else?
- Craig Nathan, through Rural Career Counseling Coordinators Program, has an annual requirement to report on up to six areas of connection with all kinds of jobseekers. They also report on the number of businesses they’ve reached. The Career Planning infographics came from this group – as a side note, they are making a set of Career Planning infographics for statewide functions.
- Bridgett Backman: Uses Excel spreadsheets to track outreach. A report goes out after each employment engagement activity that includes the number of participants and additional information.
- Mark Jacobs: Is there a simple data collection system on employer connectivity that everyone could use locally? Would that work?
 - Mark and Lorrie will connect on this. How can we come up with those counts? We don’t want them to be duplicative between DEED and local boards, but we don’t want to create extra work. Also, what are we hoping to get out of this data? What do we want to do with it?

Agenda item: Economic Development, Workforce, and Housing AMC Subcommittee**Discussion:**

- The EDWH Subcommittee had their first meeting back in December. The next meeting will be on February 27th at the AMC Legislative Conference. This first year of the subcommittee will focus on housing. This next meeting will talk about what the year is going to look like and their goals. Jeanna is looking for speakers for an overall picture of housing across the state and a summary of the biggest issues. Individuals from Hennepin County will also speak to help clarify some common terms. Jeanna is planning some tours in spring and early summer to look at positive housing practices across the state.
 - Craig Nathan: Counties, through HRAs, can enact legislation around a housing trust fund to bridge the gap between public and private sector partnerships. Crow Wing county recently initiated a project like this.

Agenda Topic: Follow-Up from Previous Meeting

Discussion:

- SHRM engagement?
- Department of Corrections Connections and Resources
- Mark Jacobs will follow up on these items

Agenda Topic: Other?

Discussion:

- What are the workplans for the Workforce Strategy Consultants?

Next meeting: March 12, 2020