



## MAWB Operations Committee Minutes

October 27<sup>th</sup>, 2022

The Chair called for approval of the previous months' meeting minutes and the agenda. Barb Chaffee moved to approve the minutes and agenda. Vicki Leaderbrand seconded. The motion carried.

### Building Strong Communities

Building Strong Communities' Executive Director joined the meeting to provide an overview of the organization and their work. [See slides](#). Visit [buildingstrong.org](http://buildingstrong.org) for more information.

### H-2A Job Opportunities and AJCs/One-Stop Centers

The committee heard a presentation from DEED about Foreign Labor Certification (FLC), and the H-2 visa subcategories H-2A and H-2B and their differences. [See slides](#).

### CareerForce Updates

- Minnesota was selected as one of seven states to receive...[SOME KIND OF GRANT]. DEED will keep \$10 million and hire staff to deliver services.
- Bree Maki was recently selected to lead the DEED Office of Broadband Development. Maki will replace previous Director Angie Dickison.
- There was a request to see if Job Service could perform a follow-up call 6-8 weeks after their initial RESEA calls. Follow-up calls are expected to start mid-November.
- DEED staff recently attended the Geographic Solutions conference (new Labor Exchange platform provider company) and learned that it can interact with Salesforce. This has the potential for solving problems and providing new opportunities for promotion.
- Job Service/CareerForce staff at DEED have been working more closely with the Business/Economic Development departments at DEED to strengthen connections. Part of the goal is to connect with economic development grantees and do a better handoff with the workforce side of things.
- [Minnesota Forward Tech Training Competitive Grant applications](#) are due at the end of November, and the strict DW eligibility is making it challenging.

### Introduction

The committee was introduced to Deven Bowdry ([deven.bowdry@state.mn.us](mailto:deven.bowdry@state.mn.us)), the new Interim Director for the Office of Public Engagement. Focus has been on planning for the next legislative session.

### Hot Topics

- **Federal Nursing Grant:** Suggested that HealthForce Minnesota could re-connect with the Operations Committee.
- **Winter Meeting Agenda:** Discussed ideas for the Winter Meeting presentations. John Chamberlin with Local and Regional Plans, Industry Associations Panel, MAWB Members Panel (describe work of local centers for GWDB members), GWDB Restructuring Updates, Long-Term/Strategic Planning for Workforce Development.

- **Serving New Americans/Refugees:** Duluth is seeing an increase in immigrant populations. Asked for training ideas for staff, particularly on legal work statuses. A committee member recommended that Rachele King, the State Refugee Coordinator ([rachele.king@state.mn.us](mailto:rachele.king@state.mn.us)) could help answer questions in the meantime. Suggested that a statewide online training may be helpful.
- **Tuition Payment Guidance:** Several local areas must obligate funding for tuition assistance before the training starts, but they can't start paying tuition until after the training has started.

#### **Director's Discussion**

- Reviewed 2023 Legislative Session documents, including the Legislative Priorities and the one-pager. Discussion around focusing on funding for employer services and adults with barriers to employment. Jeanna will update document and take them to the Executive Committee.
- Jeanna will set up a full MAWB member virtual meeting to discuss legislative priorities ahead of the winter meeting.
- Jeanna will set up a meeting with TA provider John Chamberlin while he is in town for the winter meeting to focus on MOU/IFAs.

#### **DEED VRS Updates**

A team of staff from DEED VRS joined the meeting to provide updates on partnership in CareerForce locations, changes to service delivery, Pre-ETS, and services to employers.

- Their goal is to respond to local area needs by providing flexible delivery options for services.
- They are assessing each lease as it comes up on a case-by-case basis.
- Their key tool is the MOU/IFA, which needs local partner signatures.
- VRS has found that schools want VRS services on-site and in schools. Other clients would prefer to meet at the library, in their homes, etc. Their goal is to remain nimble and meet clients where they're at.
- Importantly, VRS needs local areas to help communicate that they will deliver services to whatever location the client is in.
- "Relative benefit" is still being defined. Cybrarian isn't being used right now, so the question of what data to use to assess the use of physical space is still up for debate.
- In general, VRS does not anticipate ever returning to the amount of physical space they used to occupy across the state. They plan to remain with this more flexible model.
- VRS is in the process of hiring four additional Pre-ETS specialists.

#### **Return to Director's Discussion**

- AMC Annual Conference EDWH Subcommittee Meeting: The Economic Development, Workforce, and Housing Policy Subcommittee will meet in conjunction with the AMC Annual Conference. They are tentatively planning on doing a "WIOA 101" for Commissioners.

Janelle Wald Kovar moved to adjourn the meeting. Rick Roy seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 2:10 PM.