



MAWB Operations Committee Minutes

January 26th, 2023

The Chair called for approval of the January meeting agenda. Mark Jacobs moved to approve, and Rick Roy seconded; the motion carried. The Chair called for approval of the November meeting minutes. Nicole Swanson moved to approve the minutes and Rick Roy seconded; the motion carried.

CareerForce Updates

DEED will be starting an interagency agreement with DHS to make phone calls to time-limited SNAP recipients. There was recently another COVID-19 waiver granted for January 2023 – June 2023 for the time-limited SNAP participants, so the idea is to proactively call these program participants before the waiver expires. There are currently somewhere around 25,000 time-limited SNAP participants in the state, so there is an opportunity for MAWB to weigh in on how to prioritize people in that group. The committee suggested forming a Work Group to discuss how to prioritize calls and the potential impacts SNAP changes (particularly on the 55+ demographic) as well as inviting a DHS representative to a future MAWB Operations Committee meeting to discuss the project.

Workforce Division Updates

- Deputy Commissioner Marc Majors is overseeing the Governor's Workforce Development Board until a new Director is hired. Additionally, DEED is looking to add a Workforce Policy Coordinator position.
- Xcel Energy Power Up Program and Pilot Re-Entry Competitive Grant program awardees will likely be announced next week.
- Discussion ensued around the Support Services and P2P RFPs. DEED must react to the Legislature on these programs and can't get out in front of their actions. The Governor's budget is not intended to *reduce* these "signature programs."
- The City of Duluth advocated for a state SCSEP program with less restrictions, so this will be a priority of DEED moving forward in an effort to bring some of the 60,000 seniors that exited during COVID back into the workforce.
- Other DEED proposals in the Governor's budget include: increasing youth program funding, "Drive For Five" initiative that uses LMI data to identify five high-growth areas in the state with an average wage of at least \$55,000 annually with many vacancies in the field.
- Discussion ensued around connecting potential grantees to Workforce Boards before the RFP is submitted. This connection is essential for ensuring that programs aren't duplicated around the state. Additionally, the committee reinforced the idea that funding to support programs that already exist is important. When new programs start and funding dries up they are left out.
- Recent DOL visit had two findings: one state, one local. Local finding was around how priority of service and eligibility policy should be separated, and state finding was that their monitoring is too light.
- In the most recent Policy & Issues Committee meeting, it was discussed that a local area has been requesting an advance on federal dollars but not spending them in the required time

period, which leads to the funds earning interest, which considered “earned income” and is therefore a problem.

- Structure changes within the organization of Job Service now means that it mirrors the VRS system more closely. Reggie Worlds will now be supervising Job Service staff directly, and Joan Berning will be doing more MOU/IFA work. If you are not sure who to contact, reach out to both.

Hot Topics

- **MOU/IFA Discussion:** Committee members discussed that defining what the word “system” means in the context of MOUs and IFAs is extremely important. It’s particularly important for DEED (VRS, Job Service, etc.) to be unified on their definition of what it means to be a program participant. Committee members suggested that it may be productive for stakeholders at DEED to sit down in a meeting room and hammer out a shared definition. Other states have provided examples of metrics to use, although no one has found a perfect solution for this problem.
 - NEXT STEPS: Local areas will work with Jeanna to put together a matrix of where they are at in the MOU/IFA process to send to Juanita, Sam, Evan, and Marc. This survey will also ask what the current date is on the IFA/when it expires, and whether the OSO has been signed.
- **GWDB Meeting:** The committee agreed to move the annual winter MAWB-GWDB Meeting to the second week of November in 2023.
- **DW Eligibility Policy:** Policies have been updated. Some updates will be made to Workforce One to match these changes.
- **Diversionsary Work Program (DWP):** The Minnesota Association of County Social Service Administrators (MACSSA) is putting forward a position on DWP that not all members of MAWB agree with. This has put some counties in a difficult position, where the E&T department and the Social Service department have different views on the issue.
- **Best Places to Work Forum:** Ron Painter from NAWB will be speaking at Workforce Development Inc.’s Best Places to Work Forum on Thursday, April 27th from 11:30 AM – 4:00 PM at the International Event Center in Rochester.
 - NEXT STEPS: MAWB will send a calendar hold for the event date and location to Directors.
 - Nicole Swanson moved to reschedule the Operations Committee meeting in April to Friday, April 28th. Vicki Leaderbrand seconded; the motion carried. Ron Painter will be invited to speak at the April 28th meeting.

Legislative Updates

The committee discussed updates from the current session and discussed plans for a bill proposal.

Next Meeting: Thursday, March 2nd, 2023