

**Employer Engagement Committee  
Meeting Minutes  
August 7, 2018**

The Employer Engagement Committee Meeting was called to order at 5:30 p.m. by Cary Robbins.

**MEMBERS PRESENT:**

**IVCC:** Jim Andreoni, Mary Boogemans, Linda Burt, Debbie Clausen, Jerry Corcoran, and Amy Strawn

**STERLING:** Mike Dean, Patty Head, Cary Robbins, James Weed, and Robert White.

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Deana Jones, Kevin Lindeman, Barbara Majeski, Dave Mennie, and Lisa McCarthy

**OTHERS PRESENT (IVCC):** Dianna Schuler

**OTHERS PRESENT (Sterling):** Pam Furlan

**Business Meeting**

Approval of Minutes

Linda Burt made the motion to approve the minutes from the last meeting. Dr. Corcoran second the motion. Motion carried.

Healthcare Update

Dianna reported that the Healthcare Networking meeting originally schedule at IVCC in July was cancelled because so many members were unavailable due to vacation schedules. The next meeting is currently scheduled for October 10, 2018.

Dianna reported that the Healthcare Networking meeting at SVCC had a very small turn out but that it was still a good meeting. She went on to report that Bruce Larson from the Sterling IDES office spoke to the group about their concern about letting someone go for cause, primarily for abuse, and how to contest an unemployment insurance claim against them. Bruce stressed the need to document the abuse and identify witnesses. Dianna also reported that she spoke a little about incumbent worker training funds being available and the idea of a possible healthcare apprenticeship for Certified Medical Assistants. Pam asked if the group had any specific thoughts on what type of apprenticeship they were interested in. Dianna stated that they did not. That the conversation was informational in nature as to what BEST staff have been thinking and researching. No date has been scheduled for the next meeting.

Business Services Report

Dianna reported that the Business Services Report was for only one month because of the new program year beginning in July. She also explained that we are still getting IDES information by local office and not broken out by county. She went on to explain that Illinois Job Link is actually a part of a consortium of states that have a contract with the Job Link service and that the consortium has to be petitioned, and in agreement, for changes to the Job Link system to be made. She stated that she has been assured that Tory Davis from IDES has made the request to be able to get information by county. We are waiting on a decision.

Cary remarked that other than 2 retail closures locally (J C Penney and Bergner's), along with Nippon, that the business climate when it comes to unemployment is rather low. Pam commented that staff were just at the Sterling Bergner's and that they have about 45 employees that are being laid off. She went on to state that workshops have been scheduled for the Bergner's employees for the 17<sup>th</sup> of August, one in the morning and one in the afternoon.

#### Hiring and Retention Survey Report

Dianna reminded the committee that in the spring she did a summary report based on the initial results of the surveys, both the business and job seeker surveys. She stated that since then the survey has been re-opened and sent back out via Survey Monkey but that there has been no more surveys completed. She said that she will keep it open and periodically send it back out to try to increase the number of responses.

Pam asked what the plans were to develop a response to some of the information that was received. Jim asked what the primary reason was for employees leaving their jobs. Dianna replied that from the job seeker side of the survey it was because of a layoff. Pam indicated that additional reasons included pay, some were let go because of a lack of soft skills, as well as others. Pam instructed Dianna to get with some of the other business services staff and review the responses and develop an initial response for the October meeting.

#### Apprenticeship Discussion

Dianna began with some background on what has already been done toward becoming a sponsor of a Department of Labor Registered Apprenticeship program. She stated that BEST staff have already met with the US DOL representative from Rockford about the idea of doing one for Certified Medical Assistant(CMA). She also stated that at the July NCI Works meeting, where she also presented the idea, Bonnie Campbell seemed interested in the possibility of such a program and was willing to talk further about it. Dianna went on to inform the members that when staff had talked with DOL they were told that for management of the program there were a couple of options. According to DOL we could have one person manage the program once it is set up or we could have a committee that included those involved in the program: the local area, education, the employer. She stated that it was even possible for the Employer Engagement Committee to serve as the apprenticeship committee and ask the member how they would feel about filling that role.

Mike Dean stated that he was involved at SVCC with a committee led initiative to build apprenticeship programs through DOL and was concerned about duplicating efforts. Dianna replied that the DOL contact, Ronda Klieman, would be a good point of contact to prevent duplication of effort. She went on to say that locally CMA was not being done as yet. She went on to inform the committee that when she pulled up labor market information just for LaSalle County there was a need, based on retiring age, to begin training for replacement demand. There isn't a sufficient need for the college to create a new program, but there is a need in small amounts now and larger amounts in the future.

Pam asked if Mike was talking about CMA specifically or was the process of being a sponsor. Mike said that the committee at SVCC was trying to identify needs and what programs need to be developed. He was not certain if they were planning to follow through with CMA. He was just concerned about multiple committee working on developing the same programs. He also stated that the SVCC committee has not made a decision on what direction they are going yet. Pam requested that as this process moves along to keep Mike in the loop so that he can share progress with the committee at SVCC. Pam also stated that she had talked with Bonnie Campbell at IVCC and that Bonnie had talked to Kishwaukee

Community College about the idea of an apprenticeship program. She went on to say that Bonnie's next step was to talk with SVCC to see if the 3 college could come up with an apprenticeship program.

Pam asked if this committee would be interested in serving as the apprenticeship committee if we are able to work out a CMA apprenticeship program. Patty stated that we need to get and review the DOL standards and then we would know if this committee would be the correct entity to serve as the apprenticeship committee. Mike stated that one of the hardest parts of administering the program is evaluating the on-the-job portion and how you're going to move people through. All of which has to be defined by the sponsor.

### Industry Presentations

### Talent Pipeline Discussion

Pam reported that BEST, Inc. hired Workforce Enterprise Services to develop a universal talent pipeline framework and template. Pam explained that since our area doesn't truly have a dominate industry to focus on the project will develop a universal approach that all sectors could implement. She stated that the Employer Engagement Committee would be ideal at serving as the steering committee for the project with BEST making progress reports over the course of the 18 month project (July 1, 2018 through Dec. 31, 2019). Everyone agreed that the Employer Engagement Committee would serve as the steering committee for the Talent Pipeline project. Pam will provide the committee's membership list to Workforce Enterprise Service.

### Other Business

None

### Public Comments

Dianna reminded the committee that the NCI Works Employer Conference is being held on September 28<sup>th</sup> at the Mendota Civic Center from 8:30am to 3:00pm.

### Adjournment

With there being no further business motion to adjourn was made by Jim Andreoni. Motion was seconded by Dr Corcoran and carried. Meeting adjourned at 6:29 p.m.

Dianna Schuler