

**Employer Engagement Committee
Meeting Minutes (Organizational Meeting)
February 2, 2016**

The Employer Engagement Committee Meeting was called to order at 5:08 p.m. by Co-Chair Debbie Clausen.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

PERU: Debbie Clausen, Jim Andreoni, Mary Boogemans, Dr. Jerry Corcoran, Monte Flack, and Kevin Lindeman

MEMBERS ABSENT: Linda Burt, Patty Head, Deana Jones, Amy Liebing, Barbara Majeski, Dave Mennie, Cary Robbins, Jim Weed, Theresa Wittenauer

TELEPHONE: Vicki Carlson, and Lisa McCarthy

OTHERS PRESENT: Dianna Schuler, Pam Furlan, and Joel Torbeck

Business Meeting

Pam introduced Lisa McCarthy from TCEDA to the group. Lisa was joining the meeting via conference call. Lisa gave a brief description of her agency and the area it serves.

Committee Organization and Logistics

Pam informed the group that tonight's meeting is mostly to get the committee organized and to give some brief updates with only one action item. The members agreed that the first Tuesday of the even numbered months of the year at 5:30 p.m. would be the best time to meet.

Review of Committee Responsibilities

Pam reviewed the handout and informed the committee that WIOA requires that all partner agencies work together to meet two goals: 1) to meet the career pathway needs of our job seekers, and 2) to meet the hiring needs of our employers. She went on to inform the committee that in the past we have always had two one-stops in our area; the one in Ottawa and the one in Sterling. IDES has informed us that they will now only financially support one one-stop; the one in Ottawa. Sterling's office will be an affiliate one-stop office. When we refer to the "comprehensive one-stop" we will be referring to the one in Ottawa. Pam explained that there are more partners represented in the Ottawa one-stop than in the Sterling office and that because of that representation Ottawa better fits the definition of a comprehensive one-stop.

Pam reminded the members that NCI Works is the umbrella organization for all of the partners and, therefore, it is NCI Works' responsibility to make sure that the partners are meeting the needs of the businesses and job seekers. The business portion of this responsibility falls under

this committee. It will need to make sure that anything that is done by a partner or a group of partners is aligned with the needs of business customer.

Jim asked about the need to sign off on everyone's plans. Pam explained that now we are required to write one plan that includes all four of the core partners and that, yes, NCI Works will need to approve that plan.

Pam also informed members that all partners will be doing presentations and giving reports to the board to inform NCI Works members of what each partner is doing for the business community. We will then be asking members to share that information about services and initiatives to others at any events (service agencies/chambers) that members may attend.

Follow Up on Melanie Arthur Training-Next Steps

Pam asked members to let her know if they have any feedback from the training. Discussion then focused on some specific points that Melanie brought up. Work Readiness workshops, Pam informed the members that we currently do generic workshops, but one of Melanie Arthur's suggestions is to do industry/sector specific workshops that prepare a person for a specific job and its environment. She also stated that we would like to work with our board members to design and tailor these types of workshops going forward.

Another idea was to get the different industries together and we've done this some in the past. Pam mentioned the Logistics Council and it may be resurrected. Currently on going is the Chief Manufacturing Executives group that gather to network. Pam mentioned to Lisa that Dianna and Mary may be talking with her to get something going in her area of Carroll and Jo Daviess Counties.

Webinars/Topics for Sector Strategies

Pam shared that Melanie Arthur does many webinars and that they are 60 minutes long and about \$500. She went on to say that we would like to purchase some of these to share with businesses at no cost to them. Some of the webinars were reviewed including Funding Options, Sector Strategy Development, Local System-building, and Board Building. Pam informed them that we have the funds to purchase some of these or perhaps the members know of others.

OJT Wage Reimbursement

Pam informed the group that we would like to increase the wage reimbursement to up to 75% and that WIOA allows for us to increase it. Discussion centered on the development of criteria for positions that would qualify for the larger reimbursement and setting a floor of a minimum of 50% reimbursement. Pam state that we could certainly come up with guidelines for the Business Relations Reps to use to determine when an OJT could be paid at 75%. Some ideas included looking at the wage itself, barriers to employment, and skills. Dianna will put together a recommendation. Jim motioned to approve the increase, Mary seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Kids not going to 4-year schools/Employer Forum Update

Mary started the conversation by relating that her company struggles with finding part-time associates. She would like to be able to get into the schools to talk to seniors that are not planning to go to college. She asked how they could get in there. Mary asked if there is someone that could help. Dianna suggested that perhaps news from the educator meeting for the Employer Forum could help. Dianna informed the group that BEST has been working with IDES, DORS, Adult Education, Wagner Peyser and the business training offices at IVCC and SVCC to develop 2 manufacturing forums. The idea is to bring the manufacturers and educators together to dialogue about current and projected needs, identify skills needed, inform them of the business engagement requirements of WIOA, and to allow for educators to ask them specific questions so that they can take the information back to their schools to aid in the development of curriculum. Dianna also informed them that the core partners met with a small group of educators in January and that they were very excited about the ability to be at the forum and were asked to put together their questions for the manufacturers and to forward them to Dianna by the end of February. She informed the members that during the course of the educator meeting, Dr. Ricardo Espinoza recommended developing a coalition to continue the dialogue after the forum. Down the road we hope to replicate the effort in Ogle County and Carroll and Jo Daviess Counties. We also hope to expand into other targeted sectors.

Other Business

None

Public Comments

None

Adjournment

With there being no further business, Kevin Lindeman motioned to adjourn. Motion was seconded by Jim Andreoni and carried. Meeting adjourned at 6:16 p.m.

Dianna Schuler