

Workforce Development Board Meeting Minutes
February 10, 2016
NTRPDC Conference Room

The meeting was called to order at 10:30 by Craig Harting.

Those in attendance were: Craig Harting, Jackie Johnson, Phil Smiley, Lindsey Sikorski, Linda Walsh, Penne Watkins, and Brian Hoffman. Attending by phone/web were Bob Blair, Mike Narcavage, Heather Nelson, Jody Place, Karen Russell and Elaine Stalfa.

NTRPDC staff in attendance was: Frank Thompson, Cindy Fay, Melissa Fleming, Jody McCarty, and Bonnie Warner

Introductions were made.

Citizens' Comments – None

Meeting Minutes for August 26, 2015 and October 21, 2015 were not approved due to the lack of a quorum.

PA CareerLink – Melissa Fleming

- Rapid Response Updates:
 - CUDD Energy laid off approximately 90 employees in November 2015. About 60 of the employees were from the NT. A series of rapid response sessions were held. Their trade petition was not approved.
 - Somerset Regional Water Services laid off a total of 73 employees from Susquehanna and Wyoming Counties in September 2015.
 - 77 Energy subsidiaries: Great Plains Oilfield Rental, Oilfield Trucking and Hodges Trucking all closed in August 2015. A total of 134 people lost their jobs but 63% have obtained new employment prior to exhausting their unemployment benefits.
 - Southwestern Energy has filed a WARN notice. Rapid response services were not provided due to the timing of the layoffs. A total of 119 employees were affected with about 48 of the employees being local and the rest from out of state.
 - GTP in Towanda has stabilized. CareerLink is still working with those employees affected by recent layoffs.
 - Osram in Wellsboro, is scheduled to close in September 2016. Their trade petition has been approved. Rapid response services were provided on February 9th and 10th. Approximately 120 employees will be affected. Layoffs are expected to begin in June.
 - Hitachi Metals Automotive Components (HMAC) is merging with another company by April 1st. All 115 jobs are moving to a facility in Illinois. They are trying to place some of the employees in their Lawrenceville facility and some may go to Ward. The facility is expected to close by December 2017.
 - RSJ Technologies, Canton – This is a machining company who has placed six of our customers in OJTs.
 - Crown Cork & Seal, Nichols, NY – The company manufactures beverage cans and plans to employ 165 people. The first round of hiring for hourly positions will take place in June or July with another round in the fall.

- Tioga Downs, Nichols, NY – They are getting their gaming license and are expecting to hire 400-500 people over the course of the next year.
- Upcoming Events
 - Veteran Event – Pat Hoagland, our local veteran representative, will be holding a series of events for jobseekers who are veterans. He is bringing in different employers to discuss the skills needed to work for their company. The first event will be with Cargill. The event will be open to everyone but the focus will be on veterans. Six events will be held over the next year.
 - Re-entry Employment Specialist (RES) training is a sixteen hour course available to instruct participants in how to help ex-offenders find employment following their release from prison. Ms. Fleming has reached out to local prisons and probation offices to gather enough participants to hold the training.
 - Tioga County Job Fair will be held on March 8, 2016 at the Owego Treadway Inn in Owego, NY.
- An increase in foot traffic for all offices was seen in January. This is mostly due to recent layoffs. January is usually a slower month.

Youth Committee Meeting – Jody McCarty

- A review of changes to the program were discussed. 75% of program funding must be spent on OSY ages 16-24 years old. Staff will maintain current ISY but will not recruit additional ISY. The summer youth program will continue with Trehab and BCA. The new law also requires 20 % of the funding be spent on training.
- Staff is looking to rebrand the youth program to better fit the 16-24 year old age group. BCA and Trehab will have a contest among their youth participants to create a new program name/logo.
- Youth performance numbers through December 2015 were reported. State performance measures are not currently being met. Trehab and BCA have been working with skeleton crews due to the budget impasse.
- Business-Education Partnership (BEP)
A report was shared on the progress of the program. There are currently 11 high schools and 2 career & tech centers participating. The career counselors are very active in the schools and have been very well received. Funding is being sought to continue the program in the future. Two additional schools want to participate next year if the program is available. This program is our opportunity to serve ISY outside of the Youth Program. Heather Nelson shared that OVR may be able to provide some funding if students with IEPs are being served in the program. An ARC grant may be able to provide funding to continue the program.
 - Career Day – March 18, 2016 at Towanda High School
 - NTCC will be holding an event for students to meet employers in their field of study.
 - Susquehanna Community HS will be holding an event in May
 - Montrose – Career Fair -- May

Chair/Director Report – Frank Thompson

- A draft of an updated WDB Handbook was shared. It was requested to include a glossary of workforce development terms.
- A WDB Bylaws draft was also presented. Discussion was held on changes under the new law. Both the handbook and bylaws are in draft form as additional federal and state guidance is expected.

- The timeline for the RFP process was shared. Volunteers will be needed to review and score the proposals for recommendation to the WDB and for final approval by the NT Executive Board.
- The NT Local Plan will be due to the state in two months.

Old Business – Frank Thompson

- The state plan and comments were shared with the board. There is a concern with a requirement to spend 50% of funding on training. This requirement will affect the way we currently operate and will shut down facilities. The public comment period has ended. Mr. Thompson has contacted area legislators to address concerns for our region.
- The NT Area Designation letter has been submitted. The letter requests that our workforce development area remain the same. Changes are not expected by the state for the NT workforce development area.
- A Regional Plan will not be required for the NT.
- The new PA Workforce Development Board does not include a representative from the NT. Mike Narcavage suggested contacting Mark Smith at the state.

New Business – Frank Thompson

- Local Policy – Approval is needed for additional funds for supportive services for training. The funds would be used for entrance exam fees, license fees, and books not covered through current ITA funds. An additional \$250/participant is requested to help cover these costs as needed. A vote by ballot will be requested as a quorum was not present.
- New Youth Committee Members – Approval to add Krista Davidson, Bradford County Human Services; Kelly Silver, local OVR provider; and Gary Martell, NTCC was requested. A vote by ballot will be requested as a quorum was not present.
- One-Stop Operator Procurement – The state guidance is unclear as to who the operator should be. There is concern whether Melissa Fleming can remain the Site Administrator and be staff to the Workforce Development Board. The state doesn't want local workforce boards involved in CareerLink Operations.

Communications

- State guidance/policy is available on their website <http://www.dli.pa.gov/Businesses/Workforce-Development/Pages/Pennsylvania's-Workforce-System-Directives.aspx#.VwKfmITD875>. The most recent guidance was released in December 2015. The Deputy Secretary has since left and we are currently under the direction of an interim Deputy Secretary.

Good of the Order

- Frank Thompson
 - Labor market information was shared for December 2015. The unemployment rates are going up a little. The NT rates range from 4.9 – 5.9%. These percentages do not include the most recent layoffs.
- Phil Smiley
 - A new office opened in Montrose on January 7, 2016. This provides staff in both Susquehanna and Montrose.
 - Job Fair in Montrose on April 13th or 14th. It will be held at the Bridgewater Church which is a large facility with plenty of parking.

- Job Fair at Shadowbrook in Wyoming County is scheduled for May.
- Penne Watkins
 - GED classes in Bradford, Susquehanna, Wyoming and Tioga Counties are back to normal. The first field test of the mobile GED testing unit is completed and was very successful. The plan is to expand the testing into our other counties.
- Jackie Johnson shared that Job Corps provides training to veterans of all ages. Consideration would be given for nonresidential status for veterans living in the area.
- Bob Blair
 - TCDC has closed a couple of loans with more in the works.
 - Phase I of the demolition at the tannery was completed in the fall of 2015
 - Elkland Business Community Center is open and a few spaces have been rented.
 - TCDC is working on a transition plan to replace Bob when he retires.
- Elaine Stalfa is working on a grant proposal for RESEA. Each region will be transitioning from PREP to RESEA. The program helps claimants who are likely to exhaust their benefits. April 1st is the target date for implementation in the NT.

The next meeting date is April 13, 2016 at NTRPDC beginning at 10:30 a.m.

The meeting adjourned at 11:50 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Bonnie Warner