

Tri-County Local Workforce Investment Board Meeting
Thursday June 14, 2007
8:30am-10:30am
Eastern Maine Development Corporation

Attendees: Mel Arsenault, Suz Norton, Dawn Mealey, Lisa Rancourt, Ann Swan, Ed Upham, David Klein, Mike Ballesteros, Charlie Newton, Glenon Friedman, Julie Johnston, Stephanie Bunker, Rick Schweikert, Merle Davis, Joe Brown, Jack McKay, Andrea Bickford, Kathy Billings, Karen Smith, Faye Ivers, Chris Greenleaf, Steve Lambert, Kathy Coogan, Tanya Pereira, Becky Hayes-Boober, Joyce Oakes, Susan Moran

I. Welcome and introductions

II. Minutes

Minutes from 03/14/07 meeting passed unanimously with no revisions.

III. National Business Leadership Partnership

We were joined at today's meeting by Joyce Oakes and Susan Moran from the West Virginia Workforce Investment Board. Their WIB and the TCLWIB were paired at a matchmaker event in Denver to conduct an exchange program to learn about each other's programs. Mel just recently completed her visit to West Virginia. This exchange has been a wonderful learning experience and will help both boards with further working on board strategies.

IV. Executive Director's Report

- a. EMDC Transition- Jonathan Daniels will be leaving EMDC, last day being June 20th. In the interim, Sharon Anderson will be dealing with internal matters and Chris Shrum will be dealing with external matters. The job opening is currently posted nationally and the EMDC board is hopeful that a new President will be in place by October 1, 2007.
- b. One Stop Operator- Brief update on the one stop operator issue. So far no resolution. D. Mealey reported the states position on the issue. The One Stop Operator role has always been a shared responsibility between the state and the WIB's. The larger board has the power to take separate funds to pay for the operation of being the One Stop Operator, however it is worrisome that funds would be taken away from the workers in order to build infrastructure.

- C. Greenleaf- Inquiry as to how much money currently goes towards training. At present time it is 25-30%.
- c. LILA Accounts- Auta Main will be coming to our next board meeting in September to do a presentation on Lifelong Learning Accounts. Essentially LILA's are 401k accounts for educational purposes, are portable, and federal legislation is pending to make it a tax benefit to employers. Mel encouraged anyone who is interested to give either herself or Auta a call.
 - d. Community College Integration- Preliminary conversations with EMCC and the CareerCenters about co-location. Currently there is co-location at East Millinocket and in Ellsworth and Dover it could be achieved very easily as they are already located in close proximity. Bangor and EMCC are talking about switching offices- admissions and financial aid coming to the CareerCenter, and CareerCenter services going over to EMCC. Optimistic that this will occur this summer. Additionally it has been discussed that EMCC utilize CareerCenter space at night to hold some of their classes, as the CareerCenter is already ADA compliant, has plenty of classroom space, computers, and parking availability.
 - e. Breakfast Briefing- A hospitality/tourism breakfast briefing was held with members of industry as well as the Chamber of Commerce from Bangor and Ellsworth to discuss industry needs, training programs, and how we can support industry in general. EMCC reports they have a new customer service training module, 6-8 hours long and are holding 2 sessions in Bar Harbor this week. M. Ballesteros reports that after being questioned, the employers in the area did not want this to result in a certification as that means they will have to pay their employees more. There was lengthy discussion by the board on the pros and cons of this approach.

This is being offered to most of the state and they are currently working with Hollywood Slots to develop a training program. Computer skills are also an identified need and the CareerCenter will soon be administering a Digital Technology Certificate program to enhance the computer skills of workers in the region. We will be holding a biomed/life sciences briefing in the fall.

- f. Maine Math and Science Alliance- Mel was recently appointed to the board of the MMSA and is looking forward to learning what they have to offer. They do not offer money, however do have

grantwriting assistance and have completed a number of successful National Science Foundation grants.

- g. **CEDS Report-** The Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy report put out by EMDC is currently at its 5 year update. Chris Shrum is heading up the project, which will be completed by June 30th. They recently held a forum at Jeff's Catering to brainstorm the ideas of people in the region. As a board, we will look at priority projects and use as a lens to look at our plan and adjust if needed.
- h. **Monitoring Update:** We are currently awaiting a letter from the feds detailing the results of the monitoring session held back in December.
- i. **Apprenticeship Contract:** This year we will have an apprenticeship goal of 40 once again. This was the goal for this year and our region exceeded with a current count of 47. M. Davis reports very good progress and we are working at raising the womens wages performance goal. There is strategy in place to meet wage goals by the fall.

Additionally it was reported that there are over 300 Maine job titles that could be apprenticeships. Mel reports that this years contracts will require that 10% of new apprenticeships must be within our 3 board priority sectors: biomed/lifesciences, marine trades/boat building/composites, hospitality/tourism. Also this year we will be contracting out with United Technologies Center, Hancock County Technical Center, and Tri-County Technical Center in Dexter.

- j. **Strategic Plan:** Currently working on the strategic plan to be submitted to the state by June 17th. We recently held our 3 public comment sessions but there were no comments to be had! The final plan will be submitted by Monday. Next Friday it will go on to the Maine Jobs Council where it will be screened and potentially passed. By October or January we will be doing a modification to address issues that are still on the table.
- k. **Contracts and Budget-** Recently we had our contracts revamped with assistance from a WIA lawyer, John Chamberlin. Currently working with David and Kathy of TDC to hammer out the final details. There is an increase of monies in Piscataquis and Hancock counties due to the ASU (Areas of Substantial Unemployment)

numbers. We are also being mindful of the possibility of consortia in the future.

- V. **Job Fair Updates-** Ed Upham provided a presentation of the job fair that was held last month. This year their vendor numbers were up from 35 the first year to 70 at this past job fair. They partnered with the Bangor Daily News which worked out wonderfully. The BDN will be back on board for the next job fair and will also be having a insert in their paper pertaining to it. There were more than 500 job seekers in attendance at the fair and workshops were held. On a going forward basis the CareerCenter is looking to grow the fair at an increase of 20-30%.

- VI. **North Star Alliance:** Update from Mel on the North Star Alliance Initiative. Michelle Park is doing a great job and there is great feedback coming from employers that they would not have participated without assistance from the liaison. We are now 1.5 years into the 3 year grant, which has a February of '09 end date. The USDOL has reported that if by that time monies are not depeled, we can spend out the grant money past that Feb. deadline. Maine has submitted another WIRED grant in collaboration with NH and VT surrounding IT. There is currently no word on whether or not it was awarded.

- VII. **Certification of Hospitality Program:** M. Ballesteros gave update on the hospitality training program being put on by EMCC and how employers have voiced that they do not want it to be a certification program as that would mean that they would need to look at paying their employees more who hold this certificate. The ME Tourism and Hospitality Board approached EMCC to provide this, and they then polled businesses for support and willingness to pay for the program. The group had a rousing discussion about the program and whether they feel a certification should result after completion. Suggestions were: this program could drive competition, instead of an asset it could be a liability as different companies hold different standards that the certification may not, the market determines wages- perhaps it is a mistake to pass over the certification as it can improve quality of worker. M. Ballesteros reports that they can provide certification if requested. It is an entry level program with 4-5 cert. courses offered. Also there is a work component and an exam. J. McKay suggested we all think of how the board can play a role in this, would it be beneficial to assemble a committee?

- VIII. **State Update-** Dawn Mealey: Larinda Meade will be leaving BES next month. The state has approved an initiative that supports CCtr activities, which we will hear more about at a later date. Dawn also provided an update on 2 grants the state applied for and were awarded- Rapid Reemployment Assistance and Disability Navigator. For the REA grant, they are currently providing workshops and this grant has possibly prevented unemployment length. The state is committed to continuing even if the funds do not continue. The Disability Navigator Grant is used to build capacity with staff and linkages with community providers. A Navigator will be hired by each LWIB to work in CareerCenters in the region.

Two years ago DOL begin a Lean Initiative, which is a process to review processes and value they bring to customers. Bangor is the 1st formal lean center. Merle Davis is the coordinator. We need to identify where there is less value, set priorities, and assess what we could adjust to save money in the future. Suggestions are to cut down computers in the info centers, reduction in hours, maximize usage. Projected savings of \$20,000

D. Mealey also wanted to commend the workers of this area and remarked that Area II is a shining star and should be proud of the work they are doing.

- IX. **Performance Measures-** Historic- Kathy Coogan: K. Coogan gave a update on the historic performance measures summary. We have been consistant in being the top performing WIB and she is very proud of the staff.
- X. **Performance Measures-** David Klein: D. Klein gave update on current performance measures and how we are doing. This report is not as complete as the last quarter results have not come in yet. 96% of our NEG goals have been accomplished and the one program with the lowest enrollments is economically disadvantaged adults. There is currently 150ppl enrolled, and the goal is 180. This is low due to layoffs of staff. We are doing well across our 17 performance measures, but performance is low in some categories due to data still coming in. Also centers have taken the opportunity to clean up their caseloads for the past few years, which can also affect the numbers.

In Moosehead NEG news, there were 90 laid off as of this time, with 63 enrolled in the program. The goal is 75, which we will work towards. Currently there is talk that the plant will be purchased.

In GP NEG news, the initial goal was 190 of 475 enrollees and we have met with 199 of 475. Initially there was a lot of back work that needed to be completed and also workers were confused with the mixed messages coming re: the reopening of the mill/recall of workers. There are still 70 or so left in the program and they are still chasing some employees around.

25 are in training

28 in job search

199 work elsewhere

175 work at Red Shield

XI. **Other Business-** There was no other business, meeting adjourned at 10:30am.