



## Workforce Development Board

402 West First Street  
Duluth, Minnesota 55802



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## Meeting Minutes

Monday, May 20, 2024

Duluth Public Library, Green Room, 520 W. Superior St., Duluth, MN 55802

### Present:

Andrea Chartier, Workforce Development Specialist, Essentia Health  
Kayla Dietzmann, Director of HR & Marketing, SCS Interiors  
Brian Durand, Project Executive, McGough  
Claire Farmer-Lies, Marketing & Communications Specialist, Residential Services Inc.  
Angie Frank, Manager, Duluth Adult Education  
Susie Gilbertson, Sr. Recruiter, Maurices Corporation  
Lindsey Growette Stingle, Human Resources Director, National Bank of Commerce  
Monica Haynes, Director, UMD Bureau of Business & Economic Research  
Duane Hill, District Engineer, Minnesota Department of Transportation  
Julie Johnson Atkinson, Vice President of Sales, Visit Duluth  
Linda Kingston, Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs, Lake Superior College  
Kathy Koch, Manager of Human Resources, Allele  
Jennifer Oakes, DEED Job Service Site Supervisor, Duluth CareerForce  
Vance Okstad, Director of Outreach, Cirrus Aircraft  
Alex Ren, Youth Representative  
Rick Revoir, Dean of Strategic Development, College of St. Scholastica  
Scott Vezina, Director of Communications & Marketing, Goodwill  
Amanda Yates, Assistant Director Economic Services and Supports, St. Louis County  
Shayla Drake, Workforce Strategy Consultant, DEED  
Elena Foshay, Director, Duluth Workforce Development  
Carson Gorecki, Northeast Regional Labor Market Analyst, DEED  
Carol Turner, Operations Manager, Duluth Workforce Development

Meeting called to order at 2:00 p.m.

Icebreaker Activity

Public Comment: None

Action items:

- March meeting minutes approved by all members in attendance

#### **Updates and Announcements:**

- New executive director for Minnesota Association of Workforce Boards (MAWB) hired – Cate Duin. Role important for legislative advocacy and connecting with DEED.
- Duluth Workforce Development Awarded Drive for 5 DEED grant
  - New DEED grant program that supports workforce strategies within the largest and fastest growing industries in the state—healthcare, manufacturing, construction, IT, and education.
  - Duluth Workforce Development grant specifically funds two strategies:
    - Partnership with ISD 709 to support teacher education
      - Our focus for the Drive for Five grant is going to be folks already working with ISD 709 as paraprofessionals, integration specialists and other staff who want to move up or who are already working towards a teaching degree or seeking other kinds of licensing. Tuition and work experience wages for things like student teaching can be supported.
    - Recruiting and training Class B CDL drivers
      - Needed to drive snow plows and other highway heavy construction equipment
      - We are talking to City of Duluth streets department and companies that deliver propane
      - NOTE: Some 18 year old students who receive CDL licenses have reported that it's hard to find jobs because employers cannot afford to insure them. Propane delivery requires a hazmat certification, and you have to be 21 years old for that.
- Duluth Workforce Development Awarded Youthprise grant
  - State set aside funds in last legislative session, grant to manage program awarded to Youthprise
  - Pilot project, supporting homeless youth ages 18-24, in St. Louis County or Hennepin County
  - Two-year project where participants will receive monthly income, no strings attached with an opportunity to participate in wrap around services
  - This is structured as a study, so there will be a control group. We will be looking at things like stable housing, employment, and education. At the local level, we will be working closely with Life House. The control group will not receive monthly stipend, but will be able to access services.
  - The goal is to serve 40-45 youth.
  - We are really excited to be a part of something so innovative. Wrap around services will look at financial literacy, housing, education, employment, work readiness, community building, life skills, and mental health.
- Good Jobs Great Cities (GJGC) Site Visit
  - We had a site visit from the GJGC team.
  - Duluth was selected as one of 16 cities nationwide that are focusing on workforce development initiatives tied to the Investing in America bills.
  - We are working to launch a manufacturing working group in Duluth.
  - We had a visit from the US Department of Labor head of Investing in America and two staff from National League of Cities.

- We hosted a convening at Lake Superior College that was well attended by manufacturers. A presentation was given by the Wisconsin Regional Training Partnership, that included information about creating apprenticeships that got a lot of interest. Follow up meetings are being planned.
- Working on setting up a regional manufacturing expo.
- A paid fall internship will be posted to help with this effort.
- Work-based learning framework handout
  - Career experience, exposure, engagement, exploration
- Annual youth plan was submitted and approved by the Emerging Workforce Committee
- School district referendum did not pass

### **Legislative updates:**

#### **State** (session ended at midnight last night)

- Bonding bill did not pass
  - Spirit Valley Community Center would have included an office for CareerForce onsite, and we would have been able to have a presence in West Duluth, and could have brought services to that community more easily, at no cost
- Cannabis industry
  - Funding passed for workforce development tied to cannabis industry, but very little information available on how to use it yet
- Waiting to hear about changes to state Dislocated Worker program

#### **Federal**

- House passed the Stronger Workforce for America Act
  - Good things in the bill:
    - Changes to youth program allowing more flexibility, definition of youth we can serve, in/out of school.
  - Not in support of:
    - Requirement that 50% of adult and dislocated worker funding be spent on training. Currently we spend about 35%. The new requirement would cut out job counseling services, which clients come to us for.
    - A provision that allows state to define local workforce development areas, rather than local boards and Local Elected Officials
    - MAWB is collectively working to raise awareness of our concerns about the House bill.
      - Wrote to Representative Stauber's office to raise awareness and try to influence his vote.
      - Now that it's passed, we've moved over to the Senate side. The senate is in the process of drafting their version. Senator Smith is on the committee that oversees workforce development. It's good we have an advocate on that committee. Elena Foshay and other representatives of MAWB have met with her staff in D.C. to talk about what we like, don't like, and want to change.
    - Senate version may be out at the end of the month. We'll see what comes out. Senate has to vote. If it passes, then a conference committee takes the two versions and negotiates. Lots of opportunity to advocate.

## Career Training Study-Monica Haynes

- Measuring the Impacts of Career Training on the Economy, UMD Labovitz School of Business and Economics, Bureau of Business and Economic Research
- Topic came to them jointly from True North Goodwill and the Duluth Housing and Redevelopment Authority (HRA)
- They wanted to estimate or measure the financial benefits to individuals and to government/public assistance programs that comes from moving someone from a low-income, minimum wage, part-time career or job, into a job that requires some advanced training or education
- They modeled two different scenarios, construction laborer and registered nurse, and compared the lifetime earnings and public savings for those two careers with a part-time cashier position.
- Using the cliff tool data base, they were able to calculate over the 35-year career, how much each year a person would earn in income and in public assistance.
- Full study on website. Highlights include:
  - A person working as part time cashier would receive \$730,000 in public assistance over the course of their 35-year career, averaging \$27,000 a year.
  - A career as a construction laborer would save \$600,000 over the course of their lifetime in public assistance benefits. \$60,000 of that would come in the first three years of their career.
  - When Monica presented on the cliff tool at the March 2024 board meeting she presented it as a tool that an individual could use in their own career planning, but this really shows that there's a lot of ways you can use the data in that tool to look at big picture macroeconomic issues, savings to public assistance program, or overall earnings.
  - Retirement income or elderly care not included
- Monica Haynes and Amanda Yates are speaking at MN Community Action Partnership (MNCAP) conference, presenting on the cliff tool, July 30-Aug. 1, DECC, Duluth, MN.
- They will create a visual to make case for clients and for training.
- Scott Vezina noted that the study addresses breaking the cycle of poverty, aligning with Goodwill's mission, and the data reinforces what we know.
- Elena Foshay noted that this makes the case to policy makers that it's important to continue funding these programs. It makes the case that programs are beneficial.

## Local/Regional Plan Overview

Proposed Action: Approval vote for submission of draft plan to DEED, Incorporation of edits requested by DEED, and submission of final plan by the August 21<sup>st</sup> deadline.

- Regional Plan
  - Group that included representatives from the Duluth Workforce Development Board, the NE MN Workforce Board, Vocational Rehab, Job Service, and DEED staff that serve the region.
- Local Plan
  - \*Add slide talking about who gave input to plans
  - Duluth vision, NE MN plan
  - Best Practices
    - Talent Development Program

- Diversity and Inclusion Employer Action Guide
- Employer Champions Initiative
- 218 Trades
- Discover Healthcare

#### Regional Goals & Strengths

- Targeted Industry Sectors
- Duluth Workforce Development Board Vision
- How we are working to advance equity

#### Local plans

- Goal 1-Engage employers from high-growth, high-demand industries
- Goal 2-Expand employer and workforce system partner engagement
- Goal 3-Develop new and strengthen existing relationships
- Goal 4-Lead initiatives to reduce education, skills training, and employment disparities

#### Suggested edit for goals:

- Goal 1 edits--wordsmithing for alignment, right strategic priorities for goals, wording to be more inclusive
- Goal 2 edits--more precise language to align goals, what we say is what we mean
- Goal 3 edits--what the top services are, call out to digital literacy, technology, AI, machine learning, etc.

#### LWDA 4-Duluth Strengths & Best Practices

#### Duluth Area Workforce System Map

#### Labor Market Data

- Suggested edit. The public needs to know the context of why this data is here. Data informing our goals and strategies. Include links for more information.

#### Motion to submit plan:

- The motion is to approve the Local/Regional Plan submission to DEED and to approve Elena Foshay to make edits as long as they are not substantial that are requested by DEED, with that final submission of the plan by the August 21<sup>st</sup> deadline.
- Motion to approve passed by all members in attendance

#### Next steps:

- After we've got final plan, committees will take a look, turn into SMART goals

#### **Adjourn 3:36 pm.**

**Next full board meeting: Monday, June 17, 2024, 2:00-4:00 p.m., Government Services Center, Lake Superior Room, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, 320 West 2<sup>nd</sup> Street, Duluth, MN**