




Workforce Development Board

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Meeting Minutes

Monday, June 17, 2024

Government Services Center, Lake Superior Room, 2nd Floor, 320 West 2nd Street, Duluth, MN 55802

Present:

Andrea Chartier, Workforce Development Specialist, Essentia Health
Andrea Chirhart, Rehab Manager, DEED Vocational Rehabilitation Services
Corey Cusick, Community Services Director, United Way
Kayla Dietzmann, Director of HR & Marketing, SCS Interiors
Brian Durand, Project Executive, McGough
Chiamaka Enemuoh, President, Lifestone Health Care
Lindsey Growette Stingle, Human Resources Director, National Bank of Commerce
Monica Haynes, Director, UMD Bureau of Business & Economic Research
Julie Johnson Atkinson, Vice President of Sales, Visit Duluth
Kathy Koch, Manager of Human Resources, Allele
Jennifer Oakes, DEED Job Service Site Supervisor, Duluth CareerForce
Vance Okstad, Director of Outreach, Cirrus Aircraft
Paul Pedersen, Director of Outreach, MAC-V
Rick Revoir, Dean of Strategic Development, College of St. Scholastica
Danette Seboe, Principal Career and Tech Education & Career Readiness, ISD 709
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 2:05 p.m.

Welcome guest--Kayle Frenke, nursing intern at Essentia Health, will be a senior at Denfeld

Marla Halvorson is stepping down, Nicole Christenson will replace to represent Aspirus/St Luke's

Public Comment: None

Action Items:

- Quorum not met. May 20, 2024 board meeting minutes will be approved at next meeting

Updates and Announcements

- Legislative updates

- Expanded dislocated worker eligibility
- WIOA advocacy, Senate working on draft
- MAWB Summer Conference
 - All board members are welcome
 - Presentations
 - August 15-16, 2024
- Allocations Update
 - Every year we get a new allocation of federal and state funding.
 - It's a two-year grant. We have to spend 80% of funding by the end of the first year.
 - Allocation amounts are based on formula regarding high unemployment and other factors.
 - The state's allocation decreased.
 - WIOA/Dislocated Worker had an 8.6% decrease in funding. We received about \$7000 less than last year.
 - WIOA Adult had an almost 20% decrease. We received almost \$40,000 less than last year.
 - State dislocated worker had an 11% decrease. We received \$23,000 less than last year.
 - WIOA youth decreased as well.
 - We will have less dollars to spend on tuition assistance, incumbent worker training for employers, and will be leaning harder on competitive grants to fund staff costs.
 - Board advocacy needed at the state and federal levels. Next year we'll have to fight hard to defend workforce development.
- Manufacturing Working Group Work Plan
 - Meetings schedule
 - Engagement from employers
 - High school students
 - Apprenticeship and internship programs
 - Support career exploration
 - Booth at Grandma's Marathon expo

Equity Lens: New Americans

- We do not have a large population of New Americans in our region and we're missing out on that potential opportunity for population growth.
 - Carson Gorecki, Northeast Regional Labor Market Analyst, DEED
 - 2500 foreign born people living in Duluth since 2022
 - 2.9% total population of Duluth
 - Population growing faster than regular population, but not as fast as rest of state
 - 35% of foreign-born residents in Duluth are from Asian continents
 - A little less than one third of foreign-born residents in Duluth are from the Americas-- Latin America and Canada.
 - About 8% are from Africa and the rest are from European countries.
 - About a third of those foreign-born residents have entered since 2010 or later, same as MN as a whole. A third have been here before 1990 and have been here for over 35 years.

- Larger share of foreign-born residents in Duluth are between ages of 25-54, but not a lot of young foreign-born people in Duluth.
 - Probably coming for jobs, but not bringing young children with them.
 - Uptick in immigration to NE and rural MN.
 - Occupation data available from Census.
 - Languages spoken
 - Only English--about a third
 - Two thirds speak another language but speak English well, with about 10% of them not speaking English well
- Angie Frank couldn't attend the meeting, but shared info on English language classes and statistics from Duluth Adult Education.
 - They are an ESL provider for the region. In the last year, they've had 56 students enrolled in English language classes. Students are from 23 different countries.
 - Duluth Workforce Development has a good partnership with DAE. When folks come there for English language learning and need help finding a job they refer them to us and vice versa.
- Shayla Drake, Workforce Strategy Consultant, DEED
 - Has been working on Welcome Corps.
 - The Office of New Americans for DEED has been working with DHS.
 - Shayla connected with DHS and they connected her to Welcome Corps.
 - Two different programs
 - Public welcome groups
 - Employers
 - Works with refugees on path to citizenship
 - Highly educated and skilled individuals
 - Talent Beyond Borders
 - Resources from employers
 - Supports for resettlement in NE MN, sponsorship groups
 - Process may take 1-2 years before an individual can get here
 - Potential matches
 - Shayla has been doing presentations on Welcome Corps throughout the state to raise awareness and encourage people to become sponsors or employers.
 - Some immigrants arriving as students or staff at colleges
 - Interfaith Committee on Migrant Justice is a local, volunteer-run organization that supports refugees
- Vance Okstad, Director of Outreach, Cirrus Aircraft
 - Cirrus couldn't get enough workers locally at Duluth and other locations that matched their skills in the volume they needed. Sought out travel labor to come to these locations.
 - Worked with companies and one the fastest and most technical labor they were able to get were four employees from Mexico on scientific technician visas.

- Cirrus then looked at how to support the Latino population in Duluth and provide services and support for those who are Spanish speaking who would like to learn English, which could add to their capability to hire locally and bring more talent.
 - They see very strong dedication, loyalty and capability from individuals coming in.
 - Technical aptitude is usually higher than those sourcing for those jobs normally.
 - Staff from Mexico had to have an A&P or engineering degree.
 - Cirrus looked at creating their own ESL program, and tried to figure out what would they have to do. This raised a lot of questions.
 - What would be required of their staff? FAA requirements. Do they need to have a bilingual leader, and where can they find help to do this? Who else has done this? How do you measure English capabilities? They want to support this pool of potential employees, but getting off the ground is really hard.
- Group Discussion
 - Hospitals attract staff from all over the world, but have a hard time retaining them
 - Duluth doesn't have a federal immigration office. You have to be 150 miles away from one, and we are 152 miles away from the closest one.
 - Ongoing question is how can we support and connect everyone's efforts
 - Are there other resources in the community to attract, hire, retain new Americans?
 - Training programs for spouses/family members coming for jobs
 - UMD foreign born faculty, formal and informal groups, are there others like it in Duluth
 - We don't have an immigration attorney in Duluth
 - Great internship project--what's the landscape of services in a town like St. Cloud vs what's here?
 - The culture here is that people keep to themselves. Many leave because of the way they are welcomed here, especially when people come from culture of inclusion and culture.
 - Be aware of groups that can welcome and help new Americans integrate
 - People want to stay, but if they don't feel welcome, they leave
 - African women's group offers connection and support
 - Do North, rebranding of North by Choice website
 - Elena would like to see more open social events to welcome people into the community
 - Shayla would like to see people helping to invite
 - Supporting cultural business so individuals can find what they need, like groceries
 - The school system needs to be involved, with all families, whether they have children or not, community ed could be a navigator/connector - similar model to ECFE
 - Support, look at continents for support, instead of breaking down individual countries
 - How to support employers in their efforts to hire New Americans? We're missing community support/connections. The conversation has started, we agree, but we lack the resources/capacity to get there. That's where we need to start. We will continue working on it.

- Our capacity as a board is limited, but if the board is interested in creating a committee, it is something we can discuss in September.
- Adult/Dislocated Worker Program Presentation
 - Alex Arend, Betsy Hill, Ali Haworth introductions
 - Program Funding – Mix of federal and state formula grants
 - WIOA funding has decreased by 20% in the last two years
 - Reviewed WIOA Adult and Dislocated Worker Eligibility
 - Services
 - Career counseling, training support, support services, talent development, CLIMB (business start up while on UI)
 - Talent Development Program
 - Funding assistance will:
 - Enhance the skills of their workforce and
 - Improve processes and competitiveness and/or
 - Avert a layoff
 - Previous TDP Employers
 - CAD, Duluth Core Learning
 - Who We Served-2023 Participant Demographics
 - Popular training for participants
 - 81% of currently enrolled WIOA participants, healthcare, human services
 - Dislocated Worker
 - IT, healthcare, CDL, Self-Employment/CLIMB, Talent Development
 - Performance Measures-How are we doing?
 - Meeting and exceeding goals
 - Challenges
 - Enrollments are down, marketing, budget, inflation, barriers
 - How the board can help
 - Share our social media posts, being warm contacts for job seekers, be open to informational interviews
 - Online application available
 - Let us know if there are ways to connect with your business
- Program Performance Recap summary shared with the group

Next meeting: Monday, September 16, 2024, 2:00-4:00, Government Services Center 2nd floor