



Workforce Development Board

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Duluth, Minnesota 55802

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Meeting Minutes

Monday, January 27, 2025

Duluth City Hall, Room 330, 411 West First 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
Emily Edison, Chief Mission Officer, True North Goodwill
Chiamaka Enemuoh, President, Lifestone Health Care
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
Linda Kingston, Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs, Lake Superior College
Kathy Koch, Manager of Human Resources, Allete
Vance Okstad, Director of Outreach, Cirrus Aircraft
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

Meeting called to order at 2:03 p.m. The Workforce Development Board successfully established a quorum.

Public Comment: None

Welcome: Faith Wickenhauser, Terch & Associates and Shawn Krizaj, City of Duluth Fire Department

Action Items:

- November 2024 DWD board meeting minutes were approved by all in attendance
- 2025 Chair/Vice Chair elections
 - Nominations

- Kayla Dietzmann to continue as Chair
 - Claire Farmer-Lies to continue as Vice Chair
 - No other nominations
 - The Workforce Development Board voted to approve Kayla Dietzmann as Chair and Claire Farmer-Lies as Vice Chair
- Vote on support of 2025 MAWB Legislative Agenda
 - Priorities
 - Invest in our youth through MN Youth Program
 - MAWB advocates for ensuring the Workforce Development Fund remains focused on prioritizing support for the State Dislocated Worker Program to ensure consistent service delivery
 - Maintaining funding for core workforce development programs
 - The Workforce Development board voted to support the 2025 MAWB Legislative Agenda
 - Note: February 12-13, 2025; Duluth and St. Louis County days

Updates & Announcements

- WIOA reauthorization not taken up by Congress before the end of session in December. It was almost included in the continuing resolution to fund the federal government through the end of March, but failed to pass as part of the final bill. Unknown whether it will be taken up by the new Congress.
- Executive orders mandating that federal funding can no longer be used to support Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. DOL issued subsequent guidance that any DEI work under DOL grants must cease immediately. Impacts:
 - Regional planning funds – Annual grant for about \$35,000 for the northeast region to support implementation of strategic plan. DEED previously required that a percentage of these funds were used for DEI activities.
 - Will continue focusing efforts under this grant on employer engagement and system improvement
 - Elena Foshay was scheduled to present on a national webinar hosted by the Offices of Disability Employment Programs (ODEP) to share our DEI Action Guide, but that webinar was cancelled.
 - Guidance requested on WIOA Eligibility, and priorities of service under the WIOA Adult program:
 - The state of MN is still committed to supporting DEI work, and will offer further guidance as available
- Construct Tomorrow, March 11-12, 2025, DECC
 - Free parking
 - Partnering with workforce development board, local contractors and trade apprenticeship programs, school districts
 - Last year over 1000 high school students attended.
 - Adults interested in trades are welcome to attend Construction Careers Night on March 11 from 4:30-6:30pm
 - LiUNA Construction Career Fair, April 1, 2025 at the Radisson Hotel Duluth Union contractors will be screening candidates for the upcoming season
- Millwright Pre-apprenticeship Training, starting March 3
- CareerForce Hiring Now Job Fairs, first Wednesday of the month – Employers can sign up online to participate, or contact Deb Knoll at dknoll@duluthmn.gov

- Employer Champions Initiative 2025
 - Will continue with every other month lunch and learn sessions
- Officially launched DEI Action Guide at the Workforce Solutions Series for around 50 attendees
 - Cassy Burr from LSS and Equity Committee Co-chair, presented

One Stop Operator monitoring and oversight

- A responsibility of the board is selecting a One-Stop Operator through a competitive process, and then providing monitoring and oversight.
- There are federal requirements about partners who are supposed to be either co-located or actively delivering services at sites, and managing referrals
- Currently the One Stop Operator in Duluth is comprised of a consortium of all the agencies housed at CareerForce—DEED (SSB, VRS, Veterans, Job Service), JET, City of Duluth, AEOA
- Elena Foshay created a “dashboard” of things the board should be monitoring and aware of, which was shared
- Follow up conversation at March or May board meeting

True North Goodwill overview and updates – Dodie Brown and Emily Edison

- Mission/Programming
 - Inspiring personal transformation through the power of learning and career development
- Vision
 - All people have the opportunity to obtain meaningful employment, strengthening communities and transforming lives for generations.
- History
 - True North Goodwill was established in 1919 in Duluth, MN. It has evolved in many ways over the decades to really serve the community.
- Communities Needs Assessment across 29 counties
 - Gaps in employment and training, food insecurity, housing, childcare, etc.
 - SOAR Career Solutions and True North Goodwill merged
- Programs
 - Career Navigation, Lifestyle Enrichment, SOAR Program, Commercial Skills Education
- True North Goodwill Retail Expansion Plan 2024-25
 - New stores and career navigation centers opening
 - New regional headquarters being planned to build in Gary New Duluth
 - Business services

Committee updates

Governance:

- Recruiting, two members who will soon receive appointment letters

Executive:

- Monitoring, meeting planning

Equity:

- Strategic priorities, building capacity for New Americans
- Trainings for employers re visas, hiring

Construction Working Group:

- Construct Tomorrow
- How to connect dots between construction training and employment

Healthcare Working Group:

- LSC is planning a scrubs camp for adults in April
- Workforce housing, strategies to increase the number of housing not requiring a yearlong lease, and talent attraction in general
- CNA training

Manufacturing Working Group:

- Talent attraction
- Connecting high school CTE students to jobs in manufacturing
- Apprenticeships

Emerging Workforce Committee:

- Legislative session

Meeting adjourned at 3:52 p.m.

Next meeting: Monday, March 17, 2025; 2:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m., Duluth City Hall, Room 330, 411 West First Street, Duluth, MN 55802