



Workforce Development

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Meeting Minutes

Monday, May 19, 2025

Duluth City Hall, Room 330, 411 West First Street, Duluth, MN 55802

Present:

Andrea Chirhart, Rehab Manager, DEED Vocational Rehabilitation Services
Kayla Dietzmann, Director of HR & Marketing, SCS Interiors
Classie Dudley, Executive Director, Community Action Duluth
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
Kathy Koch, Manager of Human Resources, Allele
Jennifer Oakes, DEED Job Service Site Supervisor, Duluth CareerForce
Danette Seboe, Principal Career and Tech Education & Career Readiness, ISD 709
Ian Vincent, Director of Business Services, True North Goodwill
Faith Wickenhauser, Associate Human Resources Consultant, Terch & Associates
Amanda Yates, Assistant Director Economic Services and Supports, St. Louis County
Shayla Drake, Workforce Strategy Consultant, DEED
Elena Foshay, Director, Duluth Workforce Development
Carol Turner, Operations Manager, Duluth Workforce Development

Meeting called to order at 2:05 p.m.

Public Comment: None

Action Items:

- March 2025 Duluth Workforce Development Board meeting minutes were approved by all in attendance

Updates:

- Skills based hiring workshop for employers
 - June 17, 9:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m.
 - Government Services Building
- WIOA Impact Report

- Top level summary report on impact of our federal grants
- 551 people served through WIOA Youth, Adult, and Dislocated Worker grants and Wagner-Peyser (Job Service) in Program Year 2023 (July 1, 2023-June 30, 2024)
- 70% employed, \$42,860 estimated average annual earnings per person
- Economic Impact, \$16,543,834 total estimated annual earnings for all employed
- State and federal legislative updates
 - State funding
 - State has not finished so we will probably be moving into a special session
 - Overall cut to the workforce portion of the omnibus bill is \$30 million, with cuts across the board to programs
 - We've been working to protect the workforce development fund, and want to be sure we have healthy reserves to serve dislocated workers and other programs
 - State funding will be less, but do not know how much less
 - Federal funding
 - Over this weekend, the "Big Beautiful Bill" passed in the House Budget Committee which includes work requirements for Medicaid, cuts to adult education, SCSEP program eliminated, cuts to WIOA
 - Congress needs to pass a budget by the end of September, or the government shuts down
 - MN Association of Workforce Boards is engaging daily with federal lobbyists who work with workforce organizations around the country, and they're getting together with other state workforce associations for advocacy. There's a group flying to Washington DC in June to discuss the importance of WIOA and workforce funding.
 - Elena Foshay is requesting letters from those representing the business community about the importance of workforce programs – template will be shared
 - Federal funding cut impacts are not seen in NE MN yet, however we expect to see an increase in UI in fall
 - EPA, some layoffs so far, lab may be closed
 - Mining layoffs just began
- MAWB Summer meeting
 - August 13-15 in Duluth
 - All board members invited to attend
 - Agenda will be shared once available

Good news:

- True North Goodwill – new site update
 - \$22 million headquarters, Atlas Park, groundbreaking this summer
 - Able to serve more clients with less space
 - Will have daycare for clients on site
 - Current Garfield Avenue location is for sale

- Career Pathway Training graduations
 - CNA class, 8 graduates in April
 - CNA class, 10 graduates in May
 - Millwrights Union graduated 13 out of 15 enrolled in pre-apprenticeship training
 - Building Strong Communities construction class, 9 graduates
 - Job Fair for City Summer Temp Jobs, Yes Duluth participants hired
- 11 SCSEP participants found jobs

YES Duluth (Youth Employment Services) program presentation

- Open to Duluth residents, ages 14-24
- Offers education and training, employment services, support services
- Eligibility factors vary with each grant
- Funding-federal, state, YouthPrise (state)
- Work in schools and community
- YouthPrise Duluth Direct Cash Pilot
 - 2-year pilot, for unhoused youth, 35 participants
 - \$1000 a month, plus a one-time \$3000 payment
 - Monthly survey to collect data
 - Areas of Impact
 - Housing, financial wellness, transportation, food security, education
 - Financial literacy learning circle

Customer survey data summary and discussion

- Data gathered Feb-May 2025
- Survey sent out through partner organizations, social media, and available to in-person customers on paper and online
- 57 responses, plus 139 responses through MFIP survey
- Findings with 57 responses: people who used our services would recommend us to others, job search is the number one reason people visit, job fairs valued
- Findings including the 139 responses through MFIP survey: people prefer to be served in-person but want flexible options, having a centrally located office is very important, people prefer regular daytime hours, and would like to be contacted by email or text message

Committee updates:

Emerging Workforce

- Work plan created with goals for year

Manufacturing Working Group

- Working on setting up a manufacturing expo, in partnership with DEED

- Working towards launching apprenticeships

Healthcare Working Group

- Planning health care summit for fall
- Caring Careers Campaign the summer
- Reach out to Shayla Drake if you're interested in being involved in events

Construction Working Group

- Updates on activities in region related to construction

Equity Committee

- Employer guide still on website, no change for now
- Employer champions series, 35 at last training

Executive Committee

- Meets before each board meeting to review agenda
- Discussion of state and federal legislative issues

Governance Committee

- Making sure term renewal process starts early to avoid delays
- New member applications to review
- Claire Farmer-Lies represented board in IFA meetings (shared costs between agencies at CareerForce)

Meeting adjourned at 3:45 p.m.

Next meeting: Monday, June 16, 2025, from 2:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. at Duluth City Hall, Room 330, 411 West First Street, Duluth, MN 55802