

COUNCIL ON WORKFORCE INVESTMENT

Dislocated Worker Subcommittee November 17, 2009 Madison, Wisconsin Final Minutes

Members Present: James Haney, JoAnna Richard, Colleen Bates, Jayson Chung, Mark Reihl and Greg Gasper for Senator Joe Leibham

Members Absent: Phil Neuenfeldt

DWD Staff Present: Annette Nekola, Ron Danowski and Dianne Reynolds

Others Present: Susan Koehn and John Milisaukas, Southeast WDA; Paula Kenenakhone, Milwaukee WDA; Deborah Blum and Kathy Bink, WOW WDA; Cheryl Welch, Fox Valley WDA; Sally Cutler and Cindy Kiesling, North Central WDA; Dick Best, Jim Lindbo and Kris Pawlowski, West Central WDA; and Robert Borremans, Southwest WI WDA

Key Issues/Discussion

1. **Call to Order** Chair Haney called the meeting to order at 10:05 a.m.

2. Retraining Grants

a. **Funding Availability.** Annette Nekola reviewed the level of funding available at this time. Total funds available for Retraining Grants and for Special Response Grants for the second half of the program year is \$2,450,990. This includes \$954,386 of the state's annual Rapid Response allocation and \$1,496,604 of the Rapid Response portion of the additional dislocated worker funding received under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA).

b. **Retraining Grant Requests.** Annette Nekola reviewed the requests for funding. Nine WDAs made requests for retraining funds for participants from small dislocations that do not qualify for funding under regular Special Response Grants. These requests were made in two categories

Category 1 - Enrolled participants currently in training programs for which there are not funds to continue training after 12/31/2009. Each local workforce area provided documentation of the need including a spreadsheet listing each participant, the training program they are enrolled in, the date they started training, the projected date on which training would conclude and the total dollar amount needed. Eight of the state's eleven local workforce areas report a total of 777 individuals in this category. The projected amount of funds needed to allow these participants to continue in their training programs for the period 1/1/2010 – 6/30/2010 is \$1,779,703 (an average of \$2,290 per participant).

Category 2 - Enrolled participants that have been determined to need retraining for which there are not funds to allow them to begin training in January, 2010.

Seven of the 11 local workforce areas report a total of 482 people in this category. The number of workforce areas with participants in this category is less than those with participants in the first category because not all have enrolled or conducted assessments for applicants they knew they were not able to serve. The amount of funds needed to allow enrolled participants to begin training programs in January, 2010 (and continue through the program year) is \$973,753 (an average of \$2,020 per participant).

In addition, five local workforce areas report waiting lists totaling 1,045, most of whom have not been enrolled in the dislocated program due to lack of funds to provide services. While all workforce areas did not report waiting lists per se since some have just begun documenting everyone they are unable to serve, most have implemented alternative methods of providing service and conserving available resources. These include providing lowered amounts of training funds, not providing supportive services and developing shorter term training courses.

Staff Recommendation: Staff recommend funding requests totaling \$531,937 under Category 1 in four WDAs as follows: Waukesha-Ozaukee-Washington WDA, \$214,022; Northwest Wisconsin WDA, \$41,013; Western Wisconsin WDA, \$87,615 and Southwest Wisconsin WDA, \$189,287. These recommendations take into account adjustments being made in some WDAs to correct errors made in the annual WIA allocations for Program Years 2008 and 2009. In order to correct these errors, DWD will be distributing additional funds to seven WDAs, five of whom are requesting Retraining Grants. Since these five WDAs will have funds available to address this high priority need in their dislocated worker programs, the recommendation is they receive no Retraining Grants at this time. Staff recommend no funding of Retraining Grants for participants in Category 2 or those on waiting lists since funds are so limited. National Emergency Grant funds are being sought to address the funding shortfalls in Wisconsin's dislocated worker program. It was clarified that National Emergency Grant funds could not be applied to the same population covered by the Retraining Grants.

Motion: Motion made by Richard, second by Reihl to accept the staff recommendations to fund \$531,937 in Retraining Grants in four WDAs.

Discussion: Dick Best (West Central WDA) questioned the consideration of the allocation adjustments in making decisions about funding Retraining Grants as did Sally Cutler (North Central WDA) and Cheryl Welch (Fox Valley WDA). Richard commented that the WDAs who previously received excess funds through the annual allocation process do not have those funds on hand now to address the urgent needs in the dislocated worker programs that the Retraining Grants are intended to address. Best inquired about the status of the WIA Governor's Discretionary funds; Richard responded that this would be on the agenda of the Council on Workforce Investment's December meeting.

Action: A vote was called on the motion made by Richard and seconded by Reihl to accept the staff recommendations to fund \$531,937 in Retraining Grants in four WDAs. Motion carried.

3. **Next Meeting Date.** The next regular meeting of the Dislocated Worker Subcommittee was rescheduled to Wednesday, December 16 at 2:00 p.m. Special Response Grants for the second half of PY2009 will be reviewed at that time.
4. **Adjourn.** There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:20 a.m.