

COUNCIL ON WORKFORCE INVESTMENT MEETING SUMMARY

Draft pending approval

**Executive Committee Meeting
Madison, WI**

August 4, 2005

Members Present: Paul Linzmeyer (chair), Joel Rogers (vice chair), Sec'y Mary P. Burke, Sec'y Roberta Gassman, Joe Gilles, Tina Koehn, Doug Moquin (by phone), Lee Rasch (by phone)

Members/Committee Co chairs Absent: Dean Welch

Staff and Guests Present: Sue Gleason (CWI Liaison), Fred Bartol (DWD/OEI), Connie Colussy (DWD/BWP), Teresa Barch (WAJTE/WWDA), Rick Hall (DVR), Dale Hopkins (SCWDB), Mark Kessenich (Milwaukee PIC), Malika Monger (DHFS), Beth Sullivan (WWWDB) (by phone).

Key Issues/Discussion Items

- I. Call to Order/Minutes - Paul Linzmeyer called the meeting to order at approximately 9:30 a.m. Joel Rogers moved approval of the minutes of the May 9 meeting; Roberta Gassman seconded; approval was unanimous without changes.
- II. GROW Grant Review Process - Paul Linzmeyer commended all the applicants and noted that committee members wishing to speak should be mindful of conflicts of interest when discussing project proposals with which they might be connected. A one page table was distributed that indicated the name of each proposal, the amount requested, the counties that were covered, and also any connection to CWI members. The Executive Committee had received the executive summaries of all of the proposals but only Secretary Gassman and Paul Linzmeyer had received the full proposals.

Sue Gleason noted that the purpose of today's discussion was not to vote on or discuss the merits of particular proposals but to offer general guidance to the review team. The review team would perform the actual review and make recommendations to Secretary Gassman and CWI chair (Linzmeyer); who would make the final decisions per the grant guidelines.

Fred Bartol provided an overview of the eight proposals submitted, noting that the total amount being requested was more than double the \$390,500 set aside for these grants. An initial compliance review had found four to have fewer than the required 500,000 Wisconsin residents, but each offered a sufficiently compelling rationale to justify further consideration.

Paul Linzmeyer offered several overall comments on the proposals. He noted that all seemed weak with respect to sustainability and that most appeared to be WDBs doing business as usual. The number of proposals focusing on health care raised the question of whether it made sense to fund all of them or perhaps just one from which to learn. He also was disinclined to fund more studies, when we already know what the needs are in many cases.

Joe Gilles recommended preference for those with clear timelines and clear indications of what the money would be used for, including specific deliverables. He did not want to fund a lot of meetings, and wanted to see strong ties to the economy and education system.

Roberta Gassman said she was pleased that all regions were represented among the applications, and indicated that DWD was also able to seek revisions if needed. She also noted that multi-year funding was an option and that in the case of the competing Milwaukee projects bringing them together in some way was a possibility. She also expressed interest in seeing that cross-border partnerships included funding from the other states.

Paul Linzmeyer noted the importance of being able to determine a year from now whether anything had been accomplished. Lee Rasch saw these projects as an opportunity to pilot

some partnerships and learn from them in advance of future funding. Joe Gilles underscored the need for regular reporting and suggested some sort of incremental funding based on accomplishment be considered.

Paul Linzmeyer raised the question of DWD staff capacity for monitoring projects. Fred Bartol pointed out that the CWI Workforce Strategies Committee would be a vital partner in this process, and under program guidelines was to receive regular progress reports. Lee Rasch, co-chair of that committee, agreed that this was a logical role for the committee and that they would need to discuss further.

Mary Burke expressed concerns that projects not be too focused on studies and process without clear outcomes.

Joel Rogers urged the review committee to pay particular attention to the quality of business involvement, focusing on material commitments and specified roles; business needs not only to be involved but substantively at the table. He also underscored the need for specific plans for sustainability. He noted that these projects raised two key institutional issues: capacity of the state to learn from and replicate successful projects and the question of how to provide intelligent accountability: substantive reporting and close monitoring without overly burdensome reporting requirements. He suggested the review team not be afraid to say no to some proposals and ask for resubmission.

Mary Burke advised that funding not go to support existing staff; the focus of the review should be on clear value added, on performing work that was not being done already. Joel Rogers suggested that the purpose of any additional staff funded needed to be clearly indicated. Joe Gilles urged that the leadership responsibilities for the funded projects be clearly indicated, and specify individuals, not just groups in general.

Joel Rogers suggested two additional points with respect to making the economic development connection: that there be clear connections with these projects and regional economic development comprehensively conceived and that projects have a clear sense of sector strategy, including business and employer involvement specified at the level of particular sectors, perhaps even with specific target levels of involvement.

Several committee members also suggested that the cross-border partnerships needed to be examined carefully. While the idea of such partnerships was exciting, it was important to ensure that there really was an equal partnership, including shared financial commitment, among the partner agencies. This might involve state-level negotiation.

Several committee members expressed interest in being able to see the full applications, not just the executive summaries. Roberta Gassman indicated DWD would check with its legal counsel with regard to the legality of releasing the full applications while the review was still under way. Note: copies of the proposals will be made available after decisions are made.

III. Use of Program Year '05 funds

Discussion on this issue was deferred pending staff review of the GROW grants. There was general consensus that some funding might be used for these GROW grants but not all of the funding and no formal action was taken to authorize additional funding at this time.

IV. Bridges to Work

Malika Monger provided a brief presentation on the Medicaid Infrastructure Grant, which funds the state's "Bridges to Work" program aimed at increasing the employability of people with disabilities through improved program coordination and information. The program has received \$2.3 million for 2005, for strategic planning; that process is overseen by a sub-committee that meets monthly headed by state representative Zepnick. A full progress report on the project is planned for the December CWI meeting.

V. Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 11:30 a.m.