

COUNCIL ON WORKFORCE INVESTMENT

(Draft Pending Approval)

(Workforce Strategies Committee)

Crowne Plaza Hotel
4402 E. Washington Ave.
9:00 a.m. to 11:45 am
March 4, 2005
Madison, WI

MEETING MINUTES

Members Present: Margaret Ellibee, (for State Superintendent Elizabeth “Libby” Burmaster), Rodney Copes, Terry Craney, Barbara Fleisner, State Senator Dave Hansen, Mason Quackenbush (for Ellen Holt), Susan Hatch, John Heyer, A. Kent Olson, Lee Rasch, Mark Reihl, Jayson Chung, and Dean Welch.

Members Absent: Jerry Johnson, Joan Wilk, Patrick Schillinger, Julia Taylor, Norma Tirado-Kellenberger, Lyle Balistreri, Jewel Currie, James Haney, James Hill, State Senator Joe Liebham, Phil Neuenfeld, Richard Oulahan, James Schramm, and Xiong Lo.

CWI Staff Present: Sue Gleason, Fred Bartol, Sheryl Billups, and Jesus Guerrero.

Others Present: Dick Turner—FVWDB, Kathy Bornheimer (K.B. & Associates), John M. Roidt (Innacom), John Wagnitz (office of Sen. Hansen).

Key Issues/Discussion

Agenda Item #1—Welcome and Introduction—Meeting called to order at 9:00 a.m., by Lee Rasch. Committee Co-Chairs Lee Rasch and Dean Welch welcomed members of the newly merged Workforce Strategies Committee, and related that the meeting today will result in setting in motion the committee task of reviewing the combined work plan’s objectives and strategies, and developing the needed action plans to accomplish its work, by June 30, 2005.

Agenda Item #2—Previous Committee’ Meeting Minutes—Members discussed whether quorums of the 2 “old” committees needed to approve the minutes; it was moved and seconded that the new committee formally replace the two previous committee; motion passed. It was then moved and seconded that, as the old committees no longer existed as such, the new committee now approve the two sets of minutes as distributed. Motion carried.

Agenda Item #3—Overview of Mission, Objectives, and Strategies—Co-Chair Dean Welch reviewed the Workforce Strategy Mission, the “Draft Objectives and Strategies”

document based on work of the two previous committees and several meetings and conference calls related to their merger. He discussed/reviewed the committee's three (3) Objectives: (A) Workforce Information, (B) Workforce Preparation and Support, and (C) Targeted Regional Priorities—and each of the objectives' strategies. A motion was made, and seconded to approve the three discussed objectives, as its agreed-upon objectives. Motion carried.

Dean stated that the committee was to review the documents and “flush out” ideas to develop action plans for implementation, so as to present to government leaders by June 30, to effect change. To accomplish this, the committee was divided into three “task groups”—Objective “A” Group—Lead is Barbara Fleisner, Objective “B” Group—Lead is Margaret Ellibee, and Objective “C” Group—Lead is Kent Olson. A motion was made, and seconded, that the committee approved the formation of the three task groups. Motion carried.

Agenda Item #4—Brainstorming on Specific Action Plans—Co-Chair Lee Rasch stated that the committee should now review the objectives and strategies for ideas that each of the three “task groups” could use to focus on their action plan assignments. The remaining discussion of this item addressed gaps and overlaps in the strategies proposed for each objective.

- Objective “A”---Workforce Information:
 - Strategies 1 and 2 are similar.
 - Right now there is no one central portal through which to access information; such a portal would need to be inquiry-driven and organized around what users need, which depends on who the main users of this information would be. Users would also need data tools to understand the data. It was also noted that there needed to be formatted in a way that would allow users to separate the wheat from the chaff.
 - One type of needed information is skill analysis; possible sources include WMC, Manufacturing Solutions, WTCS, WMEP Reports; this was flagged as a possible project for CWI funding.
 - Another issue is simply defining and identifying emerging industries with “high wage” jobs, then identifying the skill gaps keeping those industries from being successful.
 - At least two distinct sets of gaps need to be assessed: those of workers coming out of school, and those of workers already in the workforce.
 - At least two distinct perspectives need to be considered: that of employers and that of workers; it was noted, for example, that employers tended to be particularly interested in “soft” skills.
 - It was noted that much of the data tended to be old, and often collected more for federal reporting purposes not directly related to regional business needs, and that there need to be better ways of getting “real time” information. One possible model: the semi-annual Job Survey that was being conducted in the Milwaukee area.
 - It was suggested that market forces might be generating useful data; businesses are collecting this information for their own needs; given limited funds for new studies we need to leverage private investments being made in data collection.
 - It was also noted that there might be ways of making more active use of data from JobNet

- It was suggested that more data were needed specifically on efficiency and effectiveness of recruitment efforts: specifically, information on company return on investment in training and recruitment efforts.
- **Follow-Up Needed**—Committee asked that DWS send a list, to all the members, showing what the current “emerging” industries are.
- Objective “B”---Workforce Preparation and Support:
 - Lee Rasch distributed printed copies of the draft report regarding COBE efforts, which he had emailed earlier.
 - In earlier discussion, it had been noted that Strategy 3 should refer to PK-16, not PK-12.
 - The committee agreed that the overall objective needed to encompass more than school-based worker preparation; it needed to include incumbent worker training and address broader issues of career development and life-long learning. It was suggested that the first part of the objective statement include a reference to employed workers and language addressing career development more broadly.
 - High school student exposure to technical training needs to be addressed; companies are looking abroad because students aren’t coming out of schools here with these skills; often it’s an issue of counselors not in sync with local business. It was suggested that we look at what other states (to whom we may be losing businesses) are doing in this connection and make more active use of “business in education” programs, job-shadowing, internships, partnerships between local business and schools, etc.
 - It was suggested that constant press coverage of the decline of manufacturing tended to be self-fulfilling: students are then steered away and companies can’t recruit skilled workers. We need to get the word out that there are still good jobs in manufacturing.
 - Strategies #2 and #4—Look at specific actions to create a “seamless” training curriculum.
 - Strategy #3—connections with between education system and the One-Stops, and existing workforce, as well as connections between private training modules (and private-sector skill standards) and the public education system need to be addressed. In general, the wording of this strategy is too narrow and needs to be revised to address these issues more broadly.
 - The education system needs to be more accommodating of non-traditional career paths, and of the fact that workers needing particular training at a certain stage in their careers have different needs from those in a degree program.
 - It was suggested that Objective B be modified to include COBE focus targets as--
-“...three populations that are under-represented in higher education in Wisconsin—working-age adults, students from lower income families, and students of color.”
- Objective “C”—Targeted regional priorities
 - The language describing populations served is not broad enough. It refers only to “high wage”--but what about entry-level? The challenge is to keep pressing on the goal of higher wage jobs without losing sight of important entry level opportunities that are lower-wage—that these opportunities exist along a continuum.
 - “High growth” is equally problematic: Wal-Mart is a “high growth” job area, but is that really what we mean?

- It was suggested that the reference to high-wage and high growth be removed from the objective but be made the focus of one of the specific strategies.
- General wrap-up to this discussion:
 - It was moved and seconded that these three objectives, with the changes discussed, be accepted as the basis for the work of the Task Groups, who will continue to refine the strategies. Motion passed without objection.
 - It was suggested that all the Task Groups need to make sure to reference emerging opportunities and new technologies.
 - Task Groups were urged to coordinate with each other to avoid overlap and to benefit from what each is learning; this led into a more general discussion of logistics and resources for managing the work of the Task Groups. Sue Gleason indicated that she would be consulting with DWS about options for web-based technologies (such as WebX and “Ehuddle” for conducting Task Group work.
 - Sue Gleason gave an overview of the CWI projects’ funding to clarify the process and also shared information on material/projects reviewed by the Executive Committee at their 1/21/2005 meeting.

Agenda Item #5—Convene Into Three Task Groups. The Co-Chairs asked that the committee members “break out” into each of the selected three task groups, and given the assignment to meet and agree:

- On strategies and possible action steps for respective Objective Group,
- Agree/Decide on task group operation-group work, individual work, scheduled meetings-conference/face-to-face/e-tools, etc., and
- Agree on goals for June meeting.

The task groups are understood to be ‘temporary’, to June 30, whose primary purpose is to gather information on specific action items and report back to the full committee on June 3, 2005. Instructions and a Planning template were provided for the task groups to use. The task groups were encouraged to seek additional members (of those not present), as well as “experts” outside of the council, if needed, or desired.

Agenda Item #6—Adjournment—Motion made and seconded to adjourn the meeting. There being no further business, the committee meeting adjourned at 11:45 a.m.