

COUNCIL ON WORKFORCE INVESTMENT

Workforce Strategies Committee Teleconference Meeting Minutes

April 28, 2006

Members Present: Dean Welch and Lee Rasch (co-chairs), Jayson Chung (for Daniel Clancy), Barb Fleishner, John Wagnitz (for Senator Dave Hansen), John Heyer, Joan Wilk

Members Absent: William Chaudoir, Rod Copes, Jewel Currie, Elizabeth Burmaster, Susan Hatch, James P. Hill, Ellen Holt, Erica Kauten, Sen. Joe Leibham, A. Kent Olson, Mark Reihl, Patrick Schillinger, Norma Tirado.

Staff Present: Fred Bartol, Sheryl Billups, Sue Gleason

Guests: Dave Eckman (North Central WDB); Beth Norris, Marilyn Johnson, Alice Olver, Mark Mundel (Southeast WDB); Sandy Hoffstader and Michael Grady (Second Chance, Waukesha); James McKay (WTCS); Herb Centena (Milwaukee Area Technical College)

Key Issue

In the absence of a quorum, no action was taken on any agenda item. The co-chairs noted that key issues on the agenda for this meeting could be brought to the Executive Committee for action at its next meeting, if necessary. CWI staff proceeded to provided planned reports and Committee members in attendance offered some feedback on key issues.

A. Update on GROW Grants and Regional Metrics

1. Grow Grants

Fred Bartol reported on the status of the first round of GROW grants, highlighting several points that have emerged from quarterly reports submitted by grantees. He noted that all grantees are getting underway, though regions are at different stages of development.

- Regions with "starter" grants are in early development stages, but moving forward on key activities. For example, North Central secured \$30,000 to supplement the GROW grant and is recruiting Northstar Economics for a study of the region's economy, while Western is cross-matching its labor market information with that in Iowa and Minnesota.
- The regions that started at a more advanced level are moving forward rapidly. For example, South Central/Southwest held an economic summit and the region is expanding its Jobs Regional Profile, while New North has implemented its Business Plan Competition.
- The seven county Southeast GROW region has just completed its grant and is planning a regional economic study.
- Several of the GROW grantees submitted a WIRED grant proposal to the U.S. Department of Labor, with applications built off their GROW grant regional efforts. While none received a grant, the U.S. DOL designated the Southeast Region as a "runner-up"; this status gives them \$100,000 in planning funds and the same technical assistance provided to WIRED grantees.

2. Metrics Project Update

Bartol noted that staff did not receive a large number of comments during the open comment period. The most consistent comment was that the proposal needed a much more refined approach to educational indicators. In response, the educational indicators were changed to incorporate a five-tiered education metric -- less than high school, high school only, beyond high school/no degree, technical degree, and college degree. Bartol also noted that the Office of Economic Advisors continues to study the list of metrics to identify improvements. He noted that based on the continuing effort, some metrics may drop out of the list and others may be added. One area the OEA staff is examining is adding industry birth and death data as a measure for entrepreneurship, an area the Committee recommended be included in the metrics system. Bartol indicated that DWD is looking at rolling out the metrics system in June or July, when a draft of actual numbers will be available.

B. GROW II

Bartol reviewed draft "proposed guiding principles" for the GROW II grants. Most comment and discussion focused around the "competitiveness" issue. There was general consensus that all current regions should receive some level of funding; "competition" should focus on amount of funds regions receive. Other members noted that there needs to be some flexibility in determining what activities will be funded (e.g., meeting costs) and that different review criteria may be needed for new partnerships and experienced partnerships. Others noted that some of the "value-added" areas listed under the fourth principle appeared duplicative and may need to be clarified. It was also noted that sector-related GROW activities should be linked to Department of Commerce efforts. Bartol indicated he would adjust the draft document to reflect these comments and send it out for additional review and comment by Committee members.

C. Advanced Manufacturing Project Ideas

Sheryl Billups reminded Committee members that the CWI has earmarked \$100,000 to address advanced manufacturing. How to use these funds is the responsibility of the Workforce Strategies Committee. Billups provided a brief overview of the Advanced Manufacturing Discussion paper and the project ideas that staff developed for Committee consideration.

The Committee's discussion generated several suggestions, among them to identify the impact of project ideas (e.g., short term, medium term, long term). This was in response to Lee Rasch's observation that there is an emerging shortage in key areas. Currently employers are not getting applicant pools for some critical jobs, while technical colleges are not getting the enrollment needed to sustain programs in those areas, a situation that suggests that short term strategies also need to be considered. In addition, members noted that there needs to be some collaborative recruiting between technical colleges and business and that a direct employer role with these projects is very important. They need to promote the programs and be involved in improving the image of manufacturing. The Committee also briefly discussed the Manufacturing Skill Standards System, which is included in the list of potential projects. Co-chair Dean Welch and others indicated support, noting widely used credentialing systems in other industries are of great assistance to both employers and workers.

The co-chairs asked staff to incorporate suggestions and send the list of project ideas out to Committee members for their input on priorities.

D. Future Aspen Institute Presentation on Business Value Assessment

Bartol referred members to information provided about the Aspen Institute's Business Value Assessment program. He explained that the program is generating interest among WDB Executive Directors and the CWI may be interested in supporting it in some way as well.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.