

COUNCIL ON WORKFORCE INVESTMENT

(Draft Pending Approval)

WORKFORCE STRATEGIES COMMITTEE

TELECONFERENCE MEETING

November 29, 2005

MEETING MINUTES

Members Present: Lee Rasch (co-chair), Dean Welch (co-chair), Margaret Ellibee (representing State Superintendent Elizabeth "Libby" Burmaster), Jayson Chung (representing WTCS President Daniel Clancy), John Wagnitz (representing State Senator Dave Hansen), Susan Hatch, John Heyer, James Hill, Ellen Holt, Kent Olson, Mark Reihl.

Members Absent: Rodney Copes, Jewel Currie, State Senator Joe Liebham, Xiong Lo, Patrick Schillinger, Norma Tirado, Joan Wilk

CWI Staff Present: Fred Bartol, Sheryl Billups, Sue Gleason (DWD/OEI)

Others Present: Eric Grosso (DWD/OEA), Linda Schultz (DWD/BWI), Teresa Barch (WAJTE), Kay Moormann (WTCS)

Key Discussion Issues

I. Call to Order and Minutes

The meeting was called to order by Lee Rasch at approximately 1:35 p.m. Upon confirmation of a quorum following discussion of the Regional Metrics Project, Ellen Holt moved approval of the September 16, 2005 meeting minutes; the motion was seconded by Barbara Fleisner and approved unanimously.

II. Regional Metrics Project

Sue Gleason provided a general overview of the Regional Metrics Proposal, focusing on the intent to use GROW regions as the base, the opportunity for regions to select measures in addition to the state measures, and the opportunities to benchmark against other similar areas across the nation (not just Wisconsin). She also noted that the proposal was discussed with the State Interagency Team (SIT) and with the Executive Committee, and the Executive Committee referred the project proposal to the Strategies Committee for continued consideration. Eric Grosso commented on the measures suggested in the paper, and Gleason noted that the SIT and Executive Committee suggested additional measures related to poverty, average wages, and educational attainment.

Committee members expressed general agreement with direction outlined, though discussion generated a number of questions and issues, among them:

- *Other measures.* Members noted a number of other measures that might be considered (e.g., in-out migration, race/ethnic breakouts - including Hispanic, level of apprenticeships, etc.). Staff noted that some of the suggestions may be more appropriate for particular regions of the state rather than statewide; others (e.g., apprenticeships) might be more appropriate for the Workforce Development System to consider as it looks at "dash board" measures for programs.

- *How the metrics will be used.* Questions were raised about whether the system could serve as a "balanced scorecard", would be primarily a planning tool or an evaluation tool, would be used as a long-term growth measure and/or to compare in-state regions against each other, and would/should be regularly reviewed (e.g., annually and/or ongoing assessment). Rasch and others noted that the measures should be viewed as long-term growth indicators for regions to use in planning -- to assess strengths, weaknesses, and resource needs -- and not as a tool to compare across in-state regions.

Questions also focused on state-wide and regional measures, what data is used and who is responsible for the data. Grosso and Gleason noted that the measures suggested in the proposal would be statewide measures, but regions could decide to include additional measures unique to their region. The statewide measures would be developed on a county basis by DWD from census and other available data sources.

In discussion of "next steps", Gleason noted that the proposal would be discussed in the full Council, but that the Council could look to the Committee to provide more specific recommendations. Among suggestions for things to consider within this context were the need for training and getting information out to people to help them understand how to make it useful, soliciting comments from a larger audience (including regional planning commissions and WDBs), and clarifying who is responsible for measures.

Follow-up: Dean Welch proposed that the Committee develop an implementation/roll-out plan considering these and other issues. Rasch suggested that the Committee report to the full Council that it endorses the Regional Metrics Proposal concepts and recommends referring back to the Committee development of a roll-out plan, which can be considered by the full Council later. There were no objections to either suggestion.

III. Workforce Information Grant

Linda Schultz provided a brief overview of the Workforce Information Grant program, including a brief review of the U.S. DOL's six strategic goals and DWD/DWS grant deliverables included in the current plan. She requested that the Committee consider hosting focus groups that could help DWD determine if grant activities are moving in the right direction and if users are getting the information they need. Gleason reminded members that improving labor market information is of significant interest to the Council and is an objective in the Committee's work plan. Hosting focus groups with business, regional planners, school officials, etc. would enable the CWI to be more fully engaged in LMI planning.

During discussion, questions were raised about the funding level and how much of the funding is devoted to system development. Schultz noted that the annual funding level is approximately \$700,000 and supports a number of activities in addition to systems (e.g., staff, training, etc.). Members also asked about new activities being funded with the current grant. Schultz reviewed several new activities, including a nursing survey, development of skills data, training, and career posters. Rasch noted that local areas are using other data sources as well, referencing a data system developed by an Idaho company that is being used in La Crosse.

Follow-up: Rasch suggested that staff develop a specific proposal for Committee consideration at its December 9 meeting.

IV. Advanced Manufacturing Solutions

Rasch provided a general overview of the Wisconsin Technical College's Advanced Manufacturing Solutions (AMS) initiative and previous Committee discussion and suggested that the Committee provide some overall direction in support of the initiative. He noted that an

appropriate role for the CWI was to support sharing of best practices. Fleisner noted that the Committee may want to incorporate into its work plan the goal of increasing interest and involvement in manufacturing and trades, with a strategy linked to supporting the AMS initiative. Bartol referred members to a one-page handout outlining possible next steps related to AMS. Rasch suggested the Committee consider the initiative in a broader context, bringing the WTCS and Wisconsin Manufacturing Extension Partnership in as strategic partners.

Motion: John Heyer moved to generally endorse the AMS initiative and bring that endorsement to the full Council, with instructions to refer back to the Committee to develop a next step proposal that would link the AMS initiative into a larger CWI context. Margaret Ellibee seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

V. GROW Grants

Bartol discussed two issues related to the GROW grants -- a new U.S. DOL grant opportunity and the Committee's oversight role with respect to the grants.

He provided a brief overview of the new grant initiative, the Workforce Innovation in Regional Economic Development (WIRED) initiative, which incorporates concepts found in the GROW grants (e.g., workforce development, education, economic development partnerships; regional focus; etc.). The new initiative will provide \$5 million a year for three years for eight to ten grants; grant applications must be submitted by the Governor. DWD believes GROW grants could serve as the foundation for grant applications; staff provided GROW grantees with the guidelines and requested that they inform DWD of their interest by December 2. Discussions are currently underway with the Governor's office on how to approach this opportunity.

Bartol also raised the issue of the Committee's ongoing role with respect to the GROW grants, specifically how it would like to engage in identifying progress and "best practices" that can be used to inform future Committee efforts. Rasch indicated that he did not see the Committee's role as a micro-manager of the grants. Some brief reports and presentations may be appropriate, but the Committee should not require extensive reporting or engage in a heavy handed oversight and evaluation approach.

In other GROW grant discussion, concerns about the process for selecting grants was again raised. To bring closure to the issue, Gleason questioned whether or not committee members wanted to send a letter to the DWD Secretary requesting a greater role in fund decisions in the future. Rasch voiced his view that it was not the Strategy Committee's role to make funding decisions. Members did not pursue the idea.

VI. Wrap Up and Adjournment

Members briefly discussed the December 9 meeting, agreeing on including an orientation on healthcare workforce related initiatives currently underway as well as follow-up items previously identified. Dean Welch will chair the meeting. There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at approximately 3:10 p.m.