

**NEMO WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD  
MEETING MINUTES**

**October 20, 2008**

**PRESENT:**

**NEMO WIB MEMBERS**

Carla Bell  
Mary Dickey  
Terry Hughes  
Terri Jones  
John Liter  
Penny Miles  
Jo Moncrief  
Janice Robinson  
Penny Schwartz  
Bonnie Seehase  
Diane Simbro  
Fred Vahle  
John I. Wilson

**WIB STAFF**

Mark Fuqua  
Casio Baumann  
Sharon Hillard  
Amy Hodges  
Cyndi Johns  
Nickie Newell

**CLEOs**

Lyndon Bode  
John Campen  
Glenn Eagan  
Gary Jones  
Charles Korman  
Sean O'Brien  
Steven Whitaker

**GUESTS**

Cathy Collop, DWD  
Darla Dwiggin, DWD  
Steve Etcher, Boonslick RPC  
Mike Gavura, State of Workforce Dev.  
Amy Goacher, Gamm, Inc.  
Robert Harrington, Shelby County Econ. Dev.  
Rose Marie Hopkins, MoWIB  
JoAnn Toerper, Boonslick RPC  
Elaine Miller, Gamm, Inc.  
Barbara Peavler, Gamm, Inc.  
Sheree Prebe, Gamm, Inc.  
Lana Vestal, DWD

## **MEETING CALLED TO ORDER**

Vice Chairperson Bonnie Seehase called the October 20, 2008 NEMO Workforce Investment Board (WIB) meeting to order at approximately 7:00 p.m. at the Paris Senior Citizens Center in Paris, Missouri.

## **ROLL CALL AND SIGNATURE SHEET**

Fred Vahle, NEMO Workforce Investment Board Secretary/Treasurer, took roll call. Thirteen board members were present and a quorum was established.

## **APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA**

John I. Wilson made a motion to approve the consent agenda. Janice Robinson seconded the motion and the motion was approved.

## **DIVISION OF WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT UPDATE**

Missouri Workforce Investment Board (MoWIB) Executive Director Rose Marie Hopkins congratulated the Kirksville Career Center for being one of the first career centers in the state to receive Charter Status from the MO State Workforce Board. She said for many businesses, these economic times have increased the need for the services that are provided through our career centers and through the WIB. She encouraged the staff to continue doing the great job they are doing and said the work they do is very important and very much appreciated.

Rose Marie said she was pleased to see a representative of Vocational Rehabilitation at the WIB meeting. She reminded everyone that Governor Blunt had declared October as National Disability Awareness month to increase the public's awareness of the contributions and skills of workers with disabilities.

Rose Marie spoke about MoWIB and said the board's composition is required to be 51 percent business like the local WIB's. She said the board is making great strides although it isn't fully appointed yet. Greg Sharpe, Jim Upchurch and Senator Wes Shoemyer have been appointed to the board representing Northeast Missouri. She said the board met for a preliminary meeting in March, a planning retreat in June, had their first real business meeting in October where they approved their Mission and Vision statements, and they are starting the process of appointing committees.

Rose Marie said she felt two things were a priority in the structure of the State Board. The first was that it be very balanced among all the different industry sectors in the state so all industries will have an impact and input into the workforce policies for the state. The second was that it be balanced geographically. She felt MoWIB was very much balanced all over the state and she was very pleased.

## **NEMO WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD STRATEGIC PLAN**

Mark said the Strategic Plan was in the development process when he was hired. When he came on board, it was emphasized that we needed to complete the plan. Over the last three to four months, the Strategic Planning and Executive Committees had met several times to discuss the

plan and make revisions. The final draft of the Strategic Plan was mailed in the WIB packets for the members to review before tonight's meeting. Mark said one of the main things that came out of the planning meetings is that the Strategic Plan is a living document and if the plan is approved tonight, it will continue to be improved upon and amended as needed. He thanked the committees for their help, and asked if there were any questions regarding the plan.

Sean said the committees met and reviewed the plan several times. He felt it was a good Strategic Plan and he wanted to make sure that it was utilized.

Terri Jones made a motion that the board accept the plan as it was written. Penny Miles seconded the motion and the motion was approved.

Lyndon Bode made a motion that the CLEOs accept the plan as it was written. John Campen seconded the motion and the motion was approved.

### **MONITORING COMMITTEE REPORT**

Terri Jones said the Monitoring and Continuous Improvement Committee had a conference call meeting with the WIB staff to review the monitoring reports of the WIB's service providers. She said the reports were also included in the WIB packets for the members to review.

Terri then read the recommendation of the committee. She said the Monitoring and Continuous Improvement Committee has reviewed the reports of the monitoring conducted by the NEMO Workforce Investment Board staff. This monitoring covered activities and services provided through sub-contracts with service providers of the NEMO Workforce Investment Board for the WIA Title I-B Adult, Youth, Dislocated Worker and the Career Assistance programs.

The committee finds that the service providers have provided sufficient response to the comments and concerns noted, and recommends the suspension of further Title I-B Adult, Youth, Dislocated Worker and Career Assistance program monitoring unless and until information warrants reinstatement of such monitoring.

Terri said the committee asked several question of the WIB staff regarding the monitoring comments and questions and they felt they were sufficiently answered. Terri motioned that the recommendation of the Monitoring and Continuous Improvement Committee be approved. John I. Wilson seconded the motion and the motion was approved.

Charlie Korman made a motion that the recommendation of the Monitoring and Continuous Improvement Committee be approved. Steven Whitaker seconded the motion and the motion was approved.

### **CAREER CENTER CHARTERING UPDATE**

Mark said he attend the MoWIB meeting in October when the Kirksville Career Center was approved for chartering status and he wanted everyone to know that the staff, partners and other stakeholders at Kirksville put a lot of work into accomplishing this goal. He said hours of work were spent toward this project, and he was very proud of the Kirksville Career Center being one of the first career centers in the state to receive Charter Status. Mark asked everyone involved in the project to come forward to be recognized and he presented the Missouri Career Center – Kirksville a plaque of recognition on behalf of the NEMO Workforce Investment Board.

## **GOVERNOR'S CONFERENCE HIGHLIGHTS**

Mark gave an update on the Governor's Conference. He said many of those who attended the conference were very focused on the topic of regional transformation. He explained that the state designated regions based on specific requirements and by those regions people were asked to divide into teams. They were then asked to identify what is currently occurring in their region and to identify what collaboration needs to occur to leverage community assets to promote a profitable future regional economy. He said the local group for our two regions focused on the areas of the workforce system and the talent pool. Some of the needs or priorities their group was in support of were transportation of the workforce and bringing all the key partners to the table. He said one of the key partners we need to bring to the table is education K-12. The group talked about duplicating the program the city of Macon has with their elementary school. Mark asked Darla Dwiggins to talk a little about Macon's program.

Darla said Dennis Bennett has been instrumental in putting the program together with the Macon school. Some of the activities that have either been held or are in the planning process are a career exploration and job fair, a wheel day and an internship project. Darla explained that all of the activities are designed to get the youth thinking about careers and engaged with local businesses. She said they are hoping that the community input into the school system will result in a better workforce.

Mark said at the end session, all the regions compiled their data and forwarded a report back to the state. After the state has done their review, they will send their findings back to the regions. When he receives a report, he will make sure the WIB is aware of the results.

## **CAP GAP UPDATE**

Cyndi Johns said one of the projects submitted for funding under the Skilled Workforce Initiative (SWI) was a demonstration project for the Career Assistance Program (CAP) customers. She said the project was designed to provide a demand driven public transportation opportunity, and the point of the project was to determine how having transportation available will affect our participation rates for individuals in this program. Cyndi asked JoAnn Toerper from Boonslick and Sheree Prebe from Gamm to give an update on the project.

JoAnn said the project started October 1 in the Boonslick region. They have partnered with Oats for the transportation and routes have been scheduled on different days for all the counties they serve. In the three weeks since the program started, they have held classes every Friday. A total of 25 customers were signed up for the classes, but only 17 customers actually attended, and only 5 utilized the SWI transportation. JoAnn said one of the interesting factors they are discovering is that when they tell the participants that they can overcome their transportation barriers, participants are telling them that they now have other means of transportation. JoAnn said they would never have known this if they had not had the opportunity to provide this service. She said it appears they can miraculously borrow a car or get a ride from someone to keep from sitting on an Oat's bus all day. She said it is unfortunate that there are still some no shows but they are still happy with the results so far, and they are hopeful that they will see an increase in participation in the days ahead.

Sheree said Gamm also started the project October 1. She said some of the counties they serve are very rural and they are trying to figure out how they are going pull the project together. Sheree said because the project is demand driven, a couple of no shows can use up the funds very quickly. Each of the career centers has started to promote the program and staff has started

contacting all of the CAP participants they have enrolled in the program and they are finding the same thing; miraculously, they are saying they don't need the transportation system at all. Sheree said it seems they don't want to ride the Oats bus so they can figure their transportation issues out for themselves. She said in the past, transportation has been a reason for not participating in the program and this project has allowed them to not give any more transportation waivers. If participants don't do what they are supposed to do, staff has taken the waiver option away from them and they will be going into a sanction process. Sheree said the participants are very surprised to think that we can actually furnish this need. They have been able to use transportation as a barrier to get out of doing what they needed to do and now it is no longer the case. She said by next quarter they will have a better feel for how the program is working.

Cyndi said this project will give us a chance to figure out, or to really prove one way or the other, what bearing transportation will have for us. At the end of this, we will have learned a lot and what we do with that will depend on what we find out. It may be that we want to pursue this long term in some of our region where it is feasible, or the results may tell us something totally different.

### **TRI STATE FORUM**

Mark said there is a Tri State Workforce Development Forum being held October 21 in Canton with Illinois and Iowa from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. to address transformation issues. Some of the topics to be discussed are identification of regional workforce gaps, doing away with boundary lines, identifying common workforce issues and finding resolutions to those issues. Mark said another question DWD Director Dawn Busick wants to ask is if the regions feel there is a need to develop a Tri State Workforce Investment Board that will act as an advisory board to the local WIB's in the three states. He said if anyone didn't get an invitation and they would like to attend the forum, to let him know after the WIB meeting.

### **NORTHEAST MO DEVELOPMENT PARTNERSHIP UPDATE**

Mark said the Northeast MO Development Partnership has now received their legal status. They are now in the process of discussing committees that will sit on the board along with each county having representation. He said the \$30,000 Marketing Grant they received will go toward marketing Northeast MO and the development of their website where information will be provided that all the entities in Northeast MO can use. Mark said the organization is very much in its infancy right now. They will be meeting again Wednesday, October 22 in Clarence and they hope to elect officers.

### **RETIREMENT INFORMATION**

Casie said on June 4 the Finance and Resource Committee met to discuss the budget and salaries. They voted to put up to four percent in a separate line item on the budget for retirement costs for the WIB staff. They charged Mark and her with looking into putting the retirement plan together. Casie said she and Mark had done that and the retirement information was included in the WIB packet. Casie then reviewed the plan. She said the simple IRA allowed only a three percent match. It is a voluntary plan and the board will match up to three percent of what the individual puts into it.

Sean said the retirement plan indicated that part-time and full-time employees are eligible to participate. He asked if there was a limit to the number of hours individuals have to work before they can participate. Casie said they hadn't discussed this because the WIB typically doesn't

have part-time employees. However, to be eligible for employee insurance staff has to be working at least 30 hours a week. Sean said he felt something should be put in the plan as far as how many hours per year the employee has to work to participate. He said the plan also indicated that employees can switch back and forth from month to month on the amount they wish to have taken out and he felt that would be too cumbersome. He felt this should be changed to every 6 or 12 months. Sean also asked if an employee decided to leave the WIB, if there was a time period in which they would receive no amount of money back. Casie said no, the employee will get it immediately. Sean asked if there were any number of years required as far as being fully invested in the plan. Casie said there are no requirements.

Terry Hughes asked if it was common to fully vest someone into the company side immediately. He felt there should be a period of time (six months to a year or five years) involved before they received a company match. Sean said he didn't think they should receive this right as soon as they were hired. Casie explained that employees have to be with the WIB past their probationary period before they are even eligible so they aren't going to receive anything for the first six months. She said the probationary period is six months unless the Executive Director feels they are meeting requirements and chooses to remove them from that probationary period.

Terry said he didn't want to make this too cumbersome on anyone but he felt more research needed to be done on the reasoning behind some organizations requiring a number of years before fully vesting their employees into their retirement plans.

After further discussion, Bonnie said unless anyone had any objections it appeared that there were enough questions to warrant reviewing the pension plan again to focus on the questions that had been mentioned. She suggested the issue be placed on the agenda for the next WIB meeting. There were no objections and the issue was tabled until the next WIB meeting.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

- **Update on Business Retention Specialist**

Mark introduced Amy Hodges, the WIB's new Business Retention Specialist. He said Amy had been with the WIB for about six weeks and we are happy to have her on board. He said Amy graduated from the University of Missouri and we are looking forward to some good things from her position it just takes a little while to get things moving.

- **Update on Rapid Response Coordinator**

Mark introduced Nickie Newell, the WIB's new Rapid Response Coordinator. He said Nickie was in the Illinois' workforce arena for twenty plus years and she now lives in Canton, MO. He said he hoped our current economic situation didn't keep her too busy but that she had been very busy since she had been with us and she had been doing a great job.

- **Update on Search for Youth/Innovations Coordinator**

Mark said the WIB has hired a Youth and Innovations Coordinator and she will begin Wednesday, October 22. Her name is Brandi Glover and she lives in Stoutsville, MO. She is currently employed with the Northeast Area Health Education Center and she has been with them for seven years. Mark said we are fortunate because Brandi has been working with a lot of the schools and those networks she has established will be helpful in her new position.

## **YOUTH COUNCIL UPDATE**

Mark said the Youth Council has been working on a Strategic Plan for quite some time and they have come to a point where they need some assistance to move forward. He has talked with

Laurie Assell, the consultant who helped with the WIB's Strategic Plan, to see if she will assist the Youth Council in that process. With Laurie's help and our new Youth Coordinator Brandi on board, this process should be moving forward. Mark said at the next WIB meeting he hoped to be able to report that the Youth Council will have made some progress in their Strategic Planning process.

### **OTHER BUSINESS**

- **Update on NEG**

Mark said many of you know that we have a Department of Labor National Emergency Grant (NEG) that is providing assistance to our area flood victims and communities. He said Boonslick has been knee deep in this and he asked Steve Etcher to give a brief update on the positive things that had been happening.

Steve said on behalf of the communities in Lincoln County he would like to thank the WIB and the State for providing the funding that is being used for the cleanup. He said it is a fantastic project and they have received tons of compliments from the community. Through the NEG have they been able to hire individuals, who have been displaced or had their employment disrupted, to help with the debris removal and cleanup of public properties. Steve said they began the project on August 25. They had about 60 applicants apply for the program and currently they have 37 people on the payroll. They have three crews working right now and they have worked in four cities. They have logged over 3,000 man hours, removed 300,000 sandbags and 130 tons of debris. Steve said they are making some real positive contributions to the region and the WIB should be proud of the way the program has been handled.

Mark commended Steve and his staff for the way they have handled the project. He said they are making a lot of progress and there is a lot of very positive press toward the WIB, the program operators and everybody involved.

Sean also praised Steve and Mark for their involvement in the area flood cleanup. He said the people in the community have been extremely appreciative of what they have done. He said the city of Windfield was a mess. They had a pile of sand (probably 60 truck loads) that couldn't be taken out of the city limits and they didn't know what to do. He said these individuals got in touch with the local asphalt people and now all that sand has gone into asphalt and into their road systems. He thanked Steve, JoAnn, Jay (who has been overseeing the job) and Mark (who brought a lot of focus to the WIB).

### **CONFIRMATION OF NEXT MEETING DATE & LOCATION**

The next NEMO Workforce Investment Board meeting was scheduled for December 1, 2008 at 7:00 p.m. The location will be announced.

### **ADJOURN**

John I. Wilson made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Terry Hughes seconded the motion and the meeting adjourned at approximately 8:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Fred Vahle