

North Central Workforce Development Board
Board Meeting Minutes
April 6, 2021
Via Web Video Conference
Moses Lake, Wenatchee & Omak, plus other locations

Ken Johnson, chair, called the meeting to order at 5:31 pm and declared a quorum. He thanked everyone for attending.

Director's Report:

Dave greeted board members and staff and summarized the agenda. He welcomed the board's newest members, Dr. Sara Thompson-Tweedy of Big Bend Community College and Zach Williams of Stemilt Growers. The planning retreat has been rescheduled again to November 19th, which is Dave's last scheduled day at work.

December 15, 2020 Board Meeting Minutes

Jim Richardson moved and Roni Holder-Diefenbach seconded to approve the December 15 meeting minutes. The motion carried.

Area Committee Discussions

Lisa summarized performance on a statewide level and how North Central's performance stacks up compared to other areas. Every two weeks Aaron rolls up statewide enrollment and training activity numbers to report to a peer working group from all the WDCs led by Lisa. Lisa explained that the 12 areas operate differently. She explained that North Central leads the state in on-the-job training activities so far this program year. Dave and Lisa explained that several areas enroll adults for basic services only, compared to North Central whose approach results in more training per enrollee and a higher return on investment.

Dave focused on the discussion at all three committee meetings concerning the Governor's Economic Success for All initiative, which targets underserved or lower-income communities with "supercharged" job skills training to increase earnings. The committee was asked for input, which will be drawn together in May and June by the staff. The managers have been asked to consider easily approachable training that leads directly to higher wages, such as CDL training, and how to prepare and assist target individuals to successfully complete their training; it is understood how this can increase the cost per person of this type of training. SkillSource must prepare a proposal for state agency approval describing how the funds will be used, including incorporation of partnerships with other agencies. Jim mentioned medical assistant training as another possible training focus for this grant. Tad asked if the BBCC maintenance mechanic program leading to an apprenticeship might also fit this project. Dave and Sara said that depending on the credential the program varies in length. Lisa clarified that the grant does not mandate successful transition to employment for all participants within the grant period. Tad also confirmed with Dave that the grant requires industry partnerships. Dave said that the grant could conceivably target incumbent workers who fall into target demographics, similar to a program based at Big Bend about 15 years ago. Zach said that due to a shortage of qualified mechanics in the area, anyone with any mechanic

skills would be highly sought by Stemilt. Zach also mentioned the Hispanic Orchard Employee Education program at WVC which would fit this scheme. Jim agreed that funding to support these programs, which do not receive tuition, would be extremely helpful. Roni also suggested purchasing tools and other equipment needed for the program. Peggy and Roni described changes coming to the retail industry that will require workforce retraining; Roni encouraged addressing those industry needs.

During the committee meetings, Dave explained the board composition changes over the last year, with a slight reduction in business members and realignment of some members and activities. There are currently three vacancies on the board following the departures of Decorah Anderson, Danny Robbins, and Stephen McFadden. Dave briefly discussed strategies and prospects for replacement appointments. Additionally, Annette Herup is leaving SGL Composites, potentially creating another vacancy unless she assumes a similar position at another company.

Personnel Committee Report

Ken reported that the committee (Ken, Roni, Heidi and Dave) met last week to review the Executive Director's job description. Ken and Roni said the committee discussed opening the position internally or externally, and whether the position was required to be located in Wenatchee if the position is opened to external candidates, especially considering local housing conditions. Peggy stated she felt the position needs to be located in Wenatchee due to its central location. Heidi pointed out that she has difficulty recruiting out-of-area candidates due to the housing crunch. Roni countered that the new reality of work may require flexible thinking, and the Board would run the danger of eliminating highly qualified candidates. Alberto pointed out that South Central recommended internal recruitment due to a very recent external search; he also said that he recommends both internal and external candidates. Jim agreed with Roni that location should not be a restricting factor; he also said that external search should only follow an internal search. Irasema echoed Roni and Jim in terms of location flexibility, and proposed that Grant County could also form a home base for a candidate. She agreed with Jim's internal-then-external search process. Sara brought up her experience relocating from out-of-area and the challenges it posed with the Moses Lake housing market. She asked for clarification of "internal" which means current SkillSource employees.

Ken asked for a motion for live vote as to whether the search should be first opened internally.

Jim Richardson moved and Peggy Vines seconded to begin the search with internal candidates. Voted aye: Tad Hildebrand, Roni Holder-Diefenbach, Ken Johnson, Heidi Myers, Irasema Ortiz-Elizalde, Jim Richardson, Sara Thompson-Tweedy, Peggy Vines, Zach Williams.

Voted nay: Alberto Isiordia

The motion carried.

Ken proposed that the internal search begin as soon as possible so that if required, an external search could begin promptly. Dave recommended to the group that the location's position and telework schedule be deferred to after the internal search; Tad recommended incorporating it into the finalization of the job description because the location determination should not be changed

only if the position is external. Dave informed the board that the physical location directly impacts fiscal responsibilities of the Executive Director that would affect position requirements. Jim said that those duties are possible electronically which should no longer pose a barrier to physical location and urged against requiring 100% presence in Wenatchee. Ken concluded that the Personnel Committee would reconvene in two weeks to determine time in office and move forward. The group agreed to this course of action.

Treasurer Election

Dave explained that the treasurer serves on the Executive Committee and the Audit Committee. While the position has traditionally been based in Wenatchee, it is not required. The time requirement is minimal consisting of a few additional meetings per year. No board members volunteered at this meeting; Dave invited interested persons to contact him for more information. He also pointed out that an employee can serve as Treasurer with the County Commissioner's approval. The Board will be asked to revisit this election at the June meeting.

Announcements:

The next board meeting will be on June 22nd by Zoom. In addition to committee meetings, there may be additional meetings called for EcSA proposal development.

The staff will meet with state monitors virtually this month for an administrative, fiscal and program review. Scanning the required documents will require a large staff effort through the rest of the month.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:13 pm.

In Attendance:

Tad Hildebrand
Roni Holder-Diefenbach
Alberto Isiordia
Ken Johnson
Heidi Myers
Irasema Ortiz-Elizalde
Jim Richardson
Sara Thompson-Tweedy
Peggy Vines
Zach Williams

Not In Attendance:

Crystal Gage
Annette Herup
Dimitri Mandelis
Brant Mayo
Michelle Price
Danny Robbins
Lavonne Roy
Karl Ruether
Pablo Villareal

Staff In Attendance:

Dave Petersen
Lisa Romine
Laura Leavitt
Aaron Parrott
Leonor Barker
Mary Hinger

County Commissioners:

Terry Thompson

WorkSource Guests:

A Garcia
Cate Pavlukovets
Justine