

**Minutes of the  
Q4 Workforce Development Council  
Thursday, December 7, 2023  
Multipurpose Room and via TEAMS audio/video connection  
WSI Century Center  
Bismarck, ND**

**Members present:** Jace Beehler, Pat Bertagnolli, Josh Blackaby, Donald Campbell, Kellie Carlson, Jason Ehlert, Tifanie Gelinske, Cindy Griffin, Proxy Mark Gorenflo for Chancellor Mark Hagerott, Dusty Jensen, Tim Johnson, Howard Klug, Landis Larson, Representative Emily O'Brien, Katie Ralston Howe, Stan Schauer, Wayde Sick, Taya Spelhaug, Damian Schlinger, James Uppgren, Kasper Ziegler

**Guests present:** Paige Kuntz, Janna Pastir, Dalberg/LAMP associates

**Staff present:** Phil Davis, Ruth Lacher, Sherri Frieze

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**CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL**

Cindy Griffin, Chair, called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. welcoming members and guests at the WSI Century Center in Bismarck.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**Motion:** It was moved by Matt Marshall, seconded by DJ Campbell, to approve the September 7, minutes. Motion carried.

**WIOA POLICY UPDATES**

**Phil Davis**

Phil walked members through the policies that were discussed and approved by the Administrative Committee.

Self Sufficiency Standards

Data Validation

Support Services

Allowable Outreach Activities

In School Youth Eligibility

Out of School Youth Eligibility

Adult Priority of Service

**WIOA MONITORING REPORT & RESPONSES**

**Phil Davis**

**Katie Ralston Howe**

The Department of Labor (DOL) audit findings for improvement included:

- Updates and new appointments that were not listed on state boards and commissions website.
- Proxy member for the council not identified in WDC bylaws.
- Board vacancies and Senate appointment not filled
- Youth Policy – needed verbiage updates
- Payment to youth workers – possible payment to be sent out twice a month.

The WIOA program has 45 days to respond to findings received from the DOL.

**WDC Response:**

- New member applications currently reside with the Governor's office and new members will be appointed by the next quarterly meeting in 2024.
- Drafted updated bylaws regarding proxy attendance were sent to the Governor's office and will be brought forward at the next quarterly meeting in 2024 to discuss the amendments.
- Job Service is working to update the verbiage for the Youth Policy and the possible increase in payments to youth workers.

## **STATEWIDE LABOR MARKET for NOVEMBER 2023**

### **Phil Davis**

Phil talked about the top 5 occupational groups with open jobs

- Healthcare, Sales & Related, Transportation, Management, and Installation & Repair
- Open jobs in ND = 13,464
- 15.9% less than November of last year
- Healthcare is #1 in open jobs.
- Unemployment Rate = 1.4% in ND vs. 3.6% nationwide
- Labor Force Participation Rate = 69.1% in ND vs. 62.7% nationwide

## **WORKFORCE INNOVATION OPPORTUNITY ACT (WIOA) STATE PLAN**

### **Katie Ralston Howe**

Every four years the WIOA Unified State Plan needs to be updated with the four agencies of Job Service ND, Voc Rehab, Adult Education, and the Commerce Department. The agencies collaborate to update the plan every two years with the strategies needs for the next four years.

#### **Core areas of focus:**

- Develop more comprehensive approaches, including industry-driven career pathways and worker-centered sector strategies.
- Addressing the needs of employers and workers, especially those who are often underserved; youth, adults who are basic skills deficient, English-language learners and immigrants, individuals with disabilities, individuals who are justice-involved, women and workers of color.
- Public Comment period is from January 19 – February 19, 2024.
- Completion of the plan needs to be submitted to the Department of Labor's online portal by March 4<sup>th</sup>.

## **STATE OF APPRENTICESHIP**

### **Wayde Sick**

Wayde talked about the pros and cons of the Office of Apprenticeship (OA) and the State Apprenticeship Agency. (SAA).

#### **OA**

- Registers and oversees programs in states without a recognized state apprenticeship agency through state field offices.
- Staff members are U.S. DOL federal employees
- Utilizes the Registered Apprenticeship Partners Information Data System (RAPIDS) system for registration, oversight, and tracking of apprentice progress and apprenticeship compliance.

#### **SAA**

- Recognized by OA to act on behalf of the federal U.S. DOL to register and oversee programs in their recognized state.
- Staff members are state employees
- May utilize the standard federal paperwork and documentation, that is agreed upon by the OA, and may use documentation specific to that state.
- May utilize the same RAPIDS system as OA or may use a separate system unique to that state.

**Advantages of OA**

Standardization, Resource Allocation, National Policy Influence, Expertise and Oversight.

**Disadvantages of OA**

Lack of local specificity, bureaucratic processes, distance from stakeholders, limited staffing.

**Advantages of SAA**

Local tailoring, accessibility, faster response, better understanding of local labor market dynamics.

**Disadvantages of SAA**

Fragmented System, Reciprocity/Accreditation, limited resources, less influence on national policy.

**IMMIGRATION AND INTEGRATION WORKFORCE STUDY**  
**Dalberg Advisors/Labor and Mobility Partners (LaMP) Associates**

**Dalberg Advisors** – group founded in 2001. They bring together strategy consulting to address complex social and environmental challenges.

**LaMP** – nonprofit partnership promoting more and better labor migration worldwide.

Today’s presentation and discussion included a working group session with members in the room and online. The groundwork over the next two years with Dalberg/LaMP will include:

- Engagement with the associates
- Identify barriers that are being encountered to hire and retain foreign labor in ND
- Understand opportunities for the Office of Legal Immigration (OLI) to have an impact
- Set the groundwork for continued collaboration throughout the next year in Phases 1 & 2.
- Timeline: October 2023 – June 2025.
  - Labor Needs Analysis
  - Bottlenecks Analysis
  - Benchmarking Analysis
  - Industries of Healthcare, Agriculture, and Energy to be focused on for foreign labor to ND

**WORKING LUNCH**  
**UPDATES BY AGENCY REPRESENTATIVES**

Updates were gathered from members and presented as listed:

- Expanding diversification with research
- Healthcare – contract labor rates are going down
- Apprenticeship programs with LPNs
- Teacher shortage taskforce listening session
- Updating the Perkins State Plan
- CTE scholarship for registered apprenticeship program
- Transportation and construction shortage – recruitment from Texas
- Microsoft working with LinkedIn for career path skills around AI
- Employees needed for new ethanol facilities
- Career exploration and career fairs
- DoCR Career Readiness Class

- Apprenticeship Readiness Program in New Town
- Housing and Transportation issues in Minot
- Transportation study for trails in Williston
- 200 percent growth in UAS over the last 5 years – short on employee
- UAS council and workforce subcommittee through Chamber
- WBL opportunities in Grand Forks school district
- Global Fronts Coalition awarded contract with Church World Services
- Sheet Metal workers training center in Underwood
- Motor Coach Industries in Pembina will stay in ND
- Project with the Office of Refugee Resettlement to create 10 forms translated to student's language
- Increase local marketing with Voc Rehab
- Integrated Education and Training – 3rd year of the program with CNA, and paraprofessional training.
- Building a small group to market the RWIP grant for manufacturing and healthcare
- NDWIG – working with Be More Colorful and Golden Path looking at manufacturing sector for virtual tours
- Workforce Survey to be launched in January, re: partnership with FMHRA – hybrid work and R&R

### **SUBCOMMITTEE UPDATES**

#### **Recruit and Retain – Becca**

1. Immigration and Policies – strategies, red tape, low unemployment rates
  - OLI presentation from Commerce was given
2. Domestic Talent Recruitment efforts
  - FTGL presentation from Commerce was given
  - Retention effort
3. Retention Efforts
  - Workforce Data -labor concentrations with skills needed, lower wages, higher cost of living and attracting from these spaces may already be happening.
  - Childcare – look for ways to endorse the work that is being done by other agencies.

#### **Removing Barriers – Damian**

- Transportation
- Housing
- English literacy

Presentation from Adult Learning Center in Fargo takeaways:

- Transportation and childcare are biggest barriers

Presentation from F5 in Fargo takeaways:

- GED/Diploma
- Addition of more funded programs
- Employment outside of prison system
- Housing
- Recovery
- Transportation to a job

### **Career Exploration – Wayde**

- SWOT analysis
- Looking for priorities
- Takeaways –
- What is best for students
- Opportunities at the schools – what is the school doing well and what is not so well
- Survey to be done and sent out to school state officers in January
- Apprenticeship to understand better for school systems
- Employer pathway for CTE
- Apprenticeship Presentation
- Schools issuing credit – cross walk with career academics and CTE on credit issuing

### **Technical Skills Gap – Katie for Erik**

- Digital Literacy Skills
- Presenter on Digital Equity Act from ND ITD soon
  - Need to have people understand how to use and build that program
  - State plans that will open up funding for foundational digital skills training

### **NEXT STEPS**

#### **Katie Ralston Howe**

Katie will send to members:

1. The link for the Job Service Webinar
2. The link for the Job Service webinar
3. The Digital Skills Foundation Plan
4. The Job Service ND WIOA Annual Report

The State has applied for two National Governor’s Association (NGA) opportunities:

1. **Action Lab** – designed around volunteer opportunities, Job Service, AmeriCorps, and Governor’s Office. An application was submitted, and notification of acceptance should be made aware soon.
2. **Learning Collaborative on Disability** – Voc Rehab is working on. Engagement with other states for mentoring and developing more inclusive workforce polices for the state and private sector.

As time progresses, these two opportunities may present themselves to the subcommittees and could be part of the WDC recommendations.

Subcommittees continue to meet monthly

- Q1 WDC meeting – a rough draft list of recommendations or a narrowed list of focus areas to be presented.
- 2024 Meeting dates are to be determined
- WDC meetings for 2024 will be held in Bismarck.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

With no further discussion, the meeting was adjourned unanimously at 2:00 p.m.