

# Executive Committee

Monday, March 5, 2007

Wisconsin Community Bank  
1717 10<sup>th</sup> Street, Monroe, WI  
3:00 P.M. – 5:00 P.M.

## MINUTES

The SWWDB Executive Committee met on Monday, March 5, 2007 at the location above.  
Attendance was as follows:

<b>Members Present:</b>	Mr. Scott Stocker	Mr. Tom Larsen
	Ms. Margery Tibbetts	Mr. James Finley
	Mr. Steve Scaccia	
<b>Members Absent:</b>		Ms. Ann Greenheck
<b>Staff Present:</b>	Dr. Robert T. Borremans	Ms. Mary Kay Runde
	Ms. Amy Charles	Ms. Barb Tucker
	Ms. Annette Meudt	

Mr. Stocker called the meeting to order at 3:05 p.m. Mr. Stocker spoke of the paradigm shift he expects that SWWDB will go through. He feels the Executive Committee should be prepared for the changes proposed for the future and be able to respond to questions regarding the need for change. The shift will be a change in focus and funding – there will be fewer Job Centers, services will be different and there could be changes in providers.

### 1. WIA Funding and Reauthorization

Dr. Borremans review the history of the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) specifically noting the changes that have occurred since its passage in 1998. The Workforce Development Boards (WDB) was responsible for providing a variety of workforce services targeted toward both the job seekers and the employers. These services were generally delivered through the network of Job Centers, which in Wisconsin, included at least one facility in each county. While WIA addresses the needs of ball job seekers and employers, this WDA has focused primarily on the needs of job seekers.

The focus of WIA began to shift in 2001 as new initiatives began to emerge focusing on preparing people with skills needed in a twenty-first century global economy. WDBs are charged with responsibility to work more closely with employers to identify the skills that will be needed for companies to stay productive. At the same time, funding began to decline.

WIA was not reauthorized in 2003 as planned and the Bush administration began to make changes to service delivery programs through appropriations language rather than by legislative language.

Mr. Scaccia asked for specifics on the WIA funding and the incumbent worker funds. Dr. Borremans addressed this by explaining that the WIA money which comes into the state is divided out. Ten percent is for DWD administrative activity and five percent is set aside for its

own initiatives. Eighty-five percent of the money is allocated to for the workforce areas for programs for dislocated workers, adults, and youth. In the early 2000s, the governor used the five percent set aside allocation for incumbent worker training. A new governor changed the focus and incumbent worker training is no longer allowed, unless a WDB gets a waiver to use a portion of the eighty-five percent funds for the incumbent worker training.

Also there is less money available. The SWWDB area has lost \$500,000 from its basic allocation since 2003. This is happening state wide and is forcing changes in the way services are delivered.

Last year, directed changes in job center standards and created Access Points of Service (APS) sites as an alternative to Comprehensive Job Center (CJC) is in each county. In our region, Janesville is the CJC with Platteville, Monroe and Richland Center as APS sites. Four locations, Darlington, Dodgeville, Lancaster and Southwest Wisconsin Technical College in Fennimore, were identified as itinerant sites and services provided on a part-time or scheduled appointment basis. In addition, the Virtual Job Center is one example of an innovative approach for delivering services.

SWWDB is not well positioned for success under the new WIA focus which is why the Career Pathways Model is proposed to replace the traditional programs SWWDB has operated for years. Dr. Borremans added that the proposed Career Pathways Model is being recommended based the need to align service delivery structures to the new WIA emphasis more so than being budget driven. SWWDB has a balanced budget based on last year's allocation. It was noted that several programs were going away - the Future Fields Program, the ATK-Dislocated Worker Project, the Opportunities Industrialization Center (OIC) grant, the Virtual Job Center (VJC) grant, and the Disability Navigator project. There is optimism that several of those programs will eventually be refunded. There are also additional funding opportunities with the Department of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) and the WISE Program.

## **2. Regional Concept – WIRED and GROW**

Dr. Borremans explained that regional collaboration in workforce and economic development is being promoted at both the federal and state levels. On the federal level a regional initiative is called the Workforce Innovations in Regional Economic Development (WIRED). This is a highly political process involving the governor and the Department of Labor (DOL). Only two WIRED proposals may be submitted from any state.

The Growing Regional Opportunities in Wisconsin (GROW) Grant is the state's version of regional economic and workforce collaboration. DWD has decided to look at GROW regions when funding special activities and are encouraging WDBs within GROW regions to collaborate in WIA planning. The partnership with the Workforce Development Board of South Central Wisconsin should aid SWWDB in getting future projects funded. This alliance with South Central is part of the reason why SWWDB is looking at the Career Pathways model.

Mr. Larsen shared his concern about the Career Pathways Model and Dane County's Career Ladder. He said that their region has a unique situation with not enough workers to fill the jobs available. This is not the situation is the Southwest WDA which has more workers available compared to the number of jobs.

Mr. Finley and Mr. Stocker suggested a summary of the changes be presented at the Board meeting. Mr. Scaccia asked that it be a simple explanation, preferably one page. Mr. Stocker said that the summary should explain exactly what changes are needed and what options are

available.

Mr. Finley said that when he first joined the Board the money was “thrown” at the Board and the Board was told to create programs to spend the funds allocated to the area. Now, with resources limited, the Board is being asked to develop a plan for serving the needs of the area rather than creating programs to spend the money. Mr. Finley added that this is the paradigm shift.

Mr. Larsen said that he is willing to consider pursuing the Career Pathways Model as an option but that he is skeptical of the concept mainly because of his understanding of the Dane County experience.

**3. Wisconsin Workforce Development Association (WWDA)**

The committee members will review this information on their own.

**4. Presentation on Career Pathways Concept**

Since the Career Pathways Model was presented at the joint meeting of the Program Operations and Workforce Services Committees and viewed by most of the committee members, it was decided to forego the presentation of the model at this meeting.

**5. Request for Proposal (RFP) Process**

Dr. Borremans explained that the Board is designated as the One Stop Operator (OSO) and, therefore, the Board is responsible for running the Job Centers. The Board prepares a Request for Proposals (RFP) to select agencies that will operate programs through the Job Centers. In the past, SWWDB actually issued six (6) RFPs to obtain proposals to operate adult, dislocated worker and older youth in Rocks County and the Southwest counties. The new RFP will solicit only two (2) proposals – one for services at the Comprehensive Job Center (CJC) and a second for services at the APS sites. This is not a major change because Job Service currently provides all of the services except for dislocated worker series in Rock County.

Ms. Tucker pointed out that under the current service delivery structure, program operators often duplicate services – for example a job search workshop provided to adults by Job Service and then a second workshop would be provided to dislocated workers by the AFL/CIO. Rather than segregating services based on populations (WIA funding categories), the new RFP would focus on services. Interested parties would submit proposals for core services, case management, or training/workshops. Agencies would be encouraged to submit proposals for all three services. Mr. Scaccia noted that this should eliminate a great deal of duplication and he suggested a simple organization chart showing the current structure compared to the proposed new structure.

Mr. Stocker summarized that there are still questions regarding funding. He also noted that he feels that the RFP needs to contain more specific information on program/service requirements. Dr. Borremans said that a RFP is not a final contract award, but it is a process that collects common information to make a reasonable side-by-side assessment of the proposers’ ability to provide the requested services. SWWDB has the authority to negotiate with organizations submitting proposal and finalize service delivery through contract negotiations.

A question was asked if the RFP was going to include information on the amount of funding available to program operators. Dr. Borremans explained that because SWWDB has not received its allocation amount it is difficult to predict funding levels. SWWDB does not expect to know the allocation numbers until late April or early May. Dr. Borremans also explained that

rather than have interested parties write proposals based on funds available, he was interested in seeing what the proposers felt it would cost to provide requested services. Mr. Larsen brought up the need to know the quantity or the scope of the services to be provided before a proposer can submit a realistic bid.

Dr. Borremans handed out a “draft copy” of Enclosure #9 for the March 14<sup>th</sup> Board Meeting Agenda. He called the committee member’s attention to the note at the beginning of the enclosure. He said that there could be a conflict of interest in discussing the RFP at an open public meeting with agencies interested in submitting a proposal – it gives those agencies “advanced” information on the contents of the RFP and allows them influence service delivery system design to areas/services they are most capable of providing. To avoid any potential conflict of interest, Dr. Borremans suggested that any agency interested in submitting a proposal should be asked to leave the meeting during the discussion and decision on the RFP.

The committee discussed the potential for a conflict of interest and how to handle the situation. The committee concurred that Board members be reminded about the SWWDB Conflict of Interest policy and, rather than ask agencies interested in responding to the RFP to temporarily leave the meeting, allow agency representatives to determine personally if they have a potential conflict and recuse themselves from discussion and voting on the RFP process.

There was consensus that the committee would support the Career Pathways model as the new direction for service delivery although everyone agreed that Career Pathways approach will be a “work in progress” and would need time to develop. There was also consensus to accept the RFP, and support the structure and system design elements contained in the RFP.

**6. Board Meeting Schedule**

Dr. Borremans is proposing a change to the Boards current schedule of meetings which are held in March, June, September and December to January, April, July and October. This would put the quarterly meeting at the beginning of each quarter rather than at the end of the quarter, and allow more accurate and timely reporting of data for performance information and financial numbers. The Executive Committee recommends the change to the Board.

**7. Schedule Next Meeting**

Tentatively, the next Executive Committee Meeting will be Monday, May 7, 2007.

**8. Adjournment**

Meeting adjourned at 5:15 pm.