

**Workforce Services Committee Meeting**  
November 28, 2007  
**Meeting Minutes**

The SWWDB Workforce Services Committee met on Wednesday, November 28, 2007 at the Rock County Job Center in Janesville, and at various locations through the WebEx conferencing system. Attendance was as follows:

|                         |   |                                |
|-------------------------|---|--------------------------------|
| <b>Members Present:</b> | Ms. Cindy Harrington (Chair)                | Mr. Bruce Palzkill *           |
|                         | Mr. James Otterstein                        | Mr. Geoff Upperton             |
| <b>Members Excused:</b> | Dr. Gary Albrecht                           | Ms. Anne Hore                  |
|                         | Ms. Amy Banicki                             | Ms. Jennifer James-Baker       |
|                         | Mr. Charles Elliott                         | Ms. Regina Prude               |
|                         | Ms. Ann Greenheck                           | Mr. Steve Scaccia              |
|                         | Mr. Ken Hendricks                           | Mr. Scott Stocker (Ex Officio) |
|                         | Mr. Tom Hogan                               |                                |
| <b>Guests Present:</b>  | Ms. Barb Kopack-Hill, Burlington School     |                                |
|                         | Mr. Ron Juradan, Burlington School          |                                |
|                         | Mr. Dylan, student at Burlington School     |                                |
|                         | Mr. Tyler, student at Burlington School     |                                |
|                         | Mr. Steve Huth, Janesville School           |                                |
|                         | Ms. Peg Hill-Breunig, Waunakee School Board |                                |
|                         | Mr. Kirk Plank, Blackhawk Technical College |                                |
|                         | Ms. Lisa Furseth, Community Action, Inc.    |                                |
|                         | Mr. Dan Cunningham, Forward Janesville      |                                |
|                         | Mr. Kevin Miller, Beloit Schools            |                                |
|                         | Ms. Deb Lake, Beloit Schools                |                                |
| <b>Staff Present:</b>   | Dr. Robert Borremans                        | Ms. Amy Charles *              |
|                         | Ms. Shannon Moe                             | Ms. Mary Kay Runde *           |
|                         |   | Mr. Mike Schultz *             |

\* Denotes people who participated via WebEx

Cindy Harrington called the meeting to order 3:05 pm. The Burlington High School presenters were delayed so the meeting began with Agenda Item #2, Future Changes in Job Center Structure.

**1. Presentation on Construction Trades Academy Program**

Mr. Ron Juradan, Superintendent at Burlington Schools, opened the presentation by saying that there is a growing shortage of qualified construction personnel caused, at least in part, by the aging workforce. Employment in the construction trades is projected to grow at approximately 15% per year and there are great opportunities for high-wage/high-growth jobs in construction fields.

Ms. Barb Kopack-Hill, Acting Principal at Burlington Schools, said that the program is entering its fourth year of operation. She explained how the program works saying that career academies are small learning communities or schools-within-schools built around a broad-based theme, rather than a specific occupation. This program focuses on construction trades using lab building experience/project, curriculum workshops, field trips and guest speakers to impart knowledge about the construction trades.

## ENCLOSURE 8

She said that success has been achieved in such a very short time which she accredits to the students involved; who are “pioneers” in this endeavor. She noted the success of the program (See the following table) in the form of improved Grade Point Averages (GPAs), lower absences/tardiness and fewer discipline issues.

|                  | GPA  | Absences<br>(Average) | Tardies | Suspension<br>Days |
|------------------|------|-----------------------|---------|--------------------|
| 2004-05          | 2.26 | 7.00                  | 13.1    | 40.0               |
| 2005-06          | 2.88 | 2.60                  | 6.7     | 3.0                |
| 2006-07          | 2.55 | 1.50                  | 4.5     | 5.5                |
| 2007-08 (Term 1) | 2.80 | 1.24                  | 3.4     | 0                  |

Ms. Kopack-Hill added that the involvement of business and industry contributes greatly to the success of the program with direct benefits for the industry, teachers, parents, and of course, the students. She said that the biggest issue so far has been the lack of females students enrolled in the program. The school is interest in attracting and recruiting more female students to the Academy.

Dylan and Tyler, two students involved in the Construction Career Academy, shared their experiences. Both were very positive about the program saying that they enjoy the hand-on, applied learning. They talked about the Academy building teamwork skills and promoting problem-solving activities. They also said that their relationship with the Academy teachers was different from how they interact with other academic teachers; saying that Academy activities reinforce academic curriculum to “real life” work. Both students felt that the Academy provided a good career path opportunity that has made their post-secondary choices more realistic and given them the skills and confidence needed to succeed in their career choices.

### 2. **Future Changes in Job Center Structure**

In the last three years, SWWDB’s funding allocation for Workforce Investment Act (WIA) services has declined steadily with an overall loss of more than twenty-five percent (25%). Also since 2004, the Department of Workforce Development (DWD) has seen the amount of federal WIA and Wagner-Peyser funding decline by thirteen percent (13.1%). The WIA and Wagner-Peyser funds are used by DWD to support the Job Center system and the Job Service organization. DWD has attempted to maintain service delivery while addressing the loss of funding by not filling vacant positions and utilizing carry-over funds for operational expenses.

With the cut in federal funding this year, DWD has been forced to reconsider its approach to workforce development services and systems. In September, DWD announced the lay-off of thirty-three (33) positions from DWD administration and the Job Service staff. Mr. Bruce Palzkill reported that DWD tried to balance its position load across the state and Job Service staff in southwest Wisconsin was heavily impacted. Mr. Palzkill said the Job Center staff is down from twenty-three (23) to fifteen (15) with ten (10) in Rock County and five (5) in the other southwest counties.

Dr. Borremans warned that the funding cuts are causing DWD to rethink the Job Center system. Restructuring of the workforce system particularly as it related to Job Centers, is being contemplated by DWD and may force a restructuring of Job Centers in southwest Wisconsin.

He noted that SWWDB had considered changes in the local Job Center structure two years ago and showed maps, prepared at that time, showing the current eight (8) Job Center

## ENCLOSURE 8

locations with a twenty-five (25) mile commuting radius that illustrate the overlap of the service areas of the Job Center sites. He noted that SWWDB looked at reducing the number of Job Centers to four (4) with the Comprehensive Job Center (CJC) in Janesville and three (3) Access Points of Service (APS) in Richland Center, Platteville and Monroe. Using a thirty (30) mile commuter radius, most areas of the workforce development area (WDA) could be covered, including all of the areas that currently have a Job Center building. He said that with the funding cuts and staffing reductions it may be necessary to further cut the number of Job Centers and showed a map depicting only two (2) Job Center sites for southwest Wisconsin – one in Janesville and one in Fennimore. He also showed an option with the CJC in Janesville and the APS in Dodgeville. Using a forty-five (45) commuting radius, he showed that the Fennimore location may be more centrally located to most of southwest Wisconsin.

Dr. Borremans indicated that the issue of Job Centers will continue to be an item of concern and that the structure of Job Centers will change, both statewide and in southwest Wisconsin, it is only a matter of when. He indicated that DWD is beginning to hold meetings to discuss the restructuring of the Job Center system. The DWD redefinition of Job Centers will impact SWWDB's decisions regarding Job Center locations.

### 3. **Workforce Innovation in Regional Economic Development (WIRED) Initiative**

Dr. Borremans updated members on WIRED Initiative activities with progress focusing on development of the required Implementation Plan. Of the six (6) cluster subcommittees, only two (health and manufacturing) are moving ahead with organizational activities at this time.

There will be a WIRED "Kick-Off" event that will feature Emily DeRocco, Department of Labor (DOL) Assistant Secretary and Governor Jim Doyle. Members will receive a formal invitation for the "Kick-Off" which is planned for Wednesday, February 13, 2008 beginning at 9:00 a.m. at Monona Terrace in Madison.

### 4. **Update on Business Services Activities and Contracts**

Ms. Amy Charles said that SWWDB continues to work directly with businesses through a contract relationship for recruiting and testing services. Referring to the 2006-2007 Business Services Contract activities enclosed with the agenda, Ms. Charles noted several new employer contracts and inquiries. She specifically highlighted a second successful job fair for United Alloy in Janesville, and an upcoming job fair in early December for Woolwich Dairy in Lancaster.

Mr. Otterstein suggested launching an image campaign with testimonials or letters of recommendation from satisfied businesses who had previous involvement in the Business Services contracts. Ms. Charles agreed and indicated that she does request letters of support from clients of the Business Services Programs upon contract completion.

### 5. **Worker Dislocation Activities**

Ms. Shannon Moe shared the local worker dislocation report for southwest Wisconsin. This report is prepared quarterly using information provided by DWD, and shows the plant closings and lay-offs since the first of 2007. Ms. Moe noted that unfortunately the current layoffs are slightly ahead of last year's numbers with additional layoffs expected throughout the region as the new year approaches.

### 8. **Other Items for Discussion**

None.

### 9. **Adjourn**

Chairperson Harrington adjourned the meeting at 4:40 p.m.