

Youth Council Meeting

October 10, 2011

Meeting Minutes

The Youth Council meeting was held on Wednesday, October 10, 2011, at the Wisconsin Community Bank in Monroe, WI. Attendance was as follows:

Members Present:	Mr. Steve Huth	Ms. Julie Pluemer
	Ms. Mary Johannesen	Mr. Greg Quam
	Mr. Walter Orzechowski	Mr. James Turner

Members Excused:	Mr. Jeremy Brown	Mr. Steve Michek
	Ms. Darla Burton	Mr. Scott Stocker
	Ms. Casey Dobson	Ms. Brittany Weis
	Ms. Imelda Majeski	

Staff Present:	Dr. Robert Borremans	Ms. Katie Gerhards
	Mr. Ron Coppernoll	Ms. Rhonda Suda

1. Introduction of New/Returning Members

Dr. Borremans called the meeting to order at 1:15 p.m. and welcomed new members Mr. James Turner, Life Skills Coordinator for the Beloit Fresh Start Program and Ms. Julie Pluemer, Career Prep Coordinator and Instructional Design Specialist for Southwest Tech College.

2. Role and Purpose of the Youth Council

Dr. Borremans stated that the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) requires each workforce board to have a Youth Council. The duties of the Youth Council include:

- Developing the portions of the local plan relating to eligible youth, as determined by the chairperson of the local board;
- Recommending eligible providers of youth activities, to be awarded grants or contracts on a competitive basis by the local board to carry out the youth activities;
- Conducting oversight with respect to the eligible providers of youth activities, in the local area;
- Coordinating youth activities authorized under section 129 in the local area; and
- Other duties determined to be appropriate by the chairperson of the local board.

WIA includes a variety of program activities for youth. Unfortunately, SWWDB does not receive enough funding to provide all of these services and opportunities. SWWDB's primary focus of SWWDB's youth activities have been to:

- Provide educational activities that will assist youth in achieving academic and employment success;
- Provide career awareness and other activities designed to improve educational and skill competencies, and provide effective connections to employers; and
- Provide opportunities for training to eligible youth.

3. Younger Youth Service Providers

Southwest Wisconsin used to be two (2) separate, stand-alone private industry councils: Rock County and the counties of Grant, Green, Iowa, Lafayette and Richland. When these councils merged under

WIA, there was concern that all of the resources received would be consumed by Rock County because of the large population. Therefore, a portion of the funds received are divided between Rock County and the five (5) counties in southwest Wisconsin.

Over the years, SWWDB has moved away from this practice and established what the needs are in each area of the southwest region. Currently, the resources SWWDB receives is divided 60-40. Rock County receives 60% and southwest Wisconsin receives 40%.

In March 2011, SWWDB published a Request for Proposal (RFP) for In-School Youth services to be provided to clients in southwest Wisconsin. Two (2) proposals were received by the end of April from CESA #2 for Green and Rock Counties, and CESA #3 for Grant, Iowa, Lafayette and Richland Counties. SWWDB awarded the contracts to the CESA organizations at the June Board meeting.

When SWWDB Administration contacted CESA #2 to award the contract to the organization, they rejected the contract and stated they were no longer interested in providing youth services. CESA #2 was concerned about the new direction asked of them to perform. Particularly, the new common measures that the Department of Workforce Development (DWD) is using for youth services.

SWWDB initiated emergency procurement procedures to find a new program operator in a limited time frame. Community Action, Inc. (CAI) submitted a proposal for Rock County and was awarded the contract at the September Board meeting.

CAI was asked to consider what organizations would be considered to provide services to youth in Green County. It is SWWDBs understanding that CAI has approached the Southwest Community Action Program (CAP), CESA #2 and Manpower for services in Green County.

4. Budget Update

WIA states that workforce development boards are to be awarded federal funds on a federal program year basis, which is October to September. However, local boards operate on a fiscal year basis, which is July to June. This results in first quarter funding being received during the last quarter of the federal fiscal year. In the past when expenses were received, SWWDB would remit payment for those expenses.

This year, SWWDB was instructed to spend monies from last fiscal year during the first quarter. In addition, when an expense was incurred, that expense was to be processed for payment immediately. Due to the funding cuts, individuals had to be placed on waiting lists until the spring semester.

Dr. Borremans explained that individuals enrolled in the Adult and Dislocated Worker programs are facing funding challenges, more so than those in the Youth programs. Out-of-school youth were impacted, but not many costs were incurred. Therefore, SWWDB was able to serve the out-of-school youth program participants that requested enrollment into training. The table below shows the change in funding amounts from PY 2010 to PY 2011.

	2010	2011	Dollar Change	% Change
Adults	550,864	512,982	-37,882	-6.88%
Dislocated Workers	864,950	663,980	-200,970	-23.23%
Youth	645,087	588,925	-56,162	-8.71%
Total	2,060,901	1,765,887	-295,014	-14.31%

5. **Business and Education Summit**

The 6th Annual Business and Education Summit will be held on Monday, November 7, 2011, from 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. at Southwest Wisconsin Technical College. The keynote speaker will be Peter Pappas who will speak on the “21st Century Skills in Action; Rigor, Relevance, and Project Based Learning.”

6. **Governor’s Workforce Vision and Priorities**

Governor Walker has adopted eight (8) priorities for workforce development in Wisconsin. As SWWDB works to complete the WIA Local Plan, it is required to address how it will implement the following six (6) priorities in the local region:

- Improving the alignment between the skills needed by private sector employers and the education and job training systems that provide the pipeline of workers;
- Coordinating federal and state economic and workforce development funds to target resources more effectively, and to explore options such as federal waivers that support innovative solutions;
- Designating specific employment sectors for priority spending based on regional sector strategy priorities and sufficient evidence of labor demand;
- Improving sector alignment of mutual purposes by requiring each Economic Development Board to have a Workforce Development Board representative;
- Improving accountability and transparency in order to measure success and prioritize future funding based on outcomes; and,
- Researching and incorporating best practices from other states to support an effective, well-coordinated programming system that is in line with federal requirements.

The Governor’s Council on Workforce Investment (CWI) is being restructured and will create a committee to address youth related issues and initiatives. This committee will begin to address the two (2) priorities that focus on coordination of workforce services with education. The goal is to create a continuum where education focuses on career activities from secondary schools to technical colleges on to the UW system. Because the CWI involves representatives of business and industry, private sector business will be directly involved with education to ensure that training will focus on skills important to business needs.

In addition to the above priorities, the workforce boards are being asked to identify demand occupations/driver industries in each workforce area. In 2006, when SWWDB was a part of the 12-county GROW region with the South Central Wisconsin Workforce Board, the driver industries were identified as healthcare, manufacturing, plastics, non-store retail trade, information technology and food processing. These industries remain the driver industries in southwestern Wisconsin with the additions of agriculture/agri-business and construction. These additions are partly due to economic development initiatives in Southwest Wisconsin. One example is a new, reorganized group, Prosperity Southwest, which has focused on advanced manufacturing, tourism, and agri-business as driver industries.

7. **WIA Workforce Development Board’s Local Plan – Youth Program**

A key component of the WIA Local Plan focuses on workforce programs and services addressing the needs of youth ages 16 to 21. SWWDB requested the input of the youth council on items that must be addressed in the local plan.

SWWDB plans to promote collaboration between the local workforce development systems, education, juvenile justice and others. Mr. Huth shared with council members that the primary focus for youth at this point in their life should be on career preparation, not career exploration. SWWDB needs to move beyond helping youth receive a high school diploma and assuming that will be adequate in assisting the

person become employable.

SWWDB's recruitment strategies could include offering a mini-grant in the five-county area of southwest Wisconsin. Organizations would be given resources to be able to use their relationship with local businesses to offer short-term job training. The youth would obtain some training and skills, and would follow them through an initial employment period.

As part of the youth eligibility definition (in addition to being age 14 through 21, and a low income individual as defined by WIA), WIA provides one (1) or more categories that must be met. Of the six (6) categories (homeless, offender, grade level or two (2) behind, pregnant or parenting, basic skills deficient, and local definition), the sixth criterion is left to the WDB to define. The local definition is defined as an individual who lacks employability skills based on the Department of Public Instruction (DPI) checklist, has no previous work experience, or has a parent who is a dislocated worker.

Primarily, SWWDB measures the success of youth service providers in terms of the performance measures outlined in WIA regulations. The youth performance measures changed about two (2) years ago when Wisconsin implemented the federal common measures. Two (2) new standards were added - literacy/numeracy gains and placement in education or employment - which SWWDB has failed. SWWDB will be making new efforts with program operators to accomplish those outcomes in the future.

The council members discussed the top three (3) priorities/goals for improved services to youth. These priorities/goals are: marketing, identify a smaller number of students that will have higher success rate and work with employers to identify job opportunities in southwest Wisconsin. This will help young people understand that to be successful in the future, more education is required.

Dr. Borremans stated the Plan will be available for review and comment for 30 days and council members, along with the general public, will have the opportunity to share their thoughts about proposed 2011-12 workforce services in southwest Wisconsin. All comments received will be shared with the Department of Workforce Development (DWD). Any concerns can be brought forward and addressed before the final plan is submitted.

8. Other Topics for Discussion

A. DOL Monitoring

Dr. Borremans explained that the Department of Labor (DOL) visited Wisconsin last Fall to monitor workforce programs and services. The monitoring included a review of five (5) workforce boards. DOL discovered that the Department of Workforce Development (DWD) was lacking in its oversight responsibility and identified about \$7.5 million of questioned costs.

If these costs would be considered disallowed costs, payment would come from the local workforce system. The grant recipients of the workforce system are the counties; therefore, the counties would have to repay any disallowed costs. SWWDB's contracts contain the provision that program operators are responsible for any disallowed costs.

DWD and the visited WDBs are still resolving the issues and finalizing the report.

B. Eligible Training Provider Renewal Process

SWWDB administrative staff is currently in the process of reviewing all of the training programs approved by the SWWDB Board of Directors. Staff mailed an Eligible Training Provider (ETP) Renewal Form to all of the training providers requesting they complete the form for renewal of each program that has been approved by SWWDB. In addition, this review has caused SWWDB to re-

evaluate the approval process. In the future, ETP applications will be considered with focus on the driver industries/demand occupations.

C. Youth Council Meeting Dates

The Youth Council meets twice a year; once in the spring and once in the fall. If the council would choose to meet more often, video conferencing capability is available in Fennimore, Janesville, and Platteville. SWWDB will conduct a survey of possible meeting dates for the future.

9. Adjournment

Dr. Borremans adjourned the meeting at 3:10 p.m.