Minneapolis Workforce Council

September 21, 2010

Meeting Minutes

Present: Carolyn Roby, Mark Anderson, Sharon Bredeson, Matthew Damon, Douglas Flateau, Darla Figoli, Joe Gaspard, Todd Klingel, Lief Larson, Ken Lundquist, Thomas MacNally, Michael McHugh, Jane Renken, Craig Vana
Staff: Deb Bahr-Helgen, Felisha Burns, Mark Brinda, Doug Suker, Anne Fischer, Linda DeHaven, Kent Robbins, Marie Larson
Guests: Kathy Carney – DEED
Excused: David Ahlers, Daniel McConnell,
Unexcused: Elizabeth Campbell, Carlye Peterson, Terrell Towers

*****Carolyn called the meeting to order at 7:40 a.m.***

Welcome and Chair's Report – Carolyn Roby opened the MWC meeting by thanking East Side Neighborhood Services staff Jazmin Danielson, Youth Department Director, for hosting the Minneapolis Workforce Council meeting.

East Side Neighborhood Services (ESNS) – Jazmin Danielson informed the MWC that ESNS has been located in Northeast Minneapolis for over 90 years. In 1915, ESNS began as a settlement house that assisted immigrants with housing, clothing, employment and other services. Jazmin stated that ESNS serves Northeast and Southeast Minneapolis residents. ESNS offers daycare to low income families with children six months to six years old, as well as operating three after school programs, employment services for individuals nineteen years of age and older and transportation services that assist individuals in need of getting to doctor appointments, grocery shopping, etc. Jazmin stated that ESNS has a seniors department that also provides employment and training for seniors. Jazmin stated that ESNS also has a center called the Friendship Center Adult Daycare. Jazmin stated that this center assists working adults who care for senior citizens by providing these seniors with hot meals, bathing, therapy, clothing etc, during the day. Jazmin informed the MWC that ESNS offers a food shelf in both Northeast and Southeast Minneapolis. Jazmin stated ESNS also provides a camp experience for boys and girls ages 8-14 at Camp Bovey. Jazmin stated that Camp Bovey's mission is to provide a safe place for youth to have fun while participating in outdoor activities that help build respect for themselves, one another, and the environment. In closing Jazmin offered a tour of ESNS to the MWC and guests.

New MWC Member Introduction – Carolyn Roby introduced three new members of the Minneapolis Workforce Council: Darla Figoli, Vice President of Human Resources at Xcel Energy, Matthew Damon, Attorney at Nilan Johnson Lewis PA and Jane Renken, Human Resources, Manager Workforce Planning Allina Recruitment Center at Allina Hospital & Clinics.

Employment Services Partner of the Year – Carolyn informed the MWC that the partners of the year, Pillsbury United Communities (PUC) in Partnership with Emerge Community Development and American Indian O.I.C, award ceremony will be held on Tuesday, September 28, 2010 from 1:30pm – 3:00pm at City Hall in the Council Chambers.

Approval of Minutes – The minutes for May 18, 2010 Minneapolis Workforce Council Meeting were moved and approved.

North Minneapolis WorkForce Center Update – Kathy Carney, Regional Manager of the South and North Minneapolis WorkForce Centers informed the MWC that the North Minneapolis WorkForce Center does not have the capacity to support the numbers of people who come into this location. Kathy stated that the State of Minnesota put out an RFP that is due the week of September 30, 2010. Kathy stated that the RFP is to conduct a facility condition audit on the North Minneapolis WorkForce Center.

Kathy stated that a firm will be chosen within a week and a half and then a final report from the firm will be due the third week of November 2010. At that time a conclusion will be made regarding renovation or moving the North Minneapolis WorkForce Center.

Minnesota Family Investment Program (MFIP) Update – Deb Bahr-Helgen, Director METP, informed the MWC that the City of Minneapolis has worked with Hennepin County Human Services since 1988. Deb stated in the early 1990s the City of Minneapolis received welfare to work dollars that allowed the City of Minneapolis and Hennepin County to work jointly to put funds out to serve long-term unemployed individuals on public assistance. Deb stated that in 2006 the relationship between the City of Minneapolis and Hennepin County changed to a service agreement that allows the City to provide technical assistance and evaluation coordination. Deb continued informing the MWC that funding for MFIP employment services comes from State of Minnesota Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) dollars that is over $35 million yearly and serves 11,000 participants that covers a variety of services such as employment services, cash and food assistance, child care and health care. Deb stated that approximately $10 million dollars is passed onto employment services to assist with employment programs.

Linda DeHaven, Manager of the MFIP Program (METP) – handed out a Minnesota Department of Human Services Fact Sheet. Linda informed the MWC that in the past MFIP was known to many as Aid to Families with Dependant Children (AFDC). Linda stated that the AFDC program was changed by the Clinton Administration and renamed TANF. TANF was a program that required additional work requirements and holding States and Counties responsible for employment participation rates and providing more incentives in assisting individuals to work instead of receiving public assistance. Linda stated that the State of Minnesota's version of TANF is called Minnesota Family Investment Program (MFIP). Linda stated that funding flows from the Federal Government to the State of Minnesota and from the State to counties in the form of consolidated grants. Linda informed the MWC about eligibility requirements and stated that MFIP is to assist low-income families and to engage them into the workforce so MFIP is no longer needed. In closing, Linda stated that there are over 16 vendors in Hennepin County and every five years RFP's are put forth where vendors need to reapply for funding.

Joe Gaspard, Minneapolis Workforce Council – informed the MWC that currently staff is working on reviewing approximately 40 RFP MFIP Proposals. Joe stated that one challenge being faced now is money is being shifted around and due to this unfortunately MFIP is working with $2 million dollars fewer than what they had previously. Joe informed the MWC that change is on the way when it comes to grading vendors. Joe stated that METP has assisted with evaluating vendor's performance. Joe informed the MWC about Hennepin County Diversionary Work Program (DWP). Joe stated this program provides employment services to help low-income families find jobs. DWP is designed to move people immediately to work, diverting many families from ever having to apply for MFIP. An eligible family can receive a maximum of four months of DWP cash benefits in a 12 month period; these four months do not count toward the MFIP 60 month lifetime limit. In closing, Joe informed the MWC the new contracts will begin January 1, 2011.

Central Corridor Update – Michael McHugh, Minneapolis Workforce Council, informed the MWC that he owns a business called Midwest Construction Group in North Minneapolis. Michael stated in his position he partners small minority construction companies together. Michael informed the MWC that he worked on the certification for women and minority owned businesses for MN/DOT and he noted that numerous truck drivers were not certified. Michael stated he is working with Marie Larson, Manager of the RENEW Project, Minneapolis Community and Technical College and MN/DOT to put a training together and target Minneapolis inner – city residents in the trucking arena.

Kent Robbins, Business and Special Projects Coordinator, METP – Presented a Central Corridor Light Rail Bid Packages document to the MWC. Kent stated this document gives the name of bid packages or contracts, dollar amounts, council awards, workforce percentage and the start date of construction projects for the Central Corridor.

Introduction to Social Media Networking – Lief Larson Minneapolis Workforce Council, informed the MWC that he is the CEO of Workface Incorporated, a company that profiles social media technology. Lief stated that Workface Incorporated has over 55,000 customer's world wide and in this economy more individuals are gaining employment through media networking. Lief stated employers are using the web to recruit or be recruited. Lief also stated that social media networking is providing some significant challenges for people who are concerned about finding employment. Lief handed out a document titled "Using the web as a career tool" to the MWC members and stated this document provides various websites and search engines for job seekers. Lief stated that these career tools such as, www.geo.craigslist.org/iso/us/mn, www.linkup.com, and www.hotjobs.yahoo.com are very useful.

Disparities Discussion –Carolyn Roby informed the MWC about a study that was published by Dr. Algernon Austin, Director of the Race, Ethnicity, and the Economy at the Economic Policy Institute in Washington DC. Carolyn stated that Dr. Austin researched metropolitan areas across the United States for disparities in black and white unemployment and out of all the metropolitan areas that were researched, the community that had the largest disparities between black and white unemployment was the Twin Cities Metropolitan Area. Carolyn stated that the Twin Cities disparity rate is greater than any other communities. Carolyn informed the MWC that Dr. Austin came to the Twins Cities area for a meeting with government officials, elected officials and non-profit organizations and brought more research to assist with identifying what's going on. Mark Brinda showed the PowerPoint Presentation used by Dr. Austin during his visit.

Dislocated Worker Committee – Sharon Bredeson submitted the Dislocated Worker Report:

- METP's Dislocated Worker results for Program Year 2009 concluded on June 30, 2010
- Dislocated Worker funding for Program Year 2009 included WIA Dislocated Worker, WIA Adult two-one time transfers, State Dislocated Worker, and ARRA/Stimulus Dislocated Worker one-time funding
- 1,120 clients were served including 44 state clients who were co-enrolled to access ARRA training funds when the state program ran out
- 349 clients were placed into unsubsidized employment at an average wage of $21.75 which on average was 89% of their previous wage
- Retention results:
  - 98% for first quarter after exit
  - 91% for second quarter after exit
  - 92% for third quarter after exit
  - As a system across the state of Minnesota, funding for the Dislocated Worker for Program Year 2010 July, 1, 2010 – June 30, 2010 is not sufficient to meet the demand. Many areas still are not taking any new customers and long waiting lists for training services are common. Minneapolis has been able to continuously enroll and provide training services to date, so based on feedback from our service provider staff, METP amended our priority of service policy in August 2010 by removing the requirement for Minneapolis residency. The remainder of the priority screen remains in effect:

Veterans or qualified spouses of a veteran have first priority. If applicant is not a veteran or qualified veteran's spouse, priority for service is given to individuals who are eligible dislocated workers who have:

1. Worked for a minimum of twelve months within the past thirty-six months, with the same employer and/or union; AND
2. Worked a full-time schedule during that period of employment thirty-one plus hours per week; AND
3. A layoff or unemployment date on or after December 1, 2007.

If we find that we are not able to meet the demand for our services at some point in the future, METP may reinstitute the Minneapolis residency requirement as needed.

- The Guthrie Theater was recently awarded a grant from the Minnesota State Arts Board allowing them to reach out to lay off and displaced workers in efforts to create a program to offer deeply discounted tickets to select performances of their productions. They were able to offer $5.00 preview tickets to their current production, The Master Butchers Singing Club, to our Dislocated Worker clients. While the funds last, the Guthrie plans to offer Dislocated Worker clients a pair of discounted tickets for each production.

STEP-UP Committee – Anne Fischer handed out a Summer Youth Employment Report for the STEP-UP Program and a 2010 Summer Youth Budget Report to WFC members.

Adult Committee – Doug Suker submitted the Adult Committee Report:

Program year 2010 is now underway; contracts are in place with eleven vendors to provide job placement and retention services in the usual manner. Approximately $1.2 million is available to our vendors through performance based contracts.

The Adult Committee is planning to meet in early November to discuss the future of four vendors who were sent corrective action letters due to poor grades in the prior program year. If any of the four vendors fail to raise their grade to a 'C' for the quarter ending September 30, 2010 their contract may be terminated effective January 1, 2011.

METP has established placement and retention goals that are written into the contracts with our vendors, the benchmarks are: 70% placement rate, 80% positive job retentions at 90-days, 70% retentions at 183 days, 65% at 275 days and 60% at 365 days. The vendor's grade is an average of the percentages and either succeeds or falls short of reaching the benchmarks from that average, a letter grade is assigned.

Staff have met with Goodwill Easter Seals to discuss the poor performance in the construction skills contract (placement in construction-related employment only) Goodwill Easter Seals is having trouble recruiting eligible clients for their training and has elected not to continue with this contract in Program Year 2010. Funds will be budgeted to pay Goodwill Easter Seals for successful retentions for the clients placed in Program Year 2009.

The economic stimulus adult projects ended enrollments June 30, 2010. A total of 251 clients were enrolled into the nine projects that were funded. The projects will continue to provide job placement and retention services through June 30, 2011, at this time, forty-five clients have been placed into jobs with an average salary of $11.66 per hour.

Next Meeting of the Minneapolis Workforce Council:

Minneapolis Public Schools
Adult Basic Education
2225 East Lake Street
Tuesday, November 16, 2010
7:30 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.
AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY PROGRAM
Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities.
TTY (612) 673-2157
Minneapolis Employment and Training Program (612) 673-5298