

MICHIGAN WORKS! WEST CENTRAL
WDB/LEO JOINT MEETING
LAKE OSCEOLA STATE BANK, BALDWIN
WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 6, 2008

MINUTES

LEO Members Present

Emig, Larry
Myers, Robert
Pinkerton, James
Scott, Brent
Warba, Mark

LEO Members Absent

Gardner, Pat
Howard, Linda
Powell, Daniel

WDB Members Present

Arnoldi, John
Aultman, Robb
Bonga, Roger
Christensen, Sharon
Crandall, Sandy
Ferguson, Tim
Fettig, Grant
Finch, Curtis
Fridsma, Chris
Frost, Jim
Gilbert, Gary
Goward, Scott
Jensen, James
Massy, Dan
Smith-Olson, Debbie
Stanek, Bill
Stuck, Brian
Thompson, Sheri
Trucks, Mary

WDB Members Absent

Geno, Buck
Masternak, Jason
Rocco, Kenneth
Varenhorst, Michael

Michigan Works! West Central Staff

Griffith, Paul Reed, Brigette Shoemaker, Connie Wyman, Michael

Others Present

Anderson, Felisha – FBR	Fairley, Rick – MPRI	Nadeau, Diana – FBR
Bloomfield, Janet – Central Area	Frendo, Joe – NCRESA	Roley, Jeff – Eagle Village
Bozeman, Jerri – Hope Network	Hall, Marie – Eagle Village	Stieg, Rebecca – MPRI
		Wood, Janet – Hope Network

Call to Order

WDB Chairperson, Sheri Thompson brought the meeting to order at 12:45 p.m. at the Lake Osceola State Bank in Baldwin. A quorum was present of both the WDB and the LEO.

Introduction of New WDB Member – Tim Ferguson, Business Rep. – Retail, Wholesale & Dept Store

Union

Tim Ferguson was welcomed by Sheri Thompson on behalf of both Boards. Tim is a Business Representative for Local Union 386 out of Grand Rapids and Yoplait is among those he works with.

Introduction of Guests

Guests were introduced and welcomed.

Consent Agenda

- Minutes of June 4, 2008 WDB/LEO Joint Meeting – Mailed Prior
 - Action Items from the June 4, 2008 Joint Meeting WDB only – Mailed Prior/Handout (Lavender)
- June Financial Report – Mailed Prior/Handout (Goldenrod)

Bill Stanek moved to approve the Consent Agenda as presented; supported by Larry Emig; motion approved by both the WDB and the LEO. 12:48 p.m.

Update on MPRI Program – Rebecca Stieg, Community Coordinator & Rick Fairley, Resource Navigator – Handout

Rebecca handed out a small publication put out by the Michigan Department of Corrections showing the costs of crime in Michigan:

- Cost to educate 1 student (K-12) annually: \$6,800
- Cost to incarcerate 1 prisoner annually: \$30,000
- 2006 Michigan Department of Corrections budget: \$1.78 billion, more than 20% of Michigan's general fund
- 11,000 prisoners are paroled annually – 48% return to prison within 2 years

- Parole failures cost to Michigan: \$117 million per year

Rebecca stated that things are going well and the Review this morning reflected that. There is a very good feeling in the direction MPRI is going and certainly a sense that we are having some successes. Dan Buron of Goodwill of Greater Grand Rapids stated to the Oversight Committee that there were many more employers than had been previously expected that were willing to employ MPRI participants. There is enthusiasm in many of the participants upon having an opportunity to work and to be positively engaged in their community and their family. Their sense of loyalty and many of their leadership skills were really able to be harnessed for some very positive things in their work.

As of June, 105 MPRI participants have been served. The numbers are pretty close to what was projected by the numbers given to us by the Department of Corrections for each of the counties. Osceola and Mason counties show a little higher than expected and a little lower in Newaygo County. We are seeing about the same number getting unsubsidized employment as subsidized. This has been a high point in working with this initiative.

The participants are receiving WorkKeys testing and are doing many times higher than expected.

Rick Fairley's primary function, at this early point, is to help build the foundational structure while partnering with the Department of Corrections and the parole agents, to solidify a seamless transition back into the community using resources available in the community. We are trying to increase the capacity to utilize the existing resources. The goal of course is to help the parolee to transition without recidivating. Community-based transition teams are being set up with the Department of Corrections and Service Providers, such as Goodwill and other's providing services, in the area of housing and counseling among others.

For these community-based transition team meetings, each parolee has a minimum of two when they first come out of the facility within 30 and 60 days. In the local Department of Corrections parole offices these people come together to collaborate and assist, not just overseeing but helping these

parolees to succeed. It is an ongoing plan based on the need and the changing circumstances in each individual's life; the planning actually begins while they are still in the facility. Things are documented as to what is working and not working and changed accordingly. An individual was paroled to Isabella County at the time when MPRI was just getting up and running and the resources were pretty scarce but we did have a contract with Goodwill to provide transportation services, workforce development and a gentleman came out who had been convicted of murder. When he first came out the parole agent had recommended that he go Goodwill for potential services. With this particular felony it would be very difficult to get hired. He had only the basics, the clothes on his back, and few toiletries. He was a little doubtful that he would even get a fair shot. They did an intake for him and he went through three or four classes of employability services training. They worked with him on resume building, developing a cover letter and recorded mock interviewing which helped him hone his skills. He is a very well spoken and educated individual and from all this he was able to get a job at a fast food restaurant, where the manager was very happy with him. This was not really the job he was hoping for but prior to that he was quite depressed thinking no one would hire him. He took the initiative and went back to his parole agent and said that some of those he worked with were doing drugs on their breaks and he felt he should not be around that. They checked with Goodwill and they found an employer who needed someone with his skills but they needed to hone his interview skills a little further and beef up his resume. With this job he would be making as much as \$14 an hour, so he went through a couple more classes. He went to the interview and got the job, this changed his life – going from “rags to riches” so to speak. They are even talking about potential management and supervisory responsibilities. He is working out and is so much more confident and singing the praises of MPRI and wants to help motivate some of the others who are struggling to acquire employment. This all happened even before the MPRI was fully up and running; just an example of how this program can change an individual's life.

John Arnoldi said that from the Department of Corrections perspective this story is what this Initiative is really all about; to make a difference in people's lives and trying to make a difference in our budget. The way a difference is made in the budget is by turning people's lives around so they do not come back to prison; prior to this Initiative MDOC was receiving a return rate of about 50%. As more services are involved for offenders and more people are involved the more success we will have. Maybe the budget idea in Michigan can be changed from spending more money in incarcerating people than we do on higher education.

Mary Trucks asked that in future race and gender be shared with Boards.

John pointed out that there is new legislation that will require lifetime GPS for certain sex offenders.

Larry Emig asked that data be given concerning those who have been released in a particular county showing what happened to them – how many have re-offended (and why), how many are employed, how many have been transferred, etc.

Paul explained that this data tracking is being brought “in-house,” and by the end of the month we should have an updated report and will start tracking additional items.

June Program Reports

▶ Foundation for Behavioral Resources – Service Provider Highlighted

Felisha reported that all staff for FBR have attended WorkKeys training and once again FBR is at full staff. With the end of the Program Year a lot of time has been spent gearing up for the New Year and ramping up for new changes with the No Worker Left Behind. Over 150 customers have been exited from the WIA Program for the quarter ending June 30 this year. Felisha and Angie Albanesi have been selected as ambassadors for the up coming Michigan Works! Conference in September. Also Felisha and Kellie Allen have begun Career Development Facilitator (CDF) training.

Ty Streeter has been promoted to Job Developer for Mason and Lake Counties.

Lake County has seen an increase in the WIA orientations which in turn has resulted in an increase in enrollments.

Felisha explained that they recently had participants take the Retail Specialist training through West Shore Community College with the US Department of Labor Grant and seven participants completed the training.

Laurie Eitniewski in Newaygo County has completed her Human Services Degree and has been promoted to WIA Case Manager and Carla McCastle was hired to fill the Supportive Services Specialist vacancy.

▶ Enrollment/Expenditure Reports – Handout

For WIA June 30 is the end of the Fiscal Year, so these reports will have “Preliminary Final” which means they may yet be adjusted but the adjustments will be minor.

FBR enrollments were questioned, but Paul reiterated that the dollar amount is what is followed more closely. It may be there was “bad estimating” or it could be the expenses of the participants were higher than expected.

On the Composite for the welfare reform program West Central is at the state average.

▶ PY 2007 Third Quarter WIA Performance Standards for Adult Service Providers

Paul explained that this chart includes HRDI because the performance for WIA goes back to October 2006 before FBR was operating the program in Lake and Mason. The enrollments are kept separate because FBR is accountable for only those they enrolled. This report is for adult Service Providers only because West Central only has one Service Provider for the youth services. West Central as whole exceeded all Adult Performance Standards except one and that one was met. This chart shows how each Service Provider is performing.

MPRI/WDB/LEO Oversight Committee Recommendation – Handout Yellow (Action Item)

Jim Pinkerton explained that the Oversight Committee met earlier in the morning with both Goodwill Industries of Greater Grand Rapids and with Muskegon Community Health Project.

▶ Extension of Service Provider Contracts

The Oversight Committee recommended approval of a one-year extension of the Contracts for both Goodwill Industries and Muskegon Community Health Project.

Larry Emig moved to accept the recommendation of the Oversight Committee to extend the Contract for Goodwill Industries for one year; supported by Jim Frost; motion accepted by both the WDB and the LEO. 1:24 p.m.

Roger Bonga moved to accept the recommendation of the Oversight Committee to extend the Contract for the Muskegon Community Health Project for one year; supported by Robert Myers; motion accepted by both the WDB and the LEO. 1:25 p.m.

NOTE: Mary Trucks left at 1:25 p.m.

Plans/Modifications Summary Blue (Action Item)

1. Incentive Grant (07-00)

West Central earned \$31,428 in incentive funding for performance the previous year, the funding is retroactive to PY-07.

2. Capacity Building (08-00)

This is funding that supports the Michigan Works! Association, each Michigan Works! Agency receives \$24,000.

3. Incumbent Worker Plan (08-00)

This Plan was authorized previously. A preliminary allocation of \$72,194 has been received.

Michigan Works! West Central has released the application and \$100,000, in anticipation of this funding to get an earlier start on the application and funding process.

4. Service Center Operations (08-00)

This Plan was authorized at the last meeting. An allocation of \$60,000 has been received.

5. High Concentration of Youth (08-00)

Instructions have not been received, but this Plan will likely be due before the next meeting.

6. JET (08-03 PI 07-20 Change 2)

This Modification adds \$26,772 in funding to assist with participant transportation. The mileage rate for JET participants has been raised from 20 cents per mile to 40 cents per mile from July 1, 2008 to September 30, 2008. This funding is programmed for participant mileage, public transportation and the vans.

7. Comprehensive Plan (October 2008 to September 2009)

The MPRI Comprehensive Plan has been prepared with input from Service Providers, Department of Corrections (DOC) Parole and Facility staff and members of the Steering Team. Funding will remain the same at \$630,000 for each of the three years covered in the agreement with DOC. There have been some adjustments to the budget from the first year as we gained experience and knowledge. Funding in the Plan is available for: housing, workforce development, mental health services, transportation, healthcare, family support, adult education, supportive services, and in-reach activities at West Shoreline and in follow-up to these services.

DOC has also approved additional funding of \$12,000 for Employment Service to provide workshops at the Lake County Residential ReEntry Facility for the next Program Year, also starting October 1.

James Jensen moved to accept the Incentive Grant 07-00, the Capacity Building, Incumbent Worker 08-00, the Service Center Operations, High Concentration Youth, JET 08-03 and the

MPRI Comprehensive Plan as presented by Michael Wyman; supported by Sandy Crandall; motion accepted by both the WDB and the LEO. 1:35 p.m.

NOTE: Rick Fairley & Rebecca Stieg left at 1:35 p.m.

WDB Bylaws – Mailed Prior (*Action Item*)

Sheri explained that the Executive Committee met previously to go over the Bylaws and with help from Paul and West Central staff the language has been updated.

Bill Stanek moved to accept the WDB Bylaws as presented with the caveat that West Central staff check with an attorney on the language under 5.0 referencing the Open Meetings' Act; supported by Grant Fettig;

Discussion: Jim Jensen questioned the language of “Section 5.0.... Open Meetings.” Paul explained that an attorney did look these over and approved all the language. It was agreed that Paul would check with the attorney to be sure this is appropriate.

Motion accepted by both the WDB and the LEO. 1:41 p.m.

Commercial Credit Card Agreement for Participant Classroom Training Tuition (*Action Item*)

Paul explained that this has been a big issue of the US Department of Labor with the State of Michigan regarding the Trade Act; Michigan Works! Agencies are not showing expenditures as soon as they could or should. Some training institutions delay billing for accounts which are in the five and six digits. This delay keeps Michigan from receiving additional funds because the federal government will not release more money until half of the current allocation is spent. USDOL says tuition needs to show it was paid the moment a person is enrolled.

Two Michigan Works! Agencies are using a “comp card”; a credit card is issued to the participants with only enough loaded on it for tuition. This zeros out after each semester.

Janet Bloomfield said that Central Area is asking the Service Providers to take care of this.

He and Brigitte met with representatives from Chase Bank, they are one of the few in the state who have this service. The Traverse City MWA suggested one card for the Michigan Works! Agency with a line of credit up to \$250,000. The Michigan Works! Agency would then call each training institution and pay the tuition over the phone via the credit card.

This needs to be accomplished by October 1. Paul asked that the Boards approve West Central entering into an agreement with Chase Bank with the understanding that all the research is not done.

The “Comerica Card” has been very successful in the last six years, with millions having gone through that credit/debit system with only one small transaction slipping through and not getting caught which was for \$14.95.

Even though there are still issues to be sorted out, Paul thought it prudent to at least bring it before the Boards for approval.

Curtis Finch moved to authorize West Central staff to work with Chase Bank to establish a commercial credit card to pay tuition for higher education; supported by Bill Stanek.

Brigitte explained this will only be used for those who are in Trade Act. It can be rolled out to the other programs as the “bugs” are worked out.

This card would be encoded for tuition only and would be given to the student. Then as soon as it is swiped it becomes a bill; compare this to waiting sometimes two months before a bill to be issued from the educational institution. This shows the funds being spent and the need for funds in this area.

Discussion followed.

NOTE: John Arnoldi left at 1:45 p.m. – Chris Fridsma left at 1:52 p.m. – Jeff Roley left at 1:53 p.m.

It was decided to table the action until more information could be obtained.

Curtis Finch and Bill Stanek agreed to withdraw the motion. 2:03 p.m.

It was suggested that a representative from Chase Bank attend the next Joint Meeting and answer some of the questions the Board members have.

NOTE: Curtis Finch, Bill Stanek & Mark Warba left at 2:03 p.m.

Recognition of Mason County Manufacturer's Council (Action Item)

Paul explained that the Michigan Works! Conference is coming up in September and they have a variety of awards they give out. West Central submitted the Mason County Manufacturer's Council for an Excellence in Innovation Award and they were selected. The Ludington Daily News is part of this Council. Ed Palsrok, West Shore Community College, Dan Sleeman, Chairman of the Mason County Growth Alliance, and representatives from three of the nine companies – Scott Lakari, Metalworks; Vic Burwell, FloraCraft; Ken Gibbs, Brill Manufacturing – these five are able to go to Detroit to accept this award. Paul was able to arrange a free rental from Healy Chrysler Dealership in Ludington, as we recently purchased four vans from them. This is an innovative partnership between West Central (Incumbent Worker funds), West Shore, the Growth Alliance and the Manufacturer's Council.

Paul explained a plaque would be put together for each employer to recognize this partnership without “upstaging” the Michigan Works! Association.

Sandy Crandall moved to recognize the Mason County Manufacturer's Council for receiving the Michigan Works! Association Excellence in Innovation Award; supported by Brent Scott; motion accepted by both the WDB and the LEO; Jim Frost abstained. 2:05 p.m.

NOTE: Brigitte Reed left at 2:05 p.m.

GED Testing Site Approval

Michigan Works! West Central has been working on becoming a GED Testing site to fill a void in Mecosta and Osceola counties. Reed City Schools has worked very closely with us to make this a smooth, seamless transition. Last Friday West Central was approved to become a GED Testing site – the application had to go to Washington, D.C. for approval.

Hope Network has done a very good job with this, it's because they care that this is coming into place. They are working with Curt Finch, MOISD, to move the GED Prep site to the Career Center for late afternoon/evening and the Testing site would be the Reed City Service Center.

A signed Contract is still needed, so Reed City Public Schools will do the GED testing for one more month. By next month there should be clearly established test dates. As an official testing site West Central cannot just test “our” customers, we must be available to anyone who wants to take the GED Tests.

WorkKeys Update – Handout

Paul explained this chart was actually put together at the request of one of the two prospects who were looking at Ludington as a potential business site. To attain “gold” a person has to score a 5 in all three modules – Reading for Information, Applied Math and Locating Information. West Central average percentages are very close to the State of Michigan averages.

The Council of Labor & Economic Growth (CLEG) has approved Michigan becoming a WorkKeys state. West Central is “out front” in implementing WorkKeys and KeyTrain in the state among the MWAs.

Business Activity

- ▶ North Lake Correctional Facility, Baldwin – Resolutions of Support

Paul has a list of 34 Resolutions/Letters of Support for the North Lake Correctional Facility which will be sent to Greg Skeens. Things have slowed down a bit but construction continues without overtime.

- ▶ New Prospects and Possible Business Expansions

Paul explained there are two prospects for Mason County and we still seem to be in the running. There are also several current employers in the five county region where expansions are a possibility.

Lake County, Pere Marquette & Hamlin Township (Mason County) Transportation Mileage Requests

The Transportation millage for Lake County for .4 mil was renewed.

The Transportation millage for Pere Marquette Township which surrounds the City of Ludington was approved, but Hamlin Township which is north of Ludington was turned down.

Michigan Works! now has eight vans that can be moved wherever they're needed. There are five in Newaygo County, two in Mason and one in Lake – FBR has done an exceptional job in coordinating vans for work and job search. Newaygo County has 12 part-time drivers.

Michigan Works! Highway Signs

The Michigan Works! signs are going up throughout Michigan.

Resignation of Carolyn Newell

Carolyn Newell has been promoted; she supervised four of our five counties and has now moved to Mt. Pleasant.

Mailing Packet Items

Service Provider Single Page Reports

Revised West Central Workforce Development Board Bylaws

Updated Workforce Development Board member list

- ▶ Unemployment Ranking by County – June 2008

Next Meeting, October 1, 2008 – Mecosta County & December Meeting Mason County – 2nd

Wednesday

The next meeting is October 1, 2008 in Mecosta County and Sheri explained that the December meeting will be the SECOND Wednesday in Mason County to recognize the final meeting of Jim Pinkerton who has been part of the WDB/LEO for 18 years. He is truly retiring at the end of this year.

Round-the-Table

- » Crandall, Northern Lake Escape Lodge & Cabins – it has been a great summer with good numbers. The end result of activities has been positive.
- » Scott, City of Ludington – Ludington has a new skate park at the beach. Western Land to erect structure in Ludington.
- » Jensen, West Shore Community College, Trustee – West Shore’s numbers are up substantially and the new building will be opening up soon. Also free transportation is offered between the City of Ludington and the West Shore campus, this was started two years ago and it experienced a significant increase last year and expect it to increase again this year.
- » Aultman, Mosaic Potash – Mosaic continues its investment in potash; the company has committed to produce potash and will not change over exclusively to salt.
- » Fettig, Fettig Farms – In our five counties there are a lot of fairs and he would encourage everyone to attend these fairs and support the kids in 4-H who are learning responsibility.
- » Stuck, Gerber Products – Business has been solid with the business moving from Novartis to Nestle. Gerber Products will be celebrating its 80th Anniversary.
- » Pinkerton, Mason County Commissioner – only five County Commission meetings left.
- » Myers, Lake County Commissioner – Lake County Millage for 911 passed; Lake & Webber Townships are putting up a youth park north on US-37, there will be baseball fields and picnic area.
- » Christensen, Department of Human Services – DHS is at an all time high for services which will most likely continue until the economy turns around.
- » Goward, Ice Mountain – Ice Mountain is not seeing the growth as expected, lay-offs of 20 to 30 people were announced. Hopefully these lay-offs are temporary and will only last until spring; however, Nestle Water across the country has experienced growth.

- » Smith-Olson, Lake Osceola State Bank – The community banks are doing fine and should be able to weather this storm. LOSB celebrates 100 years on September 20, 2008. As far as the local economy the local fairs did very well and experienced a good increase in traffic. People are coming around but not spending as was hoped. There will be a fund raiser “Walk for Warmth” coming up.
- » Bonga, Magna Donnelly – A revamping of the identity of Magna Donnelly to change to Magna Mirrors and eliminating the name “Donnelly.” Newaygo is struggling with truck sales down but fuel doors are coming back. Newaygo has a world class painting system and it is likely to get some of the business back.
- » Gilbert, Mid-Michigan Community Action Agency – Services have been provided to 19,000 families – one program for utility assistance \$800,000 has been spent on the “working poor.” This funding has been cut to \$500,000. The Statewide Walk for Warmth is coming up in February.
- » Massy, Osceola Economic Alliance – The June visits to some smaller companies, with the largest having about 100 employees, were all very positive. The transportation costs are so high now that they are not losing contracts to China anymore, at least for the time being. Four small companies said they were doing well.

Other Business

Reserved for the Public

Adjournment

Meeting stands adjourned at 2:40 p.m.