

MICHIGAN WORKS! WEST CENTRAL
WDB/LEO JOINT MEETING
REGIONAL CENTER FOR AGRI-SCIENCE & CAREER ADVANCEMENT
FREMONT WORKFORCE SERVICE CENTER
WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 3, 2016

MINUTES

LEO Members Present

Andersen, Janet
Byl, Larry
Castonia, Gary
Emig, Larry
Howard, Linda
Sloan, Dan
Trapp, Chuck
Warba, Mark

LEO Members Absent

Ortwein, Chris

WDB Members Present

Booyinga, Voni
Eisler, David
Marek, Ron
Massy, Dan
Merriam, David
Nolan, Don
Pasley, Julia
Roberts, Carla
Romanowski, Cynthia
Smith-Olson, Debbie
Stark, Liz
Thompson, Sheri
Vipperman, Mark
Vyse-Staszak, Janet

WDB Members Absent

Andrus, Amy
Cherry, Ralph
Cooper, David
Ferguson, Tim
Griffin, Nancy
Hallenbeck, Chris
Hampton, Heidi
Kosheba, Dan
Splane, Rob
Trucks, Mary
Visser, William

Michigan Works! West Central Staff

Griffith, Paul Rasmussen, Michelle Shoemaker, Connie Wyman, Mike

Others Present

Albanesi, Angie – Hope Network
Daly, Jennifer – NC RESA
Knapp, Bill – Virtual Learning Solutions
Milton, Kirby – MI Virtual University
Shields, Angela – Virtual Learning Solutions

Stefanski, Ron – Cengage Learning
Spedowske, Gretchen – NCRESA
Sweigart, Lynda – Hope Network
Wyers, Kirk – NCRESA

Call to Order

WDB Chairperson, Deborah Smith-Olson brought the joint meeting of the Workforce Development Board/Local Elected Officials to order at 12:32 p.m. at the Regional Center for Agri-Science & Career Advancement – Fremont Workforce Service Center. A quorum is present of both the WDB and the LEO.

Welcome New WDB Member – David Merriam, Leprino Foods

Debbie Smith-Olson welcomed new Board member David Merriam.

Introduction of Guests

Guests were introduced and welcomed.

Consent Agenda (*Action Item*)

- ◇ Minutes of December 2, 2015 WDB/LEO Joint Meeting – Emailed Prior
- ◇ December Financial Report – Emailed Prior/Handout (Goldenrod)

Carla Roberts moved to accept the Consent Agenda as presented; supported by Sheri Thompson; motion accepted unanimously by both the WDB and the LEO. 12:37 p.m.

PY 2015 Proposed Revised Budget – Emailed Prior/Handout (*Action Item*)

Mark Warba stated that “The administrative costs are up about \$30,000 and the bottom line totals are up about \$150,000. Can that be caused at least in part that we have added Oceana County?”

Paul explained that Brigitte could explain this – this is Grant Management. Some of it could be the addition of Oceana County; Brigitte can write a response and explain this.

Dan Sloan moved to accept the PY 2015 Proposed Revised Budget as presented with the condition that Brigitte send an email with the explanation to Mark's question; supported by David Eisler; motion accepted by both the WDB and the LEO. 12:53 p.m.

Plans/Modifications Summary – Handout *Blue* (Action Item)

1. Adult/Dislocated Worker (Modification 02)

The Modification moves \$250,000 from Dislocated Worker to Adult. The move is based on higher requests for services from Adult workers, and fewer from Dislocated Workers. Under WIOA up to 100% of the funding for each of these programs can be moved to the other. An additional transfer is likely before the end of the Program Year in June.

2. Adult/Dislocated Worker/Youth (Modifications 03, BIS Change 6)

The budget modifications accept reallocated funding for Appropriation Year (AY) 2014 for Adult/Dislocated and Youth programs of \$49,870.43 and reallocated funding for AY 2015 of \$38,678.54. This is the portion of funding that carried in from Muskegon-Oceana that is coming to West Central.

3. Service Center Operations Plan (Modification 15-15 #1)

The Modification accepts \$1,469.89 of reallocated funding for Service Center Operations. This is the portion of funding that carried in from Muskegon-Oceana that is attributed to Oceana County by formula.

4. Employment Service (Modification 2)

The Modification accepts \$6,796.12 of reallocated funding. This is the portion of carry-in funding from Muskegon-Oceana that is attributed to Oceana County by formula.

5. RESEA (Modification 15-22 Change 2)

The Modification extends Re-employment Services & Eligibility Assessment (RESEA) funding until June 30, 2016 or when it is all used. Additional funding is not anticipated, and the RESEA function for persons likely to exhaust Unemployment Insurance replaces UI Profiling and is a mandatory component of the Employment Service.

6. Career Jump Start Initiative is a program that was started in 2013 by MEDC to help connect young people to in-demand education and career opportunities. It was transferred to WDA in 2015 and the 10 regions were awarded funding. The minimum of \$32,550 was awarded to Region 4, which had not previously participated. Funding is for a variety of activities designed to encourage enrollment of students in Michigan Advanced Technician Training Program (MAT2). A variety of activities, including talent tours, employer participation, and outreach to youth and companies are allowed. The West Central portion of the funding is \$5,609. West Central suggested using the funding to support West Shore Community College and the West Shoreline ESD in Talent Tours, Summer Job opportunities with area employers and a Senior Career day in the planning stages for Lake, Mason and Oceana Counties. A motion to accept this funding from West Michigan Works!, acting as the fiduciary for Region 4, is being requested.

Mark Vipperman moved to accept the WIOA Adult/Dislocated Worker Modification 02; the WIOA Adult/Dislocated Worker/Youth Modification 03; the Service Center Operations Plan Policy Issuance 15-15 Modification 01; the Employment Service Modification 02; the Re-employment Services & Eligibility Assessment (RESEA) Modification Policy Issuance 15-22 Change 2; and the Career Jump Start Initiative as presented by Michael Wyman; supported by Liz Stark; motion accepted by both the WDB and the LEO. 1:05 p.m.

Special Presentation – Career On-Line High School – Bill Knapp, Michigan Virtual University –
Handout

Paul explained that this offers a different approach – actually getting a diploma instead of a GED; obviously it would cost more. David Myers is sick so Paul turned the presentation over too Bill Knapp.

Kirby Milton has been involved with the Michigan Virtual University from the beginning. His first job was to bring on the first online program in the mid 1990s. In 1998 was concerned having a highly skilled workforce and brought in online learning. The funding was offered with the understanding that the program would have to become self-sustaining.

The Michigan Virtual School was created in 2000 and is still in existence. The Career Online High School is an innovative program designed to reengage out-of school youth by delivering competency based instruction; 100% online. This has been very successful with students earning an accredited high school diploma.

The average age for those who take part in the online learning is 27; with an average reading level of sixth to eighth grade.

Ron Stefanski stated the adults that take part in this online learning 100% have dropped out of school and some have dropped out two or more times. Cengage Learning has an outstanding track record of helping those who have dropped out with 72% of students are going on to community colleges.

Angela Shields this partnerships gives them an accredited high school diploma and will transfer credits to accelerate completion; there is no standardized testing requirement. The average age of this worker is 27 years old. The object is to re-engage these students. There is no failure if there is an area they need to work on they simply redo it. It builds the confidence they need. The councilor also act as an instructor.

Ron reenforced the fact that it is not recommended to drop GED but this is another option. Those who want the diploma is a desire for some. When this was started with 200 scholarships.

Students are assigned an academic coach who stays with them the entire journey. Over 1,800+ graduate the program.

NOTE: David Eisler and Janet Anderson left at 1:32 p.m.

Deb said she would like reactions versus GED to online diploma – this will be emailed to sent on to the Board members.

Discussion was held if this is something the Boards thought West Central should pursue. Deb said more information is needed on what is being spent on GED and how this would increase expenditures and the interest that is out there.

NOTE: Bill Knapp, Kirby Milton, Angela Shields and Ron Stefanski left at 1:54 p.m.

December Program Reports – Handout

◇ Enrollment/Expenditures Reports

The WIOA Adult/Dislocated Worker/Youth numbers for Hope Network are on target; PATH is just three months into the Program Year and is doing well also. NCRESA Employment Services is on target as well.

Prisoner ReEntry Report – Handout

Since the Program Year started 243 unduplicated participants have been served.

Service Provider Bidding Process – Handouts

The Bidding Process for all West Central programs is underway. Letters of Intent to bid are due this week. This is a very precise process and it is important that all the “i’s are dotted” and all the “t’s crossed” allowing that the process is not contaminated. Board member names are given to prospective bidders to assure no one on the WDB/LEO Boards are not contacted about the process. This is for the programs beginning July 1, 2016.

A copy of the Competitive Bidding Process was provided to the Boards.

For this bid process all six counties have to be included in the bid – funds are not available this time to separate the counties.

Mike explained that if a Board member has a monetary affiliation with any of the bidders this should be reported. If this is the case that Board member will not be on the Review Committee and when the vote is cast that Board member would abstain.

Outreach Activities

◇ MOCC Career Expo February 23, 2016

West Central is hosting a table at the upcoming Mecosta Osceola Career Center Expo on February 23, 2016. This is a great way to introduce the Career Center students to potential opportunities through Michigan Works! West Central.

◇ Job Survivor at NCRESA January 18, 2016

Michelle participated in NCRESA’s “Job Survivor” last week. It is a lot like the TV show “Survivor”; students were put into “tribes” like “gotgetajobba” and “wantalottamoney.” Then each tribe would complete certain tasks. Michelle was involved in judging first appearances, and interviews. The students did a tremendous job, as young as they are she was very

impressed. Some of those students were on top of their game, it was fun and she was very happy to be involved.

◇ Backpack to Briefcase Event at Ferris State University February 1, 2016

This week Michelle participated in speed interviewing at Ferris State University's Backpack to Briefcase Event, which was put on by the Center for Leadership, Activities and Career Services. She met with students who wanted to prepare for the career fair the University is sponsoring Thursday the 4th. This was a phenomenal group of students! Many of them were athletes who not only play a sport, but accomplish their studies, work a part time job, or two, or even three! It was encouraging to see their enthusiasm for the future and what they want to do upon graduation.

Business Activity – Handouts

◇ Gigabit Community

Did you know Mecosta County is a Gigabit Community?

This is a fiber-based internet which gives users the fastest broadband speed available. This is on the wish list for many who use their broadband connection for movie streaming a online gaming, as well as, music streaming, photo uploads, video communication, smart devices like Smart TVs or home security networks, and more.

Gigabit is one gigabit-per-second service, or about 100 times faster than the average fixed high-speed Internet connection.

With a population of just over 10,000 people occupying Big Rapids and nearly 43,000 in surrounding Mecosta County, the region is tremendously small compared to larger fiber cities like Atlanta with a population of almost 448,000 and 5.5 million in the surrounding

metropolitan area. Though too small to attract the attention of national fiber providers, local ISPs are taking up the challenge to provide Gigabit Internet, one of which is Casair.

Casair has done tremendous work in the area to provide broadband service to our rural communities and is now offering fiber internet.

The fiber network started to become available in May 2015 and is available for commercial and residential use. The availability of Gigabit Internet in Mecosta County opens many new doors for commercial reinvestment, residential expansion, educational growth, and more.

Commuters from this area to larger cities like Grand Rapids, Saginaw, Mt. Pleasant, or Lansing will have the network capabilities they need to work from home. Technology and manufacturing businesses will be able to ramp up development and production through use of computer-aided design and online financial and organizational tools. Residents looking to connect to unparalleled Internet for work or entertainment will turn their attention to place like Mecosta County. Schools will be able to support laptops and tablets to supplement lectures. Local colleges can use the extraordinary speed to attract more applicants, particularly those interested in STEM fields.

Last month Michelle, Jennifer Heinzman, Tom Stephenson and several internet providers met with the Michigan Economic Development Corporation to discuss ways to market and promote these Gigabit communities, as the MEDC works in tandem with economic development and assists site selectors, etc. The MEDC is willing to help push out these Gigabit communities in whatever way they can by simply promoting what the local areas do. The Mecosta County Chamber is leading the way in this effort and will most likely serve as a model for other areas/Gigabit communities that are developed across the state.

◇ Broadband Expansion to Evart

At a meeting Michelle had with Tom Stephenson from Connect Michigan and Todd Wells with Casair, they discussed how Mecosta County can promote being a Gigabit community. This brought to mind Eart in Osceola County, a Rising Tide community, and bringing fiber internet to Eart could be a huge draw to businesses and community members alike. Efforts are now underway to see if this fiber Gigabit internet service can be brought to Eart. A survey is being sent to all the residents of the City of Eart in the next water bill, and we will see what the response is.

◇ Show Me the Money Day February 4, 2016

Al Weinberg, DDA Director in Eart, received a small grant from the Community Economic Development Association of Michigan to put on an event called Show Me the Money Day. This event is happening in 25 communities across the state during the months of January and February, as a kickoff to tax season.

The goal of the event is to connect Eart residents with resources to reach greater financial stability at tax time by giving them access to:

- ✓ Financial products and services
- ✓ Employment opportunities
- ✓ Free tax assistance
- ✓ Education and training opportunities
- ✓ Financial classes, etc.

This event is being coordinated with the Feeding America food truck that will be at the Eart Middle School on February 4th – the public, in addition to those receiving food at the food truck, are invited to participate.

There will be free food, prizes, a chance to win money (as in, one of those cash booths that blow money all around) and most importantly people will leave with the knowledge of where they can find cash where they didn't think to look!

◇ Website Development Update

Development on the website is moving along! Flightpath Creative out of Traverse City was selected to redesign our Website and we have already received some initial templates and designs. This will bring our web presence into the 21st Century! Hopefully by the next Board meeting West Central should have a brand new web site.

◇ Business Services Specialist

Out of 17 applications received, three phone interviews were done; one candidate is coming to Big Rapids on Friday and one on Monday for an in-person interview with Michelle and Paul.

◇ Project Rising Tide Update

Project Rising Tide is moving along. This week an action strategy was compiled for the City of Ewart. The mission is to create a sustainable path toward economic stability and growth in the City of Ewart. The shared vision of what will be accomplished over the next 6-12 months, includes assisting the city with becoming a redevelopment ready community; development of a housing strategy; developing a strategic plan for workforce development; and in particular, providing more opportunities in the City of Ewart for residents such as life skills training, programming with local high school students, etc., and making the City's website even more robust with information to better market the area and all it has to offer.

◇ Career Jump Start Grant & Partnership with West Shore Community College

Until recently this initiative was handled by the state with a Career Jump Start liaison to work within each Prosperity Region to introduce middle and high schoolers to in-demand careers

and opportunities in the local business communities. Now, that responsibility has been funneled to area agencies, like West Central to handle. Here in Region 4a a small amount of funds were received for youth outreach to connect youth to area employers via talent tours, career and internship fairs, etc. Because West Central was already partnering with West Shore Community College on a series of youth outreach events, this timing was perfect. The outreach with West Shore includes talent tours, workshops to prepare for life after high school and other work readiness topics, and a late spring career and internship fair. Our partnership with West Shore and the Jump Start Grant West Central will be able to assist in these endeavors, and other activities in our area.

NOTE: Cynthia Romanowski left at 2:23 p.m.

PY 2016 Skilled Trades Training Fund (STTF) – Handout

At the last Board meeting, two companies in Mason County were on the waiting list for funding; they received offers from WDA for half of their requested amount. Both companies declined the offer, as both companies were concerned they would start the training and not have the funding to complete it.

West Central has three companies that have already completed their training, so now follow-up documentation begins, as well as, success story writing, and getting the companies reimbursed with STTF funds.

West Central Center Partners – Handout

Paul explained that the partners collocating at the Michigan Works! Workforce Service Centers has increased and continues to be beneficial to those visiting our Centers.

December Unemployment Chart – Handout

Newaygo's ranking is again lower than the State and the State is lower than the National ranking.

Mecosta and Newaygo are both below the National rate.

Michigan Works! Return on Investments (ROI) – Handout

Paul explained that this is very impressive and the bottom line – statewide the Michigan Works!

Agencies touch one in every ten citizens in 1.6 million visits.

Talent District Career Council (TDCC) (Action Item)

Michael explained that this item was inadvertently been left off the agenda but it was necessary to have a vote prior to our April meeting. This is to approve whomever the TDCC appoints. This

replaces the Educational Advisory Group (EAG). Michelle Rasmussen is already on this Board.

West Central encouraged Lisa Stich from West Shore Community College and Gretchen Spedowski from Newaygo County Regional Educational Service Agency to represent West Central.

Sheri Thompson moved that the WDB/LEO approve these nominees for appointment to the Talent District Career Council (TDCC); supported by Gary Castonia; motion accepted by both the WDB and the LEO. 2:39 p.m.

LEO Chair/Vice Chair Election Results

Larry Emig reported that he remains to be the LEO Chair and Mark Warba remains Vice Chair.

Congratulations to both.

Mike Wyman's Retirement Celebration – February 26, 2016

Michael Wyman is retiring the end of February 2016. An Open House will be held in his honor Friday, February 26th at the Big Rapids Workforce Service Center from 3:00 to 6:00 p.m. An invitation is extended to all Board members and friends. Michael has been working at West Central since 1978 – 38 years! He will be missed.

Mike told a story about when NCRESA partnered with Habitat for Humanity. A licensed builder was hired with an instructor and West Central was able to get them recognized as a school allowing them to pay on a weekly basis. \$125 a week this helped to have the instructor available.

Mike went on site to see how the kids were doing. There were about four youth working with an adult. They were building working on the basement and the man supervising explained what they had to do to get the basement done. Mike asked if he was the instructor? He answered “No I'm on welfare and learning to build a house.” Mike followed up and this man was able to get a job at a lumber company because he knew how to build a house. This is what Michigan Works! is all about.

Debbie said this is one way that shows how Mike is able to stay within the guidelines but still make it work for our counties.

Next Meeting April 6, 2016 – Idlewild Cultural & Historic Center

The next WDB/LEO Joint meeting is Wednesday, April 6, 2016 at the Idlewild Cultural & Historic Center in Idlewild.

Round-the-Table

- » Sloan, Dan, Lake County Commissioner – “we still like Hope Network in Lake County and hope to be on the search committee, as well as Commissioner Janet Andersen from Mason County, not that it will affect my view.”
- » Booyinga, Voni, WIOA State Coordinator, WDA – Michael is very creative with his thought process and is able to step back and come up with new and good solutions and yet stay within the guidelines. Thank you Mike for your dedication and Lisa and Tammy extend their best to you.
- » Rasmussen, Michelle, Business Services Director, Michigan Works! – Festival of the Arts is coming up.
- » Smith-Olson, Debbie, Lake Osceola State Bank – Lake County snowmobile trail groomers are active and keeping the base good and trails open for snowmobilers.

Other Business

Reserved for the Public

Adjournment

Meeting stands adjourned at 2:56 p.m.