GWDB Operations Committee Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, March 13, 2018 - 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 Noon

Mississippi Conference Room - Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED)

332 Minnesota Street -Suite E200 - Saint Paul, Minnesota 55101

# Members Present

* Shirley Barnes
* Luann Bartley (conference call)
* Charlene Briner
* Steve Ditschler
* Anne Kilzer
* Scott Parker
* Roy Smith (conference call)
* Jeremy Hanson Willis

**Excused:** Mayor Elizabeth Kautz

**Guests**

**DEED**

* Cameron Macht, Regional Analyst Supervisor, LMI
* May Thao-Schunk, Director, Employment and Training

**Citizen**

* Elizabeth Morman

**Staff**

* Connie Ireland
* Julie Kahn
* Kathryn Pollard
* Rick Roy
* Lisa Snyder

# Call to Order and Introductions

Shirley Barnes, Vice-Chair, Operations Committee is the Chair Pro Tem for this meeting. The Chair Mayor Elizabeth Kautz, has an excused absence. Chair Barnes called the meeting to order at 10:01 am. Attendees in the room and on the conference call introduced themselves.

**February Meeting Minutes Approved**

At 10:13 am a quorum was verified. Scott Parker made a motion to approve the February meeting minutes. Charlene Briner made the second and the motion passed. Steve Ditschler abstained because he had an excused absence from the February meeting.

**Announcements**

* **WIOA Modification Public Comment Period Extended to March 23 and Submission Deadline Extended to April 2**

As background, Connie Ireland recapped that in late January, all states received notice from US DOL that the two-year WIOA state plan modification deadline is March 15. Given this short notice to Minnesota and all states, the thirty day public comment period was opened and a series of plan modification webinars were scheduled and implemented. The GWDB quarterly meeting aligned with the board’s state plan oversight responsibilities to make a recommendation to the Governor to meet US DOL’s deadline. As stated at the quarterly meeting, the GWDB Executive Committee has the authority to approve and submit the recommendation to the Governor about the submission of the plan modification to US DOL.

New information! Minnesota just received a plan modification submission extension from US DOL. The public comment period has been extended to March 23rd with a new state plan modification submission date to US DOL of April 2, 2018. In addition to feedback and discussions during last week’s GWDB meeting, the public has submitted written comments primarily in support of the addition of gender equity to the plan, and feedback about gender equity in industry sectors. Approximately 35 people attended the webinars. All GWDB members received email notification, and Connie will resend the announcement regarding the extension of the public comment period and new submission to US DOL deadline. The notification from DEED contains links to the WIOA website and the submission of public comment feedback.

Rick Roy stated that about 20 email comments have been submitted to date with the majority about gender equity. Other topics submitted by the public are about prevailing wage, disability strategies, service delivery equity policies, recommendations for broader and more inclusive workforce development engagement specifically for ethnic and racial communities and individuals with barriers, program alignment implementation, and that DEED LMI collect, report and act on disaggregated LMI data about Asian Minnesotans.

**Updates / Discussion**

* + **Gender data discussion.** Connie Irelandstated that Cameron Macht, DEED’s LMI Regional Analyst Supervisor was invited to today’s meeting to provide SME about the data that was included in last week’s quarterly board meeting packet.This information was in your meeting packet for this meeting. Chair Shirley Barnes welcomed and introduced Cameron.

The committee listed topics that they wanted to discuss and that more information is probably needed. Cameron stated that while a lot of data is available, some data, particularly for Greater Minnesota, is not available or has numbers insufficient for accurate analysis and informed decision making. The committee’s and guest input for data included - Do we know about individuals with numerous part-time jobs and the connection to poverty? Do we have data on the churn in the labor market – the talent pipeline train, retrain, and transition to a new job or role and tenue in the sector? Do we know about the quality of jobs – specifically, benefits? Questions about the “gig economy” and what knowledge do we have about 1099 workers? Answers to these questions are not in the data that Cameron has today; he will follow up with Connie. Cameron recommended that we also engage Ben Winchester from the U of M Extension. He is a research fellow with expertise to answer some of these questions. Connie to follow up.

Cameron reviewed the data about Minnesota’s Labor Force Characteristics. The Minnesota economy is strong with over 100 months of expansion. In 2017, the state has more than 3 million workers, with high labor force participation rates that are the second highest in the USA. The state has a low unemployment rate; however, the UI rate is no indicator of the quality of jobs open or currently held in the state. There is a tight labor market in the state with 123,000 job vacancies, 110,000 unemployed job seekers. The state has changed from gaining 40,000+ workers annually to adding 11,350 workers per year. He reviewed the Labor Force Characteristics and Targeted Industries. The data indicates that most of the targeted industries are dominated by one gender – male = manufacturing, construction, natural resources and female = health care and social assistance and that some industries are not very diverse. Health care is the most diverse and the lease are construction and natural resources. He also shares a chart of gender dominated occupations with the imbalanced occupations tending to fall into industries that are dominated by one gender – male = manufacturing, construction and transportation and female=health care and social assistance and educational services. The committee asked for data that further breaks down the target industries into occupational subsectors with faster growth. A question was asked about Agriculture data and Cameron responded that yes, there are data sets available from USDA. Cameron stated that the Occupations in Demand (OID) lists are updated annually and that OID is “dynamic” Cameron can get the gender data for the occupations in the state’s plan’s key industries. Jeremy Hanson Willis asked about regional data by the industry sectors they have identified as a priority. Cameron stated that he has not analyzed regional data by industry, but yes, that can be done. Jeremy Hanson Willis stated that the gender needs to be part of the analysis in building regional sector partnerships.

The data discussion expanded to Jeremy Hanson Willis stating that the two goals in the state plan inter-relate to each other – they are not separate. They can apply to industry sector work – and where do the disparities break down? Scott Parker spoke about the significant challenges to find and then interest women about the financial benefits and professional earn and learn opportunities that the trade offer. Shirley Barnes spoke about the challenges to attract men to many of the jobs in the long-term health care sector. Both spoke about the challenge many businesses across the state encounter to fulfill the workforce terms of a contract. The committee acknowledged the recruitment, hiring, training and retention challenges faced by the state’s employers so more understanding of the data is needed. The in-depth work can be done by the GWDB’s standing committees. This work must lead to actionable recommendations to the Operations Committee and the full GWDB. More data analysis will help to inform the analysis and subsequent informed recommendations.

Chair Shirley Barnes read the UNICEF definition of gender equality and returned the discussion to the gender equity data and state plan inclusion. *Gender Equity: is the process of being fair to men and women, boys and girls and is about equality of outcomes and results. Gender equity may involve the use of temporary special measures to compensate for historical or systemic bias or discrimination. It refers to differential treatment that is fair and positively addresses a bias or disadvantage that is due to gender roles or norms or differences between the sexes. It is a means to ensure that women and men, girls and boys have an equal chance not only at the starting point but also when reaching the finishing line. It is about the fair and just treatment of both sexes that takes into account the different needs of the men and women, cultural barriers and (past) discrimination of the specific group.*

Connie stated that at last week’s quarterly meeting it was stated that this would be a topic at the June board meeting. Members recall that; however, numerous members stated that this needs to be addressed now. Chair Shirley Barnes recognized and thanked Cameron for putting the data together on short notice, for attending today’s meeting and for the work he will continue to do to help the GWDB and its committees make informed decisions.

**Action Items**

* + **Special meetings** – Operations Committee and GWDB- The Operations Committee discussed the need for a special meeting of this committee by conference call with an in-person location at DEED subsequent to the close of the public comment period. Conflicts with members attending the National Association of Workforce Boards Forum, Washington D.C., March 24-27 were noted. Connie will work out the details and watch for an email from Julie Kahn with the calendar invitation. The purpose of the meeting will be to review the plan modification changes and make a recommendation to approve those changes.

Connie Ireland stated that after the Operations Committee special meeting, currently there currently Executive Committee meeting scheduled to complete the next step in the approval process and to make a recommendation to the Governor; however, in addition to a special meeting of the Operations Committee, replicating what was done in 2016, there will now be a special meeting of the GWDB with one item on the agenda, the approval of the modifications to Minnesota’s WIOA Combined State Plan. Watch for a meeting notice on the GWDB Special Meeting. It will be held during the last week of March.

**Add training to State Plan Goal #1 – Motion, Discussion, and Vote**

Steve Ditschler made a motion, and Steve Parker made the second to add the word “training” to the first goal so it is revised to:” **To reduce educational, training and employment disparities based on race or disability to provide greater opportunity for all Minnesotans.”** The Chair called for a vote, and it was unanimous and the members wanted the minutes to make note of that vote.

**State Plan Modification Discussion – Gender equity**

Members returned to the earlier discussion about gender equity inclusion in the state plan modification. The discussion was about how best to have focus and intentionality around gender equity in sectors, the significance of continued importance of a focus on priority on race and disability disparities and how the two goals of the state plan work together and overlap through an equity lens for industry sectors. Regional sector strategies and talent pipelines strengthen regional economies because employers are better able to fill job in demand and collectively address barriers race and disability barriers. Several members wanted wage disparities, especially for women and women of color part of the gender equity concerns including the wage disparities in a number of the key sectors’ occupations in demand. Wage disparities, bias and discrimination are all barriers and prevent getting jobs in many careers. These barriers amplify the disparities even more. The St. Cloud area’s manufactures sector partnership was noted as a best practice in taking a broader system approach that is culturally sensitive and leads to positive outcomes. Jeremy Hanson Willis stated that we could come forward with specific recommendations on what, if anything, goes in the plan and then have a bigger conversation at the June quarterly meeting of the GWDB and maybe make more changes then.

Questions about where to include this in the state plan and will the Governor accept the GWDB’s recommendations? Jeremy Hanson Willis stated that we can be specific and there is more time to change the plan whenever we want to and by June to address gender at some level.

Chair Shirley Barnes summarized the discussions that there is a desire to include gender in the plan and we will charge staff with where it goes and what it will look like. Jeremy Hanson Willis stated the Operations Committee does not have to make a recommendation today but it will be required of the full board to make a recommendation. Committee members continued the discussion and stated the gender addition to the plan must be meaningful and do not just put it in the plan to put it in the plan. Chair Shirley Barnes stated that these details will be covered in the special meeting conference call.

Steve Parker made a motion, with a second from Charlene Briner to ask staff to get back to the Operations Committee on the inclusion of gender in the state plan modification.

The Chair called for discussion on the motion. Steve Ditschler stated that deferring this decision to the June board meeting is not necessary and the recommendation to include gender needs to be made today. Jeremy Hanson Willis asked that it is noted in the minutes that the committee had a robust and engaging discussion with recommendations and ideas shared, talked through, all viewpoints were heard, and that all see the discussion as important, and a variety of potential recommendations were explored. Charlene Briner agreed and said meaningful discussions provide context and rationale for critical decisions. The opportunity to reflect after the meeting was also noted by members and they supported the engagement, pride in their jobs and career pathway, and incredible passion from all the labor representatives in attendance last week.

The motion was restated for the clerk, the question called and a vote taken. The motion unanimously passed. Connie Ireland will follow up with Chair Elizabeth Kautz on her schedule for the Operations Committee’s special meeting following the close of the public comment period for the state plan modification.

Chair Shirley Barnes thanked the members of the committee for a thoughtful, meaningful and respectful discussion today, Cameron Macht for his attendance at the meeting and materials to aid the committee in its work today, and Connie Ireland and the GWDB staff.

* **Dashboard Update**
  + Connie Ireland stated that work on the Regional Dashboard continues with work on sector partnership gender gaps, race and disability, and how to incorporate this into the employer survey.
* **Infrastructure Funding Agreement Policy –** At the February meeting, Chair Elizabeth Kautz asked Rick Roy to prepare a high level summary of this 14 page proposed policy. Connie Ireland met with Mayor Kautz and shared the two-page summary that Rick prepared and that is in your meeting packet. Rick Roy stated that the bullet points on the first page and the WIOA Titles’ new additions, and the reverse side is how the funding works. Minnesota. He directed committee members to review the last section titled “The State Funding Mechanism” because it defines the resolution methodology in the event of an impasse at the local or state level after consultation with the GWDB. If this were to happen, it will come before this committee. There are limits for each WIOA Title as to their level of contribution. US DOL is on site at DEED and other areas this week, and Rick asked about the IFA policy. From US DOL he gained insight on changes to this that we need to make. Minnesota must have its own methodology. Anne Kilzer asked if this document can be shared with partners – yes, but there will be a few changes based on US DOL’s response to Rick’s questions. The IFA is new with WIOA.
* **Subsequent Designation Policy –** Since US DOL is on-site this week, Rick Roy also asked about this WIOA required policy and learned that designation does not include financial sanctions. Performance measure attainment and fiscal sanctions are two separate items. That means that if a local area falls short of its performance outcomes for two consecutive program years, there is no fiscal penalty. The policy will be updated based on this US DOL information and then come back to the Operations Committee.
* **GWDB Board Training and Development Conference**
  + The survey results have been tallied and the responses are positive. The materials will be posted online. There will be a 20 minute training module prior to each quarterly GWDB meeting and the GWDB will work with MWCA for future non-metro in-person trainings for state and local workforce development board members.
* **GWDB Governance** 
  + Connie Ireland reported a vacancy, Bob Evans retired and the replacement process will begin. The GWDB does not have a representative from southeastern Minnesota as well as from the financial services sector and has sought a legal review of statue regarding the library representative.
* **April Meeting Topics** 
  + Career Pathways Sector Strategies policy – Connie Ireland
* **Partnerships**

**MWCA** – Anne Kilzer

* 30 people representing 7 local workforce development boards will be attending the upcoming National Association of Workforce Boards’ (NAWB) annual forum in Washington D. C. Congress is not in session, but they will be meeting with staff and form Rep. John Klein staffer Rosemary Lahasky who is now the US DOL ETA Deputy Assistant Secretary.
* A focus this year is training materials and approaches to support their members as they too experience staff turnover and retirements at all levels.
* **Meeting Adjournment** – Members offered closing remarks about the meeting today that included Charlene Briner thanking the members for their patience and being hear conversations, Chair Shirley Barnes said that the committee today took a team approach today, Jeremy Hanson Willis spoke about the thoughtful conversations we are having to get to our goals, and Scott Parker said that today’s meeting was important as the committee works to make its recommendation to the full board. The meeting was then adjourned by consensus at 11:57 pm.