**Governor’s Workforce Development Board - Minutes**

Wednesday, September 9, 2020 - 10:00 to 11:30 a.m.

Virtual Meeting via Microsoft Teams

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **GWDB Members or Designees Present**  Carol Anderson  Ron Anderson  Shirley Barnes  Laura Beeth, Chair  Josh Berg  Robert Blake  Dr. Vance Boelter  Dr. Jeffery Boyd  JD Burton  Dave Debevec  Steve Ditschler  Jason Duininck  Mary Ferguson  John Fisher (for Dee Torgerson, DEED VRS)  Les Fujitake  Rep. Barb Haley  Kelly Hansen  Samuel Heimlich  Nerita Hughes  Abdiwadi Husen  Mayor Elizabeth Kautz  Jessica Looman  Katie Lundmark  Bill McCarthy  Heather McGannon, DLI  Priya Morioka  Sen. Carla Nelson  Loren Nelson  Eric Nesheim  Dr. Dennis Olson  Scott Parker  Catherine Penkert  Jovon Perry  Teresa Pivec, MMB  Ekta Prakash  Dr. Paul Pribbenow  Tony Ramunno  Ed Reynoso  Ali Rodway  Laura Sayles  Roy Smith  Jerri Sweeney  Jennifer Theisen | **Speakers**  Commissioner Steve Grove, DEED  Cameron Macht, Labor Market Information Office, DEED  **Guests Present**  Commissioner Randy Maluchnik, Carver County  **DEED Staff Present**  Ray Douha, Director of Veterans Services  Lorrie Janatopoulos, CareerForce Director  Liz Jennings, Employer Engagement Specialist  Mike Lang, Director, Job Seeker Services  Maureen Ramirez, Director, Office of Economic Opportunity  **GWDB Staff**  Ben Baglio, Director  Kay Kammen, Sr. Policy Analyst |

**Call to Order and Welcome**

The meeting was called to order at 10:01 a.m. by Governor’s Workforce Development Board Chair Laura Beeth. GWDB Director Ben Baglio gave a brief orientation on Microsoft Teams and explained roll call would not be taken as members’ names are captured electronically by the application. Members were encouraged to use the chat feature throughout the meeting. The link to a recording of the meeting will be sent via e-mail to all members.

**GWDB Business**

***Action Item:*** *Approval of Chair Report*

Roy Smith made a motion to approve the Chair’s Report for December 2019-March 2020***.*** Shirley Barnes seconded the motion and the report was unanimously approved.

***Action Item****: Approval of Minutes March 4, 2020 Meeting*

Mayor Elizabeth Kautz made a motion to approve the minutes of the GWDB meeting on March 4, 2020. Bill McCarthy seconded the motion. The minutes were approved.

**Labor Market Presentation: COVID-19 Impacts on the Workforce**

Cameron Macht, Acting Assistant Director of DEED’s Labor Market Information (LMI) Office, gave an overview on how Minnesota’s workforce has been impacted by the COVID-19 global pandemic. He explained that coronavirus and its associated economic challenges resulted in an all-time record high unemployment rate of 9.9 percent in May 2020. Previous high rates occurred in 1983 and 2010. These challenges, he said, are expected to continue for months, perhaps years. The highest number of Unemployment Insurance (UI) applications has come from the Twin Cities Metro Area and Northeast Minnesota. In the past month, every region of the state has experienced declines in UI claims. In July, 35,000 Minnesotans dropped out of the labor market due to retirement, discouragement, and safety concerns. LMI analysts will pay close attention to this metric and examine trends going forward. LMI data tools are continually in development to respond to media inquiries and business requests. Certain industries have been impacted harder and on a different timeline than others. Some residents are leaving the state to search for employment elsewhere while gaps among women, young people and the non-white workforce are widening, rather than tightening. A Question & Answer session following Cameron’s presentation.

**GWDB Director Updates**

Ben Baglio gave a status report on the [One Minnesota State Combined Plan](https://mn.gov/deed/assets/wioa-state-plan_tcm1045-443536.pdf), submitted and approved by the U.S. Department of Labor. He also reported on the Coursera initiative, which was made possible by $250,000 in federal funding and, to date, more than 10,000 Minnesotans are utilizing it. Coursera is a leading online learning platform, and any Minnesotan can request access for access by filling out the short request form at [www.CareerForceMN.com/Coursera](http://www.CareerForceMN.com/Coursera). Once their account is activated, can choose from over 4,800 online courses and guided learning projects to enroll in and earn certificates for completing courses at no cost. The initiative provides for this no-cost access for Minnesotans through March 31, 2021, while the deadline to fill out the request form and then sign up for DEED’s program within Coursera is December 31, 2020.

**GWDB Member Survey**

A survey of GWDB membership is in development and members are encouraged to respond with their feedback in order to provide input on how businesses and organizations have had to adjust since COVID-19, where workforce board members see the greatest needs going forward, as well as how the GWDB can be improved moving forward so that all members are able to be involved and that the utility of the board for the state’s public workforce development system can be maximized. In order to provide more opportunities for input across the workforce system, particularly from businesses, labor and community organizations, education and training providers, and other partners from outside state government, the survey will also be sent out to local workforce board members through the Minnesota Association of Workforce Boards (MAWB).

**DEED Leadership Updates**

DEED Commissioner Steve Grove expressed his thanks for the GWDB’s leadership in submitting the State Plan to USDOL and for the Board’s work during this unprecedented time. He complimented the Minnesota business and civic communities and shared his views on mounting a state response to overcome COVID-19 challenges. He said he is hopeful that federal funding and bonding allocations will provide some relief and he commented on the work of UI at DEED as well as efforts that the agency has worked on to try and bring relief to small businesses. He sees this crisis also as a time of opportunity; a time to turn to re-skilling, technology, and innovation in order to prepare the current workforce but also better position our state for the future. Challenges continue to exist surrounding the social safety net and how safe or ready some feel to return to work, as well as efforts to address educational and economic disparities that have seen an increased need since the pandemic has disproportionately impacted many of these same communities. He concluded by saying that the workforce development system will be key to our economic recovery, and that to do this most effectively will require the evaluation of traditional brick-and-mortar infrastructure, digital platforms, telework, and the role of government in workforce development as we aim to serve businesses and job seekers.

Chair Beeth thanked Commissioner Grove for his comments. She also thanked Board members for working harder than ever on behalf of the workers of Minnesota.

**CareerForce Update**

CareerForce Director Lorrie Janatopoulos and Mike Lang, Director of Job Seeker Services, discussed the shifting landscape within the CareerForce system during this time of uncertainty. With locations closed to mitigate the spread of coronavirus, outreach has shifted to virtual sessions and hours by appointment. This development has made it more difficult to reach those who are most challenged by job loss. This has led to efforts such as the “Jobs in Demand” campaign and virtual job fairs, including a job fair for veterans scheduled for Nov. 10, as well as other new resources available on CareerForceMN.com.

**Adjournment**

Steve Ditschler made a motion to adjourn. Vance Boulter seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 11:37 a.m.

*The next meeting of the Full Board will be held virtually via Zoom on* ***Wednesday, December 9, 2020 from 10:00 to 12:00 Noon. It will be a Joint Meeting with the Minnesota Association of Workforce Boards.***