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

Wednesday, December 9, 2020 - 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 Noon

Videoconference via Microsoft Teams

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| **GWDB Members/Delegates** | **MAWB Members Present** | **Speakers** |
| Sr. Vice Chancellor Ron Anderson, Minnesota State  Shirley Barnes  Kristin Batson, MMB  Laura Beeth, Chair  Josh Berg  Robert Blake  Dr. Vance Boelter  Dr. Jeffery Boyd  Steve Ditschler  David Dively  Jason Duininck  Mary Ferguson  Jeanna Fortney  Les Fujitake  Lee George  Commissioner Steve Grove, DEED  Rep. Barb Haley  Kelly Hansen  Samuel Heimlich  Sen. John Hoffman  Nerita Hughes  Abdiwadi Husen  Felipe Illescas  Valerie Johnson  Steve Kalina  Mayor Elizabeth Kautz  Jennifer Lang  Katie Lundmark  Bill McCarthy  Loren Nelson  Bill Nelson  Eric Nesheim  Scott Parker  Catherine Penkert  Jovon Perry – DHS  Ekta Prakash  Dr. Paul Pribbenow  Anthony Ramunno  Commissioner Mary Cathryn Ricker, MDE  Ed Reynoso  Ali Rodway  Laura Sayles  Roy Smith  Dan Solomon, DLI  Winnie Sullivan, OHE  Jerri Sweeney  Jennifer Theisen  Dee Torgerson | Deb Bahr-Helgen  Shirley Barnes, Chair  Ling Becker  Laura Beeth  Carrie Bendix  Tammy Biery  Barb Chaffee  Mary Ferguson  Jeanna Fortney, Director  Elena Foshay  Heather Goodwin  Rod Franks  Rick Greene  Cheryl Gustafson  Diane Halvorson  Mark Jacobs  Wanda Jensen  Stan Karwoski  Anne Kilzer  Vicki Leaderbrand  Nicole Mattson  Jim McDonough  Loren Nelson  Pamela Oeffler  Kate Probert  Jinny Reitman  Scott Schulte  Pearce Shauen  Alyssa Soderlund  Nola Speiser  Bud Stone  Nicole Swanson  Janelle Wald Kovar | Commissioner Steve Grove  Deputy Commissioner Hamse Warfa  **GWDB Staff**  Ben Baglio, Director  Kay Kammen, Sr. Policy Analyst  **DEED Staff**  Lorrie Janatopoulos, CareerForce Director;  Mike Lang, CareerForce Director of Employment Services;  Maureen Ramirez, Director, Office of Economic Opportunity;  Marc Majors, Director, Employment & Training Programs. |

**Call to Order and Welcome**

Laura Beeth, Chair of the Governor’s Workforce Development Board, welcomed everyone to the joint gathering of the GWDB and the Minnesota Association of Workforce Development Boards (MAWB). She praised the business members and other workforce partners for their ability to pivot and strategically move forward in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. She thanked Mayor Elizabeth Kautz, chair of the GWDB Operations Committee, for her leadership and the many GWDB members who serve on local workforce development boards.

MAWB Chair Shirley Barnes commented on the difficulties and successes of the past eight months and how Minnesota’s 16 local boards rose to meet the challenges they faced. She spoke of the importance of diversity and inclusion in the workplace, as well as the need for professional development and job training. She thanked the workforce directors, chairs, local elected officials and partners who make this work possible.

**GWDB Business Meeting**

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

Scott Parker made a motion to approve the Chair’s Report for Fourth Quarter 2020***.*** Shirley Barnes seconded the motion and the report was unanimously approved.

***Action Item****: Approval of Minutes September 9, 2020 Meeting*

Scott Parker made a motion to approve the minutes of the GWDB meeting on Sept. 9, 2020. Vance Boelter seconded the motion. The minutes were approved.

***Action Item:*** *Approval of GWDB 2021 Legislative Report*

Operations Chair Elizabeth Kautz entered a motion to approve the GWDB 2021 Legislative Report and Bill McCarthy seconded the motion. It was approved by the Full Board.

**MAWB Business Meeting**

The Association’s 2021 legislative priorities were shared with the audience by Anne Kilzer, who is Director of the Hennepin/Carver Workforce Board and leads MAWB’s Legislative Committee. The 2021 Meeting Schedule was reviewed and approved. MAWB’s Promising Practices Awards were also announced.

**COVID-19 and Innovation at the Local Level**

Tammy Biery, Executive Director of Career Solutions in St. Cloud, outlined the outreach strategies her team has utilized, including social media, Somali radio programming, press releases, posters, handouts and community presentations and education. She also spoke of the role CARES Act funding has had in assisting families who are experiencing financial hardships.

Deb Bahr-Helgen, Director of the City of Minneapolis Training and Employment Program, shared the successes and the volume of customers served through an accessible and interactive virtual platform.

Ling Becker, Director of Ramsey County Career Solutions, expressed her appreciation to the County Board for their support during the public health crisis. Despite offering limited in-person services, partnerships with libraries, Minnesota State and digital literacy navigators resulted in numerous contracts and more than 1500 youth and young adults served.

**CareerForce Updates and Discussion**

Lorrie Janatopoulos, CareerForce Director, gave an update on the CareerForce response to the pandemic, initially presented in September. Outreach continues to be important. Women of Color continue to be impacted significantly as well as Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) communities and younger CareerForce customers. She discussed the CareerForce Jobs in Demand campaign, which highlights businesses who are hiring on CareerForceMN.com.

Mike Lang, CareerForce Director of Employment Services, talked about how partnerships with community-based organizations and government entities have resulted in distribution of free personal computers and career kits to those in need. He said the CareerForce Help Desk has experienced a dramatic increase in calls. Drive-through career fairs and Jobs in Demand are drawing traffic and interest. Mike’s presentation included a demo of the CareerForceMN.com site.

A Question and Answer Session followed.

**Workforce Development and Economic Development**

Hamse Warfa, DEED Deputy Commissioner, greeted attendees of the joint meeting. He complimented Lorrie and Mike on the system-wide response to the pandemic. He highlighted efforts to engage with stakeholders, including MAWB, to address current needs related to the Workforce Development Fund and direction for the future. Going forward, goals are focused on key areas: the digital divide and the lack of wireless access in rural areas of the state; shared metrics around funding, competitive grants and the funding of innovative ideas and initiatives; and service utilization of programs such as Dislocated Worker and Rapid Response.

DEED Commissioner Steve Grove said he is grateful for the members of the GWDB and MAWB and the leadership of Chair Beeth and Chair Barnes. He said the next two to three months are projected to be the worst of the pandemic as Minnesota responds to being a centralized hotspot for COVID-19 cases as well the “Perfect Storm” of a health crisis, economic crisis and civil unrest. There is hopeful news that state relief is coming and a budget surplus was announced last week. These funds will serve as a bridge to federal funding. Unemployment Insurance has distributed $9 billion in Minnesota with more to come as benefits are extended.

Commissioner Grove told the group that what the state’s workforce development boards do in the next few months will determine where the state is 12 months from now. He offered a blueprint for success: Make every effort to increase inclusion; Build the best pandemic-proof economy by increasing new starts and sustainability for small businesses; Reskill for service sector workers who have suffered greatly using a host of methods, including the Coursera on-line learning platform.

**Closing Remarks**

Laura Beeth thanked Commissioner Grove for his leadership and perseverance during this difficult time. She recognized Steve Ditschler, long-time GWDB member and Chair of the Disability Equity Committee, who is entering a new phase of his life: retirement. She expressed her gratitude for his time, leadership and service to workforce development at the local, state, and national level. Steve said, “It has been an honor and a privilege to serve on this Board under three governors and have the opportunity to work with such great people.” Chair Beeth also gave a “shout out” to Ben, Kay and Jeanna for their efforts in planning the joint meeting.

Shirley Barnes shared a quote from Martin Luther King, Jr.: “Life's most persistent and urgent question is, 'What are you doing for others?’” She thanked the members of both MAWB and the GWDB for the work that they do in service of others and our state.

**Adjournment**

Prior to adjournment, GWDB Director Ben Baglio said the deadline for responses to a GWDB member survey has been extended. The meeting was adjourned at 11:56 a.m. by acclamation.

*The next meeting of the Governor’s Workforce Development Board is scheduled from* ***10:00 to 11:30 a.m. on Wednesday, April 28*** *via Zoom.*