



NEMO WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD

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NEMO Workforce Development Board (WDB) Employer Engagement Committee Meeting August 10, 2020

Members Present

Jim Kolve
Annette Sweet
Michael Purol
Erin Dennis

WDB Staff Present

Diane Simbro
Sharon Hillard

Members Absent

Steven Garner
Glenn Eagan
Lesa Barber
Darin Arnsmeier
Donny Carroll
Mac Wilt
Dennis Gill
Julie Rodgers
Shyla Brauch

Guests Present

Dana Keller
Randy Lane
Shari Schenewerk
Amanda Sizemore
Chad Eggen
Janet Hickey
Kim Cull
Erica Davis
Lon Little
Rita Brown
Sheree Prebe

CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Jim Kolve called the NEMO WDB Employer Engagement Committee Meeting to order at approximately 2:00 pm. The meeting was conducted electronically through Zoom.

ROLL CALL

Roll call was taken. Four Committee members were present and a quorum was established. Seventeen people were in attendance.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES AND AGENDA

Annette Sweet moved to approve the Agenda and the June 19, 2020 Meeting Minutes. Michael Purol seconded the motion and the motion was approved.

ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION – ALL ATTENDEES INVITED TO SHARE EVENTS, ETC.

Amanda Sizemore said classes would be starting in a week or two at St. Charles Community College. They would be a mix of on-line and on-campus classes. She discussed the various start and end dates being

offered for different programs. She said ESL and AEL had gone on-line due to COVID. She explained that the ESL classes were on-line, instructor lead classes. Amanda said she could send information regarding the various programs being offered to anyone who was interested.

Rita Brown provided some information regarding business needs in the Hannibal area. She said Park Place Signs in Hannibal was interested in providing apprenticeships and she would be speaking with General Mills about apprenticeships as well. She felt the customer UI calls had decreased in the last two weeks. She noted that businesses were not contacting staff to place job orders and staff was having to contact the businesses. Most of the job openings she had seen were for manufacturing. Kim Cull felt a lot of the individuals were not interested in going back to work until the stimulus funds expire. Randy Lane said he was working with Practical Tactical Plus in Hannibal to develop a possible OJT.

Janet Hickey said most of the jobs they were seeing in the Warrenton area were manufacturing and security related. She added that the Job Center was starting to receive more calls from individuals interested in CDL and Nursing training. They were also receiving some calls from individuals requesting more information regarding the new stimulus for UI. Janet said anyone needing information regarding UI could find their answers on the Jobs.mo.gov website.

Sheree Prebe said traffic had been light at the Kirksville Job Center. Staff had been busy with school enrollments and they had been getting a lot of referrals.

Michael Purol said Poepping Stone Bach & Associates was always looking for staffing for their industry. He noted that the success of working from home varied with their employees; senior employees were doing well but newer staff were struggling as they may need more assistance. He said someone from their staff was always being placed under quarantine. Michael said short-term CAD (computer-aided design) training may be helpful for individuals wishing to succeed in their industry. Amanda said St. Charles Community College offers a virtual CAD class.

Annette Sweet said construction of the High Prairie Wind Farm in Adair and Schuyler Counties was proceeding and may be completed in a couple of months. Vestas would hire and provide the workers in the beginning and then Ameren may take over. She noted that the demand for solar energy was increasing and individuals who had IT training may have a leg up in that industry.

CHAIR'S REPORT ON HEALTHCARE AND AGRICULTURE

Jim said the constant change due to COVID was continuing. He noted that the pandemic had reinforced the need for broadband in the rural areas. He said we need to work to get as much funding as possible spent in the rural areas for that cause. Jim added that he hopes the re-opening of the schools goes well.

UPDATE ON WORKFORCE

Diane said the NE Region received \$458,000 in Cares Act training funding. There is a \$4,000 cap for each individual but their training can be supplemented by WIOA funds. All training must be invoiced by October 31. Staff is currently working on outreach for the program.

Diane said the Access Committee is working on plans for a virtual, reverse job fair. The committee will meet again on Monday, August 17 to develop their plans. The job fair will be open to individuals with disabilities and others with barriers to employment. She added that staff is working to develop virtual workshops for individuals.

Diane said the State had issued a Request for Proposal for a consultant regarding Job Centers of the future and how we can be more efficient. An agency had been selected and they would start very soon with their evaluations.

BUILDING A STRATEGY FOR EMPLOYER ENGAGEMENT

- Step 1 – Define Strength/Weaknesses (Completed)
- Step 2 – Define the Skills Gap for Local Employers (Completed)
- Step 3 – Define the Training Needs of Employers and Who Will Deliver the Training

Diane said the Committee decided to leave Steps 2 and 3 on the agenda for today's meeting. She said the topic of employer training needs and who can provide the training would be an ongoing topic and she would add information provided in today's meeting to these steps. She added that the State has purchased software to be used for the virtual job fair.

UPDATE ON DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Shari Schenewerk provided an update regarding the small business grants through the MO Cares Act. Those for small business and tourism were mostly \$50,000. Applications for family farms had been closed. She noted that the meat processing grants could be used for startups. Shari said the Wind Farm in Knox County was moving forward and they were seeing a lot of activity. She said the pandemic was a challenge for our local companies and was impacting their ability to find employees. She said some of our utilities currently have openings. Shari thanked the Job Center staff for their assistance in helping with the UI calls for the past few months.

OTHER BUSINESS

Diane announced that Michael Purol, who joined today's meeting, was the newly elected Workforce Development Board Chairperson.

NEXT MEETING DATE AND LOCATION

The next Employer Engagement Committee meeting was scheduled for November 2, 2020.

ADJOURN

Dana Keller moved that the meeting be adjourned. Erin Dennis seconded the motion and the meeting was adjourned.