



Spokane Area WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL

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MINUTES

SPOKANE AREA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL
Wednesday, December 12, 2007, 8:00 a.m.
Glover Mansion

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Frankie Arteaga	Peter Casimir	Polly Crowley	Steve Dahlstrom	Ronald Dalla
Donna Dalzell	Craig Dias	Robert Duron	Tom Fritz	Rich Hadley
Kevin Managhan	Julie Meyer	Nancy Nelson	Mike Senske	John Serben
Hugh Severs	Dixie Simmons	Beth Thew	Diana Wilhite	

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Jeff Benesch	Ben Cabildo	Liz Collier	Kim Do	Steve Jurich
Bill Kalivas	Craig Lee			

OTHERS PRESENT:

Jeff Zahir – Employment Security Department	Sharon Parry- Real Workforce Solutions	Lisa White- Spokane Public Schools
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STAFF PRESENT:

Mark Mattke- Workforce Strategy & Planning Director	Gordon Gutterud- Accountant	Peg Waldron- Assistant Director of Workforce Operations	Dawn Karber- Youth Involvement Coordinator	Anne Lockwood- Secretary	Justin Davis- Intern	Lori Meakin- Workforce Development Program Specialist
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CALL TO ORDER/WELCOME:

The meeting was called to order at 8:10 am. Introductions were made.

MAYOR MARY VERNER - CITY OF SPOKANE

Mayor Mary Verner kicked off the Workforce Development Council Retreat today and spoke about how pleased she is about the partnerships between business, secondary and post secondary education, and the public sector that have been created in the Spokane area and contributed to our economic growth. She recognized that leadership is a critical element to our continued success and thanked the members of the WDC for their time and effort. The Mayor also discussed the need for a focus upon green and sustainable technology as an economic development and workforce development tool for Spokane that positions our region for this growing industry.

ITEM #1 – NEW MEMBER NOMINATION:

Rich Hadley reported that the Membership Committee has been busy securing replacements for Council members who have retired. The WDC is pleased to bring new expertise and perspectives to the table. Rich introduced several new WDC members – Dixie Simmons, Polly Crowley, and Ron Dalla – and welcomed Steve Dahlstrom back to the WDC.

Rich introduced Lisa White as a prospective member of the WDC. Lisa is the Director of Career and Technical Education for Spokane Public Schools and brings talent, energy, and reinforces our linkage with secondary education. Lisa also serves on the OSPI Advisory Board and Youth Council.

There was a motion and a second to bring Lisa White's name to the Local Elected Officials for appointment to WDC. Approved. None opposed.

ITEM #2 – DEMAND/DECLINE LIST:

It is time again to review and validate information on the Demand/Decline list for the Spokane Area. The information for this list is compiled based on labor market data gathered by Employment Security and is updated annually.

The Council is responsible for the Demand/Decline list, which is used to guide decision making by system staff and customers with regard to potential training and the use of public funds to support training activities. If the Council disagrees with the status of occupations on the list, we have the right to change it to more accurately reflect the local labor market.

The data sources for the list rely upon surveys conducted by the Employment Security Department and information gleaned from unemployment insurance system records. There are some gaps in the data that local business can help to fill, and at this time the list is circulated to area Skill Panel members for their input. It was also suggested that WDC members bring the Demand/Decline list to other business groups and get their input. Another suggestion was to put the list on the WDC website and solicit input via this means. It was also noted that colleges may access the Demand/Decline list, once it is completed, to help determine the training needed for the local area.

The WDC will develop a process for distributing and obtaining feedback on the Demand/Decline list more widely and rapidly for PY08.

Anne Lockwood will send the Demand/Decline list electronically to WDC members. Based on the members' expertise, each will work through the list and make comments. As an example, if the list shows an occupation in demand and experience is otherwise, mark *disagree* and state the reason. The deadline to return the Demand/Decline list to Anne is February 12, 2008.

WDC MEMBER EDUCATION

The need to more quickly educate new members about the work of the Council was raised. WIA and the workforce development system are complex and requires more attention to effectively learn than simply attending Council meetings. A proposal was discussed wherein existing members would provide assistance/mentorship to new members to facilitate the process of orientation. Some of the ideas for educating new members are:

- 1) Set up and have discussion to transmit information to the new members.

- 2) Mentors sit with new members during meetings so they are able to ask questions and obtain a clearer understanding of topics. There is a recognized intrinsic value in mentoring new members, in that learning occurs for both parties. While it is understood that there will still be a lengthy learning curve, it is helpful to have a connection with a more seasoned member to help give context and facilitate learning.
- 3) Create a DVD that acts as an orientation device.
- 4) The Website was considered helpful and the availability of tools online would be useful. The GSI YouTube-type video was mentioned as a helpful online tool.
- 6) Have some information chats recorded and put on website.
- 7) Another suggestion was to conduct an in-depth study session on individual topics where a critical decision is required.

ONE-STOP RELOCATION

Last year the WDC decided to relocate the One-Stop Center in 3 years. The consolidation of the subagents and the reduction WIA funds has created a situation necessitating that the WDC review this decision. A re-location would require substantial investment at a time when federal WIA funds are being reduced. It may be more fiscally prudent to remain in the current location and utilize existing resources until funding is stabilized.

This subject will be taken up in the Retreat portion of this meeting.

ITEM #3 – OVERVIEW OF LABOR MARKET TRENDS:

Jeff Zahir, Regional Labor Market Economist, presented an economic overview to the Council, with the caveat that he presents two types of information. The first type of information is data that Jeff has collected and the second is his opinion. It is an informed opinion but still an opinion that is subject to the constraints of his perspective. He reminded the Council that data is only as good as its sources and that if members don't think the information is accurate, please inform him. He values WDC member input and the perspective it provides.

Synopsis of Presentation:

- Manufacturing is showing growth in 2007, while the Retail Trade, Accommodation and Food Services have slowed down. Retail Trade is declining in its pace of hiring, but still growing. There is about 1% fewer young people in retail than in prior years, as retail trades are hiring people and keeping them all year long as opposed to hiring seasonally.
- Jeff reported on the results of the Job Vacancy Survey conducted annually in April. This survey is sent out to every employer who pays into the Unemployment Insurance system. The survey asks "Do you have jobs you are trying to fill?" In our region there were 5,600 employers looking for employees, with a total number of 5000 open positions.
- SKIES data is input by the Employment Security Department for jobs listed by Employment Security. The jobs employers list via the self service online portal are not counted. The Construction industry is one that may be undercounted as it uses more of the self service or other hiring mechanisms outside of the state system.
- Only 269 jobs were listed in March and April through the WorkSource system. No health services jobs were listed in the WorkSource Center in March and April.

- Jeff is seeking a method to use the survey to point employers to the WorkSource system for assistance.
- In March and April 1,365 people were registered with WorkSource; 335 were already employed. WorkSource did not offer many jobs that met the needs of these customers. There were 613 people looking for a move up to a better wage, approximately half with high school and above education; and about 300 people had more than 2 years of college.
- 2006 had no announced layoffs. In 2007 there were a significant number of people who were laid off and then hired back. Bank of America, Aramark, Agilent, SprayCool, and the Spokesman-Review all experienced layoff events.
- Spokane's total population is 465,000 and 47,000 people live at or below the poverty rate, and 46.5% of single mothers with children under the age of 5 are below the poverty level.
- The Department of Labor reports 48,095 individuals with disabilities. One question is how many are currently employed? This may point to an unmet need in the state and our area.
- The numbers of foreign born workers increased 20%. Many individuals of Russian origin are employed in construction and are self employed. A better count of these individuals would help in developing service strategies to better meet their needs.
- A reliable predictor of the number of manufacturing jobs in our region is the trend in the number of factory orders at the national level. Usually, eight months after the U.S. Department of Labor reports that manufacturing orders are down, we will see a decrease in the number employed in manufacturing locally, and vice versa. The increase the number of UI claimants shows this trend as well.
- Healthcare remains steady in Spokane, with no significant changes in either the growth of new jobs or numbers of people in the labor market. The age of the workforce shows people in their 40s to 50s, and it seems to be a revolving door for those around the age of 14 to 24 – which is to be expected with this highly mobile age group. Healthcare openings include clinical computing, RN, and lab tech, and over 300 of the jobs had only 3% turnover.
- Safeway offers a good model for employment that stretches from hire to retire, with multiple pathways and opportunities for advancement. HollisterStier is another company who hires directly from high schools and promotes from within.
- There are also emerging occupations that Jeff doesn't have SOC codes for and represent some of the most important jobs in our economy. Tracking these is an ongoing challenge. Most of the jobs in the future economy do not exist at this time and adequate skill acquisition requires a workforce development system that is agile enough to find and categorize them as they are created and transmit information to the community for action by our workforce.

ADJOURN:

The meeting was adjourned at 10:00 am.

NEXT MEETING:

The next WDC Meeting will be Wednesday, January 9, 2007, at the Skills Center.