

# MEETING MINUTES

## Strategic Directions Committee Meeting

5/16/2023

10:00 AM – 11:45 AM

In-Person at the NWWIB Office (301 Ellis, Suite 3, Ashland, WI) and Virtually



### Attendees:

- |  |   |  |
|--|---|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Judy Aspling (Chair) | <input type="checkbox"/> Jessica Wagner-Schultz-excused | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PC Rassmussen  |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Barb Flynn           | <input type="checkbox"/> Kelly Klein - excused          | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Thomas Michels |
|  | <input type="checkbox"/> Bambi Pattermann -excused      |  |

### Staff & Guests:

- |   |  |  |
|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mari Kay-Nabozny | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Melissa Rabska | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Bella Potack-Rettler |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Scott Schultz    | <input type="checkbox"/> Ryce Davis                | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Dawn Knapp           |
|   |  | <input type="checkbox"/> Kristi Waits                    |

### 1) Welcome and Opening Meeting Business

- a) Call to Order
- b) Roll Call
- c) Public Meeting Notice

NWWIB staff sent the meeting notice to regional Class A newspapers and regional library systems. In addition, the meeting notices were also posted on the Northwest Wisconsin Workforce Investment Board website and all social media outlets.

- d) Welcome and Introduction of Guests  
No guests were present.

### 2) Approval of Meeting Minutes

- a) Review and Approve 1/17/2023 Meeting Minutes  
Motion to approve as presented: Barb Flynn  
2<sup>nd</sup>: Judy Aspling  
Motion passed unanimously.

### 3) NWWIB Initiatives & Enrollment Update

- a.) Special grants/projects enrollments and Co-enrollments | Melissa Rabska  
Melissa Rabska spoke on the initiative by the number report for April 2023 and referenced the corresponding Infographic sheet in the packet. Success highlights include: 352 participants in the Workers Advancement Initiative (WAI) program, exceeding the goal of 200. Kudos! The Support to Communities (S2C) grant is also overperforming its' goal of 130 participants and currently has 138 in the program with about one year left for the grant. We are expecting the S2C grant to top out at 145 participants due to funding limitations and we have been happy with the success of that. The Corrections and Reentry programs (Windows to Work and Pathways Home 2) are currently serving 115 participants. The Collaboration of Wisconsin (COW) Rural Healthcare grant is serving a total of 97 participants. Of the 97 - 41 are in WDA 7 with Dawn and 56 are in WDA 8 with Clarice. All programs are going well. Additionally, the State Case Management system, ASSET has updated its reports and we are now able to report on our co-enrollment numbers as indicated on the

infographic in packet. COW and S2C have high co-enrollment rates due to parallel career pathways in healthcare and Substance Use training programs.

b.) DOL Nursing Expansion Grant | *Melissa Rabska*

Melissa Rabska reported that we found out at the end of last week that we were unsuccessful in the grant application. Two grants were awarded in Wisconsin to Employ Milwaukee and the Forward Services Company (FSC)

c.) PSC Outreach Grant | *Melissa Rabska*

Melissa Rabska reported that the PSC grant is to address digital equity and outreach. We were awarded just over \$25,000 for data collection. We will gather information that gets shared with the State to be included in their plan. The target population are ones we already serve, such as; low income, minorities, persons with language barriers, aging, veterans, disabilities, rural and incarcerated. We were not awarded the grant until mid-April even though the grant started on April 1, 2023, therefore we are still in the planning stage. It is a short grant that will end in August 2023. We will conduct several listening sessions to attain qualitative data and we will send out short surveys to gather quantitative data as well. This will additionally position us in a good place for future funding for Broadband grants. Discussion followed. Barb Flynn inquired if when we are looking at inmate data how will the data be recorded if the individual is housed in Bayfield County but lives in a different county. Melissa Rabska clarified that the data will likely be recorded under the county where they reside based on how we are setting the survey up.

d.) PY23 Youth Procurement | *Melissa Rabska*

Melissa Rabska reported that this afternoon the Youth Committee will vote on the RFP procurement. Two organizations responded and we received proposals from In the Door and NWCEP. The In the Door proposal only stated it would serve In School Youth or Out of School Youth – not both – making their proposal cost prohibitive. They also did not follow the RFP instructions, so we are not able to pursue them. The NWCEP proposal only included the typical programs despite the RFP being crafted specifically to broaden the Scope of Work for innovative proposals. For example, in the RFP there was a requirement for a career academy for youth that would attain short term credentials and would be of interest for In or Out of School Youth. NWCEP proposed the Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA), the Personal Care Worker, and CDL. These are the same three training programs that have traditionally been operated by NWCEP in the past.

e.) Public Relations Report | *Bella Potack-Rettler*

Bella Potack-Rettler spoke about the Public Relations Report for April 2023 and referenced the report in the packet. She reported on the following; the “Spark” contest returns for the 5<sup>th</sup> year, our email outreach “Workforce Today: Spring 2023” edition has an open rate of nearly 40%, TDCON Winning in Wisconsin event had a 30% open rate. There was one Winning in Wisconsin held on April 11 & 12 in La Crosse. A After 5 Entrepreneurial event on April 18<sup>th</sup> in Iron River. The Childcare Essentials Training cohort is continuing. There was also a Discover Health Event held on April 28<sup>th</sup> in Ashland, which was a hands on experience for high schoolers interested in the healthcare field.

Bella reported that our podcast is in the top 20 Wisconsin Business as rated to Feedspot and we have had 1,106 downloads from January through April 2023. Bella clarified Feedspot is not a broad measure.

f.) Social Media Report | *Bella Potack-Rettler*

Bella spoke regarding the Social Media report with the overview highlights that Facebook accounts reach is up 32% increase in one month with 5,478 accounts reached. We created our TikTok account a little over a month ago and it is 107.4% up from March. Key take aways are that we are exceeding our social media goals with photos of staff at events receiving the most engagement and videos having the most reach. The events are also great for networking through social media. The goals for May 2023 are to continue the upward trend on Facebook, Instagram and TikTok and to increase the LinkedIn numbers. Judy expressed in general

LinkedIn she feels like it is losing popularity. Bella agreed and stated she is working with the algorithm for LinkedIn. Also reported that our social media featuring animals, including Friday, have been gaining traction.

g.) **New Hires Update | Melissa Rabska**

Melissa Rabska reported that we are currently in the process of hiring staff for the QUEST grant. QUEST is a DWD grant to local workforce boards that have a childcare focus. The goal is to have 500 additional childcare slots across the state of Wisconsin. Our work at NWWIB will feed into that statewide goal. Our role is to assist with the workforce piece in building childcare cohorts as well as case management and networking with childcare providers to understand the childcare and staffing needs. We held interviews last week and two individuals stood out. Mari is currently in the process of making offers to both individuals. One position will perform case management to effectively serve participants and it is a part-time position. The other position will be full-time and will perform the QUEST project management and technical needs for the grant. This individual has over 30 years of childcare experience in Wisconsin and really understands systems and is able to build from the ground up. We are excited to find and grab talent when we can find them. They will both hopefully start in June but as Mari is currently in negotiations with them, there are no firm start dates at this time.

4) **Regional Report | Melissa Rabska**

Thomas Michels reported on the DWD reports in the packet. He stated that as usual Bayfield County has the 2<sup>nd</sup> highest unemployment rate. He reported our region has 2<sup>nd</sup> highest unemployment rate in the state but going down from last year. He noted that the Labor Force Index, the Employment Index and the Unemployment Index are all long-term numbers to see trends in the declining labor force in our area. The state of Wisconsin is doing better than in our region and the United States as a whole has a growing labor force, although that is not reflected in our region. Discussion followed regarding starting to see some job opportunities for people whereas before employers were getting no response from job posting. Also, PC Rasmussen stated he is starting to expand the job search to outside of the state, as well as outside of the Midwest region with wages raised at least 30- 50%, in which businesses must adjust operations to accommodate the increase. Discussion also included equipment purchases that do not require skilled labor or reduce labor needs of businesses. Judy Aspling inquired as to what the market decline on the Employment Index contributed to. Thomas Michels stated that our region is 10 years behind demographically and the report reflects that.

5) **PY22 Performance Q3 | Committee Members**

Melissa Rabska reported that we believed we would have the DWD WIOA Performance for Quarter 3 when we initially compiled this agenda, but it has not been released yet. We are not sure what the lag is attributed to but know that the DWD was looking at doing a new dashboard.

6) **Partner Updates on Workforce Related Items**

Barb Flynn reported that the Bayfield County building was under construction and their offices will eventually move to the Veteran office location. She stated that 100% of the reentry clients with addictions are employed and there have been no positive UAs in the last year, which is a huge success and they are doing remarkable! She shared that every one of them are OWI individuals that do not have a drivers license and they are still able to have stable employment with barriers to transportation. Most are working in construction, with one in the fishing industry and one in a tourism-related position. PC Rasmussen inquired where employees are able to receive counseling, treatment and additional aid. Barb Flynn stated that everyone in the reentry program is required to complete AODA and counseling throughout the entire program. She stated employers have been very supportive and participants can choose whatever location they would like to go to counseling. Also, every client has a drug sweat patch that is a constant drug test that is swapped out weekly. Discussion followed regarding where to find counseling that are not court mandated. Barb Flynn provided the following

resources: NA and AA meeting that are available in person and online, LIONS Rock program that individuals can log on to participate across the world and also to call any therapists office to make an appointment.

7) **Adjourn**

a.) Next scheduled meeting date: August 22nd,2023 at 10:00am or at the call of the Chair

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