



WWDA Meeting Minutes November 5, 2008

Location: Exhibition Hall of the Alliant Energy Center, Kegonsa Room. 1919 Alliant Energy Center Way, Madison, Wisconsin 53713

Association members (or representatives) present: Don Madelung, Pat Schramm, Beth Norris, Francisco Sanchez, Cheryl Welch, James Golembeski, Jim Ehrsam, Dan Racette, Sally Cutler, Steve Terry, Dick Best, Bob Borremans, Jerry Hanoski,

Also present: Ron Danoski, Department of Workforce Development, Gary Denis, Department of Workforce Development; Sarah Diedrick-Kasdorf, Wisconsin Counties Association; Mari Kay-Nabonzy, WWDA/WAJTE Legislative Staff; Michelle St. Clair, WWDA/WAJTE Coordinator; Al Hesse, Fox Valley Workforce Development Board; Allison Brost, WWDA/WAJTE Intern

1. Convene

Don Madelung Called the meeting to Order at 1:15.

2. Approval of minutes.

Ehrsam motioned to approve the minutes of the August 6, 2008 annual WWDA meeting; Bates seconded. Motion carried.

3. Committee Breakout Sessions.

WWDA members broke into four small subcommittees for in-depth discussion: (1) Membership Education, (2) Partnership Development, (3) Financial Strategy, and (4) Legislative Strategy. Members reconvened to a larger group to hear a presentation by Secretary Gassman; committee reports followed.

4. Secretary Gassman's Department of Workforce Development (DWD) Updates.

Secretary Gassman greeted the association's members and provided an overview of current events at DWD. She noted that the state's anticipated budget deficit is very deep and is expected to impact all State of Wisconsin Departments, including DWD. She commented that we are now in very challenging times and that the state is looking very carefully at filling positions and taking trips.

Secretary Gassman then discussed workforce development system reform recommendations emerging from the Council on Workforce Investment (CWI). Tim Sullivan, Chair of CWI and President of Bucyrus International, recently provided Governor Doyle with a set of recommendations to better enable the state to meet workforce and employer needs by reshaping the workforce system into more flexible, and better coordinated, regional industry partnerships. It should be noted that in his December 17, 2008 letter to the governor, Sullivan acknowledged the importance of private-sector led workforce development boards: "responsibility and leadership for the regional partnerships of the sector strategy should be assigned to workforce development

boards (WDBs), recognizing that several of them are already linked in collaborative efforts with economic development entities through DWD Grow Grants and DOL WIRED grants.”

In short, CWI recommendations are to facilitate regional sector strategy initiatives by (1) funding for training for industry partnerships in regions, (2) establishing a common skill assessment between schools, workers, employers, and (3) expanding apprenticeship and MSSC certification, etc. In addition, CWI recommends better coordinating workforce programming across state departments in order to create common goals and common measures to assess workforce investments. After reviewing CWI recommendations, Gassman spent some time discussing the NGA Policy Academy and that the efforts of both groups would be brought into alignment.

Gassman anticipated that there would be significant federal investments in workforce improvements in the near future, which would likely overlap with the Governor’s Grow Wisconsin Agenda (e.g. opportunity grants, youth & adult apprenticeship, MSSC certification, and skills jump programs to help low-skilled/low-income population).

A question was raised about unemployment. Discussion ensued; Gassman welcomed written suggestions from WWDA members.

5. Committee Reports.

Membership Education. Norris provided a report on the Membership Education Subcommittee. A survey of WWDA members had been performed in the fall of 2008 to determine member education interests and needs. In response to member feedback, time will be set aside at WWDA meetings for informational presentations. Presentations would address: (a) regional partnerships, (b) workplace trends, and (c) career pathways. In addition, workforce issue articles will be added to the WWDA newsletter to promote knowledge and understanding of workforce issues.

Partnership Development. Terry provided a report on the Partnership Development Subcommittee. WWDA had a good presence at the 2008 Wisconsin Economic Development Association (WEDA) and Wisconsin Counties Association (WCA) in terms of membership attendance. Terry also reported that the association had an exhibit space at both conferences in order to promote awareness about the association, which helps to facilitate partnership development. Terry also reported on the efforts to be made further the association’s partnership with the Wisconsin Technical College System. Cutler would make a presentation to the WTCS Board Presidents Association on behalf of WWDA in order to build an understanding of workforce development boards and the board’s statewide association. In addition, partnership development was also recommended with the Wisconsin Council on Children & Families.

Financial Strategy. Golembeski provided a report on the Financial Strategy Subcommittee. The Financial Strategy Subcommittee discussed the value of the association incorporating as a tax exempt 501c3 and recommended that staff pursue incorporation. In addition, the Financial Strategy Subcommittee discussed how state unemployment insurance programs have been used by other states to capitalize statewide workforce development funds. WWDA’s intern, Allison Brost, will perform research and prepare a report on this issue. If pursued, discussions should occur with the UI Oversight Committee and with business and industry.

Legislative Strategy. Kay-Nabozny reported on the Legislative Strategy Subcommittee, which is spearheading the development of the 2009-11 Legislative Agenda and the Day at the Capitol event.

6. Legislative agenda.

Kay-Nabozny provided a handout of the proposed 2009-11 WWDA legislative agenda. Discussion ensued. Best commented that legislator recognition of boards was important. It was agreed that the agenda would be updated by the Legislative Subcommittee and brought to WWDA members for approval at the Feb 4th meeting. WWDA members should contact Kay-Nabozny with questions or comments.

7. Legislative activity.

Kay-Nabozny provided a review of the WWDA Day at the Capitol scheduled for February 12, 2009, which provides workforce development boards with the opportunity to educate state legislators about the workforce development system. At the February 12, 2009 Day at the Capitol event, each of the eleven workforce development areas will send a delegation to speak with their state senators and representatives about statewide workforce concerns and local issues. The event will begin with an orientation at 8:00am at the Best Western Inn on the Park. Workforce Development Area delegations will meet with state representatives in the morning and afternoon (each WDA will schedule its own meetings). This year, lunch will be provided. A debriefing will be held at the end of the day, from 3:30p to 4:00p.

8. Other business.

None submitted.

The meeting adjourned at 2:55p. The next meeting of WWDA is February 4, 2009; the next WWDA event is the February 12, 2009 Day at the Capitol.

Submitted by Michelle St. Clair, WAJTE/WWDA Coordinator