



## WWDA Meeting Minutes April 29, 2009

**Location:** Pewaukee Workforce Development Center, Classrooms 108-110, 892 Main Street, Pewaukee, WI 53072

**Association members (or representatives) present:** Mark Kessenich, Francisco Sanchez, Jim Dwyer, John Heyer, Cheryl Welch, Jim Golembeski, James Barlow, Steve Terry, Dan Racette, Dick Best, Colleen Bates, Jerry Hanoski, James Ehram, Dan Braund, Bob Borremans

**Also present:** Ron Danoski, Department of Workforce Development, Gary Denis, Department of Workforce Development; Jerry Murphy, New North; Michael Mortell, Southeastern Wisconsin WIRED Initiative; Mari Kay-Nabonzy, WWDA/WAJTE Workforce Systems Advocate; Michelle St. Clair, WWDA/WAJTE Coordinator

### 1. Convene

John Heyer convened the meeting shortly after 1:00p.

### 2. Approval of Minutes

Dwyer motioned to approve the minutes; Ehram seconded. Motion carried.

### 3. Panel on Regional Partnerships

Given state and national trends towards regionalism, a panel was organized to educate association members about some regional development efforts that are occurring across the state. Three experts relayed experiences from their area's regional development strategies; each of which draws strength from a partnerships from business, education, public sector, and community leaders.

Mike Mortell, the Coordinator of Southeastern Wisconsin's Workforce Innovations in Regional Economic Development (WIRED) Initiative, discussed regionalism in the seven counties of Southeastern Wisconsin. Mr. Mortell discussed the formation of the Milwaukee 7 (M7), which is the regional economic development collaborative and described its relationship with the Regional Workforce Alliance (RWA). RWA unites workforce development boards with other workforce investment stakeholders and essentially functions as the talent development arm of the (M7). Mr. Mortell also discussed the \$5.1 million grant awarded to the region by the U.S. Department of Labor through WIRED. The Southeastern Wisconsin region consists of three workforce development areas, including the Waukesha-Ozaukee-Washington Workforce Development Board, the Milwaukee Area Workforce Investment Board, and the Tri-County Workforce Development Area of Kenosha, Racine, and Walworth counties.

Jerry Murphy, Executive Director of the New North, discussed the 18-county regional development effort in Northeast Wisconsin. He reviewed the region's geography, which includes the Fox Valley and Bay Area Workforce Development Boards. Mr. Murphy discussed the region's key economic initiatives and effort to develop a recognizable brand. The New North brand serves to unite the region both internally and externally. It will be promoted through an integrated marketing campaign to shape and redefine market perceptions and expectations.

Jerry Hanoski, Executive Director of Workforce Connections, discussed the Seven Rivers Region. The tri-state region unites communities around the Mississippi River, from western Wisconsin to

southeast Minnesota and northeast Iowa. Mr. Hanoski discussed the targeted industry analysis and asset map conducted in the Seven Rivers region through a US Department of Labor Regional Innovation Grant. He discussed the RIG region's industry opportunities and assets as well as the region's workforce challenges and opportunities.

#### **4. Q&A of panel**

A question and answer period followed presentations by Mr. Mortell, Murphy, and Hanoski. Questions included funding, opportunities, and challenges.

#### **5. ARRA**

Association members were provided information about American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funding coming to the Department of Workforce Development. ARRA funding would invest \$5,183,854 into WIA Adult services, \$16,059,607 into WIA Dislocated Worker services, and \$13,808,812 into WIA Youth services in the State of Wisconsin. In these program areas, most of the funding would be directed to the workforce development boards following WIA formula allocations but a portion of the funding was also being set-aside for use at the state's discretion in addition to its administrative cut.

Kay Nabozny discussed how the legislature's Joint Finance Committee had passed the ARRA allocation to the Workforce Investment Act program. WWDA provided Joint Finance Committee members with information about how the workforce development boards and Job Centers provide Workforce Investment Act (WIA) Program services. In addition, she relayed that the association's monthly legislative newsletter to state representatives also addressed some frequently asked questions about WIA. She commented that WAJTE Directors were in the process of developing a communication piece from the association to the state's federal representatives in order to keep them apprised of how ARRA dollars are being spent by Wisconsin's workforce development boards.

There were some discussion about the use of ARRA discretionary dollars. There was concern that the state might not be able to spend its ARRA set-aside quickly and effectively, which would be problematic for the state's ARRA performance. At the same time the state held set-aside funds, there was concern that Wisconsin's Job Centers were facing a challenging increase in the demand for services.

*Motion to request a rapid distribution of discretionary funds associated with ARRA to local areas to be included with rapid response, adult, dislocated workers, and youth resources. Bates seconded. Motion carried.*

#### **6. Discuss & Set WWDA Annual Meeting**

There was discussion about the association's annual meeting in the Summer of 2009. The Western Wisconsin Workforce Development Board offered to host the next meeting. There was an interest in partnering again with the with Minnesota Workforce Alliance

*Meeting adjourned at 2:55p*

*Submitted by Michelle St. Clair, Coordinator*