



THE VOICE OF WISCONSIN'S LOCAL  
WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARDS

**Meeting Minutes:** June 3, 2009

**Location:** GEF#1 Building, Room F105, 201 E. Washington Avenue, Madison, WI 53707-7972

**Association members present:** Jerry Hanoski, Bob Borremans, Sally Cutler, Beth Norris, Dick Best, Francisco Sanchez, Pat Schramm, Al Hesse, Mark Kessenich

**Others present:** Michelle St. Clair, WAJTE/WWDA Coordinator; Mari Kay-Nabozny, Workforce Systems Advocate; Department of Workforce Development (DWD) Representative: Gary Denis

*Sanchez called the meeting to order at 9:30a.*

## **WAJTE Meeting**

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### **1. Approval of Minutes**

Golembeski motioned to approve minutes from the April 29, 2009 WAJTE meeting; Cutler seconded. Motion carried.

### **2. Chair's report**

Sanchez informed WAJTE Directors that invoices for WWDA membership dues would be sent out shortly and that PY2009 association dues would be \$5,000. He noted that last year the association acquired a group membership with the National Workforce Alliance (NWA) at a discounted rate of \$5,500 (or \$500 per WDA), and dues for both the association and the association's NWA membership were wrapped together. Kay-Nabozny indicated that she was in communication with NWA staff to confirm the costs of the association's membership with NWA in PY2009.

Sanchez asked whether WAJTE Directors wanted to renew the association's membership with NWA. Discussion ensued. There was a question as to the benefit of the membership. Best provided insight; he commented that NWA membership supports Bradley, who has been instrumental in keeping WIA allocations up. Best requested that WAJTE Directors wait until July to make a decision. St. Clair will send out association membership dues separately.

A draft letter to be sent to Secretary Gassman regarding the state's use of ARRA discretionary dollars was distributed. A new investment paradigm for the state was proposed. It was recommended that rather than issuing a series of applications for a litany of projects, DWD should issue one broad request for proposals that defined a range of eligible employment and training activities and also clearly described how proposals will be judged and selected (e.g. enumerate funding priorities & principles).

Discussion ensued. Directors discussed the formula DWD uses to allocate WIA dollars. Directors also discussed PY2009 funding levels. Golembeski commented that the foundational system is stressed. There was agreement across workforce development boards that given PY2009 WIA program cuts, ARRA dollars would need to be directed to offset losses.

Denis commented that some ARRA discretionary dollars have already been obligated.

Best motioned for WAJTE to send a letter to Secretary Gassman that requested the expeditious and efficient distribution of ARRA discretionary resources. This letter should reference the impact PY2009 WIA Program cuts will have on local areas and ARRA resources. In addition, the chair of the Council on Workforce Investment and members of the state senate and assembly workforce committees should be copied on the correspondence. Kessenich seconded. Motion carried.

Sanchez next discussed a request by Linda Preyz for a representative from WAJTE to participate in RISE activities; Golembeski volunteered to be the WAJTE Director's representative to RISE.

### **3. Coordinator's Report**

St. Clair reviewed follow-up activities from the last WAJTE meeting. She noted that draft correspondence regarding the use of ARRA discretionary dollars had been developed, a meeting of WAJTE Directors had been organized to discuss ARRA competitive grants, and Kay-Nabozny produced a publication on the boards' ARRA Summer Youth program. In addition, she noted that the association's annual report and filing fee had been submitted to the Wisconsin Department of Financial Institutions.

St. Clair also reported that there was a Statewide Business Services Group conference call held on May 11<sup>th</sup> to exchange information about current activities. She reported there would be another conference call on June 8<sup>th</sup> and an in-person quarterly meeting on July 13<sup>th</sup>. She asked about lunch costs for this group. Discussion ensued. It was agreed that the hosting WDA would absorb the costs of catering (anticipated at no more than \$200).

St. Clair also commented that the association's latest fiscal report was in meeting packets. Meeting expenses were under budget by \$1,783 and special projects were under budget by \$7,460.

St. Clair then reviewed key items from the ASSET User Group Minutes: (a) there was uncertainty about the state's timetable for completing ASSET modifications, and (b) AUG is still waiting to hear from the state about when and how performance measures will be negotiated to move to common measures.

Denis clarified that PY2008 will not be common measured, but it was anticipated that common measures would apply in PY2009. DWD is working with DOL to establish performance standards for common measures. DWD's draft "Wisconsin's American

Recovery and Reinvestment Act Addendum to the Workforce Investment Act State Plan Program Year 2009-2010” identifies performance standards for common measures” (p. 36).

#### **4. Legislative Staff Report**

Kay-Nabozny provided a legislative update. She reported that Representative Jason Fields introduced Assembly Bill 234, which would provide tax credits to employers who hire individuals from targeted, disadvantaged populations. It is estimated to have a \$12 million fiscal impact to state. In addition, she reviewed Senate Bill 183 introduced by Senator Kreitlow. It would require businesses to inform workforce development boards when there is a mass layoff. It is anticipated to have a \$10,000 fiscal impact.

Kay-Nabozny also noted that Representative Strachota petitioned to continue the Joint Legislative Committee on Workforce. She reminded directors that this committee introduced legislation on ‘LiLas,’ requested a survey of nurses by the Department of Regulations & Licensing, and have requested an audit of the workforce development system.

At the federal level, Kay-Nabozny reported that Senator Feingold was seeking a quote from the association about the proposed Health Care Retraining Act. She would work with Sanchez to develop a statement.

Kay-Nabozny reviewed information about the WWDA legislative newsletter sent to state representatives and the new ARRA newsletter distributed to federal representatives. She noted that for the federal newsletter, she did not get data from the Milwaukee and Fox Valley workforce development boards. She also requested that workforce development boards send her links when they receive publicity; she will put public relations information on the WWDA website.

Lastly, she commented that WWDA could request that a state legislative group hold a hearing on WIA reauthorization. Discussion ensued.

#### **5. Recovery & Reinvestment Work Groups**

There was some discussion about ARRA Work Groups. Only the RES and TAA Work Groups have been meeting. Kessenich relayed that Wellington (from DWD) has convened a group to discuss ARRA competitive grants.

#### **6. Potential Training: Elevate America**

St. Clair relayed information to WAJTE Directors about computer training vouchers available through MicroSoft’s Elevate America Program. Discussion ensued. Denis commented that he would be meeting with MS representatives on the matter soon. Borremans volunteered to represent WAJTE Directors at the meeting.

## **7. WWDA Annual Meeting**

At the last WAJTE meeting, there had been agreement to have the association's annual meeting in La Crosse in early August. Kay-Nabozny relayed that the Minnesota association would be meeting in Duluth from August 11-13<sup>th</sup>. Discussion ensued. It was agreed that if the association sought to focus on WIA Reauthorization, then that legislative focus would benefit from a partnership with the Minnesota association. Potential meeting topics include WIA reauthorization, ARRA investments, Youth Program successes. It was also suggested that federal representatives be invited to the annual meeting.

## **8. DWD Report**

Denis reported that opportunity grants would soon be sent to the workforce development boards. These grants are designed to help incumbent workers pay for tuition and wrap around services. He indicated that eligibility factors included employment, wages (200% of poverty), age (at least 18), and education (not enrolled full-time in school).

Denis also commented that the Department of Education has changed their eligibility determinations for Pell grants - eligibility determinations will be made looking forward rather than looking back. Denis expects that the WTCS Board will send correspondence out to the state's technical colleges regarding the new method for determining financial aid eligibility. In addition, Denis noted that letters will also be sent out to UI recipients regarding the increase in training benefits now available.

Denis also provided an update on the Disability Navigator Program. DWD submitted a grant application to the Department of Labor for over \$800,000. There have also been discussions with DVR at the state level about the Navigator program.

Shramm commented that there is a misunderstanding that the boards have a surplus of money. Discussion ensued about how PY2009 WIA Program cuts have offset ARRA surpluses. Kay-Nabozny would develop a letter to go to federal representatives explaining that PY2009 funding cuts mean that ARRA investments will be offset.

## **9. Other Reports**

A Wisconsin Rural Partnership Conference will be held on June 5<sup>th</sup>; WWDA is an official sponsor and will have an exhibit booth.

Denis commented that competitive procurement for cohort training is NOT required.

*The meeting adjourned at noon. Over lunch, Secretary Gassman and Jeff Bode from the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) discussed the youth Summer Employment Collaboration between DWD and DNR. They discussed DWD's use of ARRA discretionary resources to fund 55 youth experience slots across the state. There would be five youth per workforce development area; the local boards will be a key partner.*

*Respectfully submitted by Michelle St. Clair, WWDA/WAJTE Coordinator*