



Montana Department of **LABOR & INDUSTRY**

State Workforce Investment Board

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Executive Committee Minutes

1:30 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.

Go-To Meeting, 1st Floor Conference Room, Walt Sullivan Building

Helena, Montana

July 31, 2013

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Marty Copps, Chair; Dave Crum, Vice Chair; Mike McGinley; Dore Schwinden (Pam Bucy Designee); and John Rogers

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT: Mike Grove

STAFF: Leisa Smith, and Chris Wilhelm

GUESTS: Pam Watson, Suzanne Ferguson, and Rhonda Huseby

Welcome and Introductions

Chair Marty Copps called the meeting to order at 1:34 p.m. She welcomed Committee members and guests. Leisa welcomed new member, John Rogers.

Roll call

Leisa Smith conducted roll call and establishing a quorum

Agenda

Chair Copps reviewed the Agenda and asked for a consensus to approve it. Mr. Crum moved to approve the agenda as presented. The motion carried.

Minutes

Chair Copps reviewed past meeting minutes from September 5, 2012. No changes or additions were made. Mr. Crum moved to approve the minutes as presented, and Mr. McGinley seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

I. OJT Waiver: Limits on Employer Reimbursement

The Workforce Investment Act Unit Supervisor, Suzanne Ferguson, presented brief overview of the OJT grants Montana has received. The state was awarded a National Emergency Grant (NEG) for On-the-Job Training (OJT) on June 30, 2010. The grant, in the amount of \$889,009 was to provide On-the-Job Training to the long-term unemployed (defined as being out of work

for 22 weeks). Job Service regions 1, 2, and 4 were the covered areas for the grant. The grant was originally funded with ARRA funds, and had a sliding scale of reimbursement for the employer:

- Up to 90%: Employers with 50 or fewer employees
- Up to 75%: Employers with 51-250 employees
- Up to 50%: Employers with more than 250 employees

In June 2012, Montana was awarded an additional \$1,265,000 to continue with the program, due to the success the state was experiencing. The second allocation of money was not ARRA funds. The grant will be in operation until June 30, 2014. Montana expects to serve 145 participants in total with this grant. As of July 31, 2013, the Department has enrolled 129 participants and expects to hit the enrollment goal and spend all of the funds.

Ms. Ferguson explained the purpose of the requested OJT Waiver, which is to provide the same sliding scale of reimbursement as the OJT Grants, but throughout the state. The intent is to maximize the flexibility needed to ensure speedy implementation of formula and discretionary grants; increase business usage of the workforce system; create additional opportunities for new workers, and for unemployed and underemployed workers to speed their return to full-time employment; and reduce the length of time for a Unemployment Insurance (UI) claim, and reduce the need for usage of other public assistance benefits. Targeted populations are unemployed and underemployed workers who do not have transferable or marketable skills; individuals entering the workforce for the first time; hard-to-serve, low-income youth who are unable to compete for limited job openings; and businesses needing to hire additional workers to sustain their productivity, who do not have the resources to do so.

The proposal has been posted to the SWIB website for 15 days for public comment. To date, no public comment has been received.

Two brief news videos were viewed that talked about the success of the grant program.

Mr. Crum moved to approve submission to the OJT waiver regarding Limits on Employer Reimbursements to the US Department of Labor; Mr. Rogers seconded. The motion carried unanimously. Staff will keep the State Board posted on the Waiver's progress.

II. Next Steps

Ms. Smith advised members that State Board staff is still waiting for Board appointments from the Governor's Office, and that current membership will continue to serve until new appointments are made. She requested members submit suggestions to the Governor's office for people who may be interested in serving on any board or council.

SWIB orientation and strategic planning is tentatively scheduled for late October or early November.

There are no updates on the Youth Council.

With no further discussion Chair Copps adjourned the meeting at 1:53 p.m.