



Wyoming Workforce Development Council

Monthly Council Call

September 5, 2017

Conference Call

Committee Members Present

Jim Engel, Chairman
Keith Zabka

John Walsh
Gary New

Stacy Strasser
Rocky Anderson

Council Members Absent

Shawn Reese
Leonard Scoleri, Vice Chairman
Kevin Kershisnik
Jim Rose
Ron Van Voast
Scott Norris
Cathy Connolly
Michael Von Flatern

Larry Barttelbort
Sid Gressette
Jillian Balow
John Cox
Stacy Strasser
Felix Carrizales
Ray Fleming Dinneen
Shannon Buller

Robert McKim
Mark Madsen
Tom Forslund
Katie Legerski
Randal Six
Delbert McOmie
Fabian Lobera

Council Members Designees Present

Noelle Reed

Michelle Panos

Others Present

Hayley McKee

Laurie Knowlton

Chairman Engel called the meeting to order and asked Ms. Knowlton to discuss the items on the agenda.

WIOA Staff Convening Dates

It was determined that One-Stop office field staff would benefit from a short training on the program and the Council's perspectives on the WIOA changes. Ms. Knowlton will be traveling with Mike Griffin and the Program Strategy Team to Sheridan and Casper on October 2 – 6, Oct 10 & 11 in Cheyenne, and Oct 23 – 26 in Rock Springs. Council members are, as always, invited to attend any of these meetings they choose. Ms. Knowlton will send out more details as the dates get closer.

October Council Meeting

Rooms have been obtained at the La Quinta Inn and Dr. Rose has arranged for meeting rooms at the Gillette College. Dinner will be at the Pizza Carrello and the agenda is currently being developed.

Pilot Project – K-12 to Workforce

A meeting was held in Cheyenne on August 17 with Gary New, Mechanical Systems, Katie Legerski, a banking representative, Michael Broad from DOL, and Dr. Newton, from LCSD 1 about connecting K-12 to the workforce. The results of the meeting showed that there is currently no communication at the local level in this area. As a result of that meeting, a meeting with young people, two 22-year olds and a 15-year old, identified what would be beneficial in their view to make those connections. The younger person, in particular, noted that it would be very beneficial to have employers come into the schools to let students know what they need to learn before entering the job market.

Chairman Engel questioned whether Career Days were still being held in the schools. They are not currently available in the Laramie County School Systems. The youth also noted that there is always a push from the schools towards a college pathway rather than giving students encouragement to pursue careers in the trades or non-degree programs.

Mr. New added that there is a huge gap between what employers need and what the schools are providing. The school representative asked for information about all strengths and weaknesses seen by businesses and other interested parties that are either being met or are not being met by the current K-12 curriculum. Mr. New expressed his opinion that, while there is nothing wrong with pursuing a college degree path, there are also many jobs that do not require that pathway. The students who choose not to pursue a college degree are often “seen” as problem students; questioned why is there not encouragement for students who excel to pursue a path other than a degree program? There is currently a vacuum between the degree positions and the skilled trades.

Mr. Anderson shared that he agreed and has tried to get into the school system to talk to students for many years and has pretty much given up trying, as he was always given access only to a few underachieving students in shop classes or other venues where he did not have access to the general student population.

This will be kept on the radar of the Council going forward. Mr. New shared that he has had some continuing conversations and communications with the representative from the Laramie County School System that may prove to be helpful. Ms. Panos added that it may be helpful to get on the agenda with the Wyoming Association of School Administrators to share some of these concerns. Ms. McKee shared that a K-12 educational curriculum development specialist is being recommended to be a part of the WAGs going forward.

Policy Updates

Agency programs have been working hard to update their policies to align with WIOA. WIOA Compliance & Finance has reviewed Title I (Adult, Dislocated, and Youth programs) and it will be distributed to the Council for their review before that meeting.

Jeanette Pickinpaugh has been working on the Monitoring Policy, which is considerably more involved under WIOA than it was under WIA.

The Wagner-Peyser policy is also in review and will be available shortly for action at the October Council meeting. All of these are moving forward for review by the Compliance & Finance Committee and then the full Council.

WAGs

Ms. McKee highlighted the phone call last week with over 100 invited guests regarding the progress of the WAGs. The phone call was very productive, and the primary discussion was the implementation of the Council's direction so far. Feedback was requested on the organizational chart, including the addition of the Educational Curriculum Development representative and representation from Vocational Rehabilitation.

The regional WAG support teams were discussed and who would be recommended as core members of those groups. The WAG members were also asked to forward any questions to Ms. Knowlton from which the top 5 questions will be presented to the Council in October. The Council will receive a copy of the full poll for review.

Chairman Engel reminded everyone that the WAGs are not a required component of the WIOA law, but Wyoming is being used as a model state, so, though it seems to be going very slowly, it is important that the program is rolled out correctly and in the right direction from the beginning. The WAG teams are expected to be extremely beneficial asset in the state moving this program forward with the DOL.

Ms. McKee shared a discussion that was had with a representative from the National Governors' Association recently, who spoke with Adult Education and he loved what Wyoming is doing and took it back to the NGA to share. The WAG Academy is being worked on and will be held in November. Much good work is being done generating a lot of enthusiasm including the ENDOW report recently submitted to the Minerals Committee last week. Workforce is the common denominator in terms of why businesses in Wyoming are struggling with growth. These groups have a great opportunity to find out how these needs can be addressed in Wyoming. The people that are getting involved with the WAGs are very engaged and enthusiastic to work with the Council to solve some of these deficits within the State of Wyoming.

Ms. McKee thanked Noelle Reed and Marcia Hess for their contributions in these efforts.

The meeting adjourned.