



Wyoming Workforce Development Council Workforce Advisory Group (WAG) Lead Phone Call

Meeting Notes

July 14, 2017

Conference Call

Del McOmie, Lander
Cindy Wallace, Carbon County Econ Dev
Kelsie De Paolo, Casper
Karry Gomez, Casper
Meri Thompson - Casper
Janet Griffin, Wheatland
Kathy Benson, Riverton
Sandy Myers, Powell
Annette Melo, Laramie
Angela Rush, Rock Springs
Vermona Peterson, NE WY
Jeff Schultz, Cheyenne
Rebecca Eusek, Wyoming Business Council

Colleen Dubbe, Jackson & Afton
Rocky Anderson, Casper
Christi While, Rock Springs
Sid Gressette, Rock Springs
Dave Trogmorton, Rawlins
Noelle Reed, Wyoming Business Council
Gilbert Servantez, SE WY
Hayley McKee, DWS
Marcia Hess, Adult Education
Mike Griffin, DWS
Laurie Knowlton, DWS
Ron Wild

Ms. McKee introduced herself as the Public Affairs Administrator for Workforce Services and a staff member of the Workforce Development Council. She thanked everyone for participating and expressed gratitude from the Council for all work already done by the WAGs. She continued by stating that the Council is looking forward to working closely together moving forward to make a stronger and more robust Wyoming and contribute to the overall good and stronger economy of the State. Ms. McKee also conveyed that the Council hears and understands the concerns surrounding the WAGs and has mapped out a structure upon which it would like feedback. She concluded by saying that the Council dedicated a significant amount of time to the WAGs at its last meeting. She concluded by saying that WAGs are not standard for single area states and are not required by the law.

Ms. Hess announced the August 8, Adult Education Summer Conference – Partnership Day and invited everyone to attend. She also said that there will be special speakers including Mike Barrett of the National Governors’ Association to discuss WIOA. Shawn Reese will be speaking about ENDOW and how that connects back to WIOA. There will be another as yet unannounced group of speakers during the morning. Over lunch, there will be a customer-centered keynote address followed by awards to Adult Education programs for having met performance guidelines this year. Please sign up at wylla.org.

Ms. McKee thanked everyone for their participation, and conveyed that the Wyoming Workforce Development Council is interested in the needs of the WAGs, who is at the table, and what the concerns and opportunities are.

Ms. Knowlton gave an overview of the newly reformed Wyoming Workforce Development Council. She continued by informing that there are 29 members appointed by the Governor and that there is one open seat. Ms. Knowlton continued by stating that the Council meets quarterly and serves as the Strategy Team for Workforce Services. The Council has 4 different Committees: Executive Committee, WIOA Compliance and Finance Committee, Sector Strategies Committee, and Career Pathways and Apprenticeship Services



Committee. There are a handful of Council members on each of these committees. The handout goes into additional detail on the Council and its mission.

Ms. Reed stated that she works for the Wyoming Business Council and also serves as one of the staff members assisting the WWDC with WAGs. She presented an overview of the survey provided by the WWDC to gather information on the who, what, when, why, and how related to the needs of WAGs around the State. The results were assessed by Hayley and Noelle and their interpretation will be presented and summarized today. There will also be an opportunity to gather additional information which may have been missed in their survey assessment. Some WAGs are in the development stage, others are gathering information from businesses, while a few are in the asset-mapping stage in their regions. She stated that survey responses varied widely about the role of WAGs, as well as the tools and resources that may be helpful to accomplishing goals. Some key suggestions were an annual meeting and workshops for the WAGs so that everyone can come together and look at things from a State perspective. Another suggestion was more collaboration with the Wyoming Business Council, the WWDC and the WAGs and to take a more regional approach. Ms. Reed also noted inquiry surrounding the questions WAGs should be asking the businesses and financial assistance. Performance indicators were mentioned and also what success looks like for these WAGs. The main take-away was that the WAGs need more guidance, information and direction from the Council and a defined vision, mission and goals communicated to all the WAGs. Ms. Reed also noted requests for consistent communications and updates from the Council.

Ms. Gomez from Casper suggested a parliamentarian of sorts who can speak upon the WIOA law and the requirements that are made based upon the law. She also noted that some of the ideas regarding the WAG structure may not fall within the requirements that are based on the law. As to reporting and Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) added to the list for the Council on their list of WAG support resources, that the Research and Planning group that is already funded by the State of Wyoming be added and utilized more fully.

Ms. McKee added that Research & Planning reports to her and are currently a part of the support that is being provided as we move forward.

Ms. Reed suggesting providing the WAGs with a Resource Guide that can be used to provide websites or contacts for any needs that they may have.

Mr. Servantez, the Center Manager for the Torrington and Wheatland Workforce Centers, added that Research and Planning does provide information to the Center Managers and he has been forwarding that information to key players, businesses and folks within our WAG, which has been greatly appreciated.

Mr. Wild said that the things he heard is a need for a sense of purpose and a sense of direction for the WAGs.

Ms. McKee suggested discussing the topic of financial assistance. Meri and Carrie from Casper requested more information disseminated to the public because the Casper group is having difficulty getting people to come to the table because of lack of knowledge on the subject. Cindy from Carbon County agreed that they also need direction on how to get people to meetings. Annette from Laramie added her observation about having workforce centers in two different regions; she wondered if it was mandatory for the Council members to attend the WAG meetings. Mr. McKee stated that there was an agenda item that will speak to that more in a few moments regarding the structure. A question was raised about how to access finances. Jeff from Cheyenne asked about the relationship between the Council and ENDOW. There is some overlap between the two, but being that ENDOW is so new, those things are still being worked out.



The WAGs were encouraged to be a support to both, pulling together to complement that effort. Carrie asked who the parliamentarian is who can answer questions about WIOA. Ms. McKee asked for clarification on what Ms. Gomez was envisioning. Ms. Gomez said that it was, according to Roberts Rules of Order, someone who knows the clear definitions of what the rules are, or the gate-keeper, who can be turned to with any questions as a resource. Ms. Knowlton was identified as the go-to person on WIOA and legislation for the Council. Marcia from Adult Education may have been the source of the idea that WAGs were federally mandated, but they are not, but it was suggested that the WAGs be modeled after some of the Education advisory groups, or Community Advisory Groups.

Ms. Knowlton went over the structure of the Statewide Strategy, which is posted on the WWDC website. The Sector Strategies identified by the Sector Strategies Committee are Healthcare, Trades, Technology, and Value-Added Resources. Carrie wanted to know how these Sector Strategies are defined. Noelle added that when the Sector Strategies Committee began, they were aware that the areas are very broad, and the Committee is in the process of narrowing those definitions as they apply to Wyoming. Different areas or regions may have different needs, so the original groups were quite broad in order to address the whole. The Sector Strategies Committee will work on narrowing the focus to determine what will be focused on for the initial roll-out, and thereafter. Ms. McKee stated that the hope is that the Community-level WAGs will make sure that representation for whatever businesses or industries they need to promote and will carry those interests to the Regional-level WAGs and to the Council. Anyone who had any further questions or concerns was encouraged to contact Ms. Knowlton directly.

Since the May Council meeting, the Wyoming WAG Support Team has been working to align the structure and they are developing a comprehensive survey along with the Wyoming Business Council, to dig into the needs of each community. They are very interested in obtaining input from businesses about their needs and what they are seeing in their search for employees, whether those gaps are in education or training. The Team is also working on a WAG Academy and how that could help to fill some of the needs that are out there.

Ms. Reed related some additional information regarding a possible WAG Academy, where it may be held and the possible goals and advantages to fill some of the information and criteria gaps that are causing some current concern. She asked for any input on what could be provided and to identify what guidance and topics. Ms. Melo recommended including a live stream or webinar for those who may not be able to travel to this event.

Ms. Knowlton went over the Council agenda for the upcoming meeting in Thermopolis. The meeting is open to the public and an invitation was included in her comments.

The call concluded with Ms. McKee providing her phone number and email. She encouraged anyone who had questions or input to contact her at any time.