

GOVERNOR'S WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD
WORKFORCE SYSTEM COMMITTEE MEETING
Walt Sullivan Building, Helena
April 21, 2004

MINUTES

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT: Wendy Keating, Bruce Day, Jerry Driscoll, Gail Gray

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT VIA TELECONFERENCE: Jim Hollenback, Haley Beaudry

COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT: Leroy Bingham, Jody Messinger

STAFF: Kelly Chapman, Pam Watson

GUESTS: Sue Mohr, Mark Bowlds, Jeff Rupp, Gary Warren.

Call to Order

Wendy Keating, Acting Chair in Leroy Bingham's absence, called the meeting to order at 2:35 p.m.

Welcome and Introductions

Chair Keating welcomed members and guests.

Review & Approval of December Minutes

Chair Keating allotted time for committee members to review the minutes from the committee meeting on December 12, 2003, and asked for comments or corrections. Hearing none she called for a motion. Jerry Driscoll moved to approve the minutes as submitted, Bruce Day seconded; motion carried unanimously.

Review of Committee Changes

Kelly Chapman gave a brief overview of the committee changes adopted by the Executive Committee in February. The changes were made to better align with the National Governor's Association (NGA) project with which Montana is closely involved. As a result of the changes, the Regulatory Committee is now the Workforce System Committee.

WIA Governance Update

Wendy Keating reported that during recent weeks, meetings between the Department of Labor & Industry (DLI), Montana Job Training Partnership (MJTP) staff and Board of Directors have been held to resolve oversight issues and perceptions that have been affecting working relationships between the local boards and DLI. Some key issues were discussed including mutual expectations of the relationship. In an attempt to begin resolving the issues, Sue Mohr and Gordon Morris (from the Montana Association of Counties) will draft a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), then work with DLI to finalize and implement a strategy to bring clarification and mutual understanding of roles and responsibilities, as well as an understanding of process to address future issues. Bruce Day asked Wendy Keating for an overview of what prompted the meeting and the issues that were discussed. Ms. Keating stated that DLI's perspective is based upon their responsibilities under state and federal laws. Historically there has been a lack of mutual agreement on the level of authority held by the oversight entity at DLI. DLI is responsible to the State Auditor and federal government, so is not

legally outside the scope of their role. The lack of understanding of roles and responsibilities on both sides has led to some unproductive relationships between the DLI and LWIB staff. MJTP's Board of Directors asked Wendy Keating and Ingrid Childress to participate in their meetings to better keep everyone informed. Haley Beaudry asked if there was a timeframe for completion of the MOU, and Ms. Keating advised that while nothing was set, all concerned are anxious to get things moving and the MOU is a good step forward. During Public Comment, Ms. Mohr advised that a meeting was scheduled in the near future with MJTP and DLI staff to resolve other pending issues, and at that time they could possibly discuss a timeframe for completing the MOU.

State Liaison Report

Chair Keating introduced Gary Warren and advised that his title of State Liaison will be changed in the near future. Mr. Warren reported that his bureau is charged with workforce system oversight in Montana and is accountable to the federal government for Workforce Investment Act (WIA) programs. Ingrid Childress, Workforce Services Administrator at DLI, recently changed the title of Mr. Warren's bureau to State Workforce Programs and Management Bureau to better align it with oversight for all workforce programs, not just WIA. Currently, if Local Workforce Investment Boards (LWIB's) have procedures in place, they are being monitored. Mr. Warren also reported that MOU's are being prepared to transfer incentive money from year ending December 31, 2002 to the LWIBs targeting healthcare occupations and training/education. Mr. Warren's bureau is requesting workforce system partners refer clients across programs to provide better use of the funds. Montana was also notified in March that we qualified for incentive money from year ending December 31, 2003. There is a short time frame to apply for the grants, and Mr. Warren recommended continuing to work with partners with a continued focus on addressing health care worker shortages. Gail Gray asked if the money can be used under the WIA programs, and Mr. Warren confirmed that is the case. Ms. Mohr commented that the LWIB's intend to work on the grants as soon as possible so no money will be lost. Ms. Keating asked if all programs coordinate to address health care worker shortages, and Mr. Warren indicated that they try to align each partner to provide different access to education and training. Haley Beaudry asked if the money that goes to DLI and is distributed to programs is considered spent, Mr. Warren clarified that until expended, the money is still considered on the books and could be lost if not spent by the end of the grant period.

Farmworker/Workforce Board Dialogue

Bruce Day reported that he recently attended meetings in San Antonio, Texas concerning migrant and seasonal farmworkers. The meetings were convened by the US Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration, and the National Association of Workforce Boards (NAWB). The dialogue included coordinating programs with state and local workforce investment boards to improve use of the program through the workforce development system. The Employment and Training Administration has made 3 proposals to eliminate the National Migrant and Seasonal Farmworker Program, so there is a need for Montana to become active at all levels. This includes involving the SWIB, LWIB's, and Community Management Teams (CMT), in an effort to promote relationships with the program, address issues such as language barriers and isolation from access to the system, involve and better understand agricultural employers, and better serve farmworkers. With regard to the DLI grant process, discussion relative to collocation plans is also important. A document summarizing the issues discussed in San Antonio is expected by June outlining best practices. Bruce Day, on behalf of Rural Employment Opportunities (REO), requested the SWIB encourage LWIB's to be active in the strategic planning of program issues, and to bring awareness to LWIB's and CMT's to promote outreach and referrals. Ms. Keating indicated that the SWIB could work with the University System and the DLI Research and Analysis Bureau to determine labor market information or agricultural data that is available. Mr. Day advised there is an agricultural

census every five years which could also provide useful data. Jeff Rupp asked what other national programs are included in Montana's workforce system, and if the Workforce Programs and Management Bureau under DLI has oversight authority over those programs. Committee discussion indicated several programs including Job Corps, Older Worker, and Native American programs; Mark Bowlds, Chief of the Job Service Field Operations Bureau, DLI, indicated that oversight is at the national level for those programs, not under the Montana DLI. Ms. Mohr agreed that more effort is needed to develop the migrant and seasonal farmworker program as skills needs are changing rapidly and are different from what they were just a few years ago. She also stated that she appreciated Bruce Day's comments and that she concurs that tracking skill requirements, available training, and addressing bilingual language issues would be beneficial to the program.

Project Indian Challenge

Kelly Chapman indicated that Leroy Bingham was not in attendance, and asked if Jerry Driscoll would like to report on the Project Indian Challenge since it is a joint project with the AFL-CIO. Mr. Driscoll advised that the grant has been applied for through the AFL-CIO and is pending. The program will use urban Indian dollars for training, and that being considered a dislocated worker will not be a requirement for qualification. The program will target non-reservation Native Americans. Wendy Keating asked if there are any demand-specific occupations within the program, and Mr. Driscoll reported that there are not. Any reasonable occupation will be considered, and outcomes will be tracked based on employment and earnings of participants.

Next Meeting

Kelly Chapman asked committee members if there were any topics they would like included on the agenda for the committee meeting scheduled for May 21st. Gail Gray asked if there could be discussion relative to healthcare shortages training. Jerry Driscoll stated he would like discussion on co-enrollment issues, as statistics are unreliable under the current method of tracking program enrollment. Chair Keating asked if there is a method in place for tracking participants without duplication to ensure performance reports are not skewed. Mr. Warren advised that data by participant are rolled up to the state level and reported to the federal government – reports by individual program operators are not required at the federal level. He also advised that his bureau has recommended co-enrollment throughout the statewide system to ensure the participant's needs are met regardless which program receives credit for services. Mr. Driscoll suggested that if there is co-enrollment, the entity that provides the majority of services should receive the credit and be allowed to count the participant in their enrollment count. He indicated this is necessary due to the fact that if AFL-CIO field coordinators receive credit for enrollment, they are awarded a monetary incentive bonus. Ms. Keating asked if this is an issue before the LWIB's and Mr. Warren's Bureau. Sue Mohr stated that delivery at the local level is complex. A response period for new proposals at the state level is a good thing to allow feedback from partners and LWIB's. She also indicated this issue may require further discussion. Mr. Warren stated that the situation could be eliminated completely if there was only one program operator in each area to provide services.

VII. Adjournment

Acting Chair Wendy Keating adjourned the meeting at 3:28 p.m.