

Maine Jobs Council meeting

September 26, 2008:

Augusta

MAINE JOBS COUNCIL Lewiston, Maine September 26, 2008

Minutes

Present: Phil Dionne, Garret Oswald, Peter Diplock, Steve Pound, Rochelle Wallace, Mel Clarrage, Jackie Coogan, Paul Luce, Al Menard, Dina Winslow, Steve Duval, Sharon Barker, Joe Duson, Gene Ellis, James Westhoff, James Baumer, Jane Gilbert, Debra Reitchel (scribe)

Phil Dionne called the meeting to order. Introductions were made.

Committee Reports

Commission on Disability and Employment – Mel Clarrage

Mel passed out information of upcoming events in October which is recognized as Disability Employment Awareness Month. Disability Mentoring Day is October 15, 2008, and is a collaborative effort of Jobs for Maine Grads, the Disability Navigator Program from the Bureau of Employment Services, Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation and a number of other agencies within the disability community. “Working Together” a business to business event initiated by the Comprehensive Employment Opportunities Grant will take place on October 30, 2008. The Commission on Disability and Employment is preparing the annual report for the Legislature.

Women’s Employment Issues Committee – Sharon Barker

The Women’s Employment Issues Committee is preparing the “2008 Status of Women in the Workforce in Maine” report. Students working on the report have conducted interviews throughout the state with women in targeted populations with a strong focus on women in minorities. Representatives from these groups have been invited to the next WEIC meeting.

WEIC is utilizing the Polycom system to increase access to their meetings.

Sharon is sponsoring the National Girls Collaborative Project at the University of Maine on April 10, 2009. The goal is to create a statewide network of girl-serving organizations that encourages participation in STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics). Small grants from the National Science Foundation are available to organizations that will collaborate with organizations with similar goals.

Apprenticeship Committee – Gene Ellis

The Apprenticeship program is undergoing the Value Stream Mapping process. Much of the program will be website based.

On 10/6/08 Maine Biz interviewed Gene Ellis for an article about the Apprenticeship program.

For the fiscal year ending June 30, 2008, the return on investment for the apprenticeship program was over 50 to 1.

Portsmouth Naval Shipyard is working with Gene to service approximately 869 apprenticeships from the shipyard. They recently graduated 114 apprentices.

In July 2008 the Apprenticeship Committee voted to provide financial assistance for specific industry certificates or licenses toward the cost of exams. The goal is to develop nationally and/or internationally recognized certificates or licenses.

At the October 2008 meeting the committee will discuss providing assistance for prior learning assessments.

Gene has been working with people at Portland West who are developing a green home builder apprenticeship program.

The Bureau of Vocational Services at Maine Medical and the Department of Labor Apprenticeship Program will be signing a consent agreement regarding hiring people with disabilities.

Older Worker Committee – Garret Oswald

The Older Worker Committee Annual Report will be given at the Blaine House Conference on Aging on October 14, 2008. Phyllis Cohen, co-chair of the OWC has accepted a position at the national headquarters of AARP. John Christie will be the sole chair.

Youth Committee - Garret Oswald

Joanna Russell provided high lights of the Shaping Opportunities Conference on September 25, 2008 sponsored by the Bangor Savings Bank at the Eames Learning Center in Bangor. Stakeholders gathered to collaborate on connecting youth to education, training and career development. Tech Prep Coordinator Walter Ridlon provided his Gold-Collar Worker presentation. Lewiston held a Golden-Collar event, and Presque Isle and Calais will each hold one.

Industry Association Committee – Garret Oswald

The IAC was formerly made up of trade association executives; however, attendance has been low. An option would be to reach out to MJC members to become members of the IAC.

Policy Committee - Steve Duval

Steve Duval gave a brief overview of the 9/19/08 Policy Committee meeting. Members discussed changing the incentive policy, but agreed not to make any changes to it at this time. They also discussed the new Data Warehouse project and adding ad hoc committees for newcomers and veterans. We want to make sure that all groups are represented by the MJC.

Mission Transition - Peter Diplock

Peter Diplock is the coordinator for Voc Rehab's Mission Transition program which is an event designed to assist students with disabilities access resources and information to reach their post high school goals. Peter related the history of the program with a slide presentation. Voc Rehab has partnered with the MJC and an array of stakeholders to bring ten Mission Transition events to various venues throughout the state.

Workforce Investment Board Reports

Local Area I - Dena Winslow

Aroostook and Washington counties have wind power projects underway. Over 900 people will be needed to fill the construction jobs opening up. At the present time Maine does not have the workforce to support these jobs. To meet the demand for this new technology, Northern Maine Community College is offering a Wind Power Technology Associate's degree program.

Local Area II - Joanna Russell

Katahdin Paper has applied for a National Emergency Grant and petitioned the USDOL for trade adjustment assistance. The local community has reached out to the displaced workers through various means. Local Area II continues to work on board development and by-laws. Four new members from the private sector have been added to the board. The Work Ready program is underway and well received by the community and an advisory board needs to be created.

Local Area III – James Baumer

Local Area III has a New Mainers Workforce partnership program doing a Work Ready pilot with new Mainers serving residents of the River Valley Site in Lewiston. The Work Ready credential program is going well, and there are several sites up and running as well as Next Step Training Programs.

The Health Care Action team recently received and was awarded a Transition to College and Career pilot project grant.

Local Area III is also involved in the Skills to Compete Workforce Alliance Initiative which is focused on the middle skill jobs and education for those middle skill jobs.

A Gold Collar event was held at the Lewiston Regional Tech Center.

Craig Anderson from Goodwill Industries of Northern New England is the new chair, and Craig Nelson of Doyle and Nelson in Augusta is the new vice chair of Local Area III. Many thanks to Peter Thompson who has been the interim chair for eight years.

The Mid Coast Council for Business Development Partnership is moving forward with the WIRED philosophy. They worked on a mapping resource project which will be available to MJC members on the website.

Veterans Ad Hoc Committee – Paul Luce

Paul Luce manages the Veterans Programs through the CareerCenters. In 2007 roughly 7000 vets used the services of the CareerCenter network, yet over 140,000 vets reside here. Paul reported on the new and creative methods used to bring CareerCenter services and other resources to veterans before they return home and after. New federal legislation may prioritize veteran benefits. Work will begin on creating the new committee.

Phil Dionne attended the State Workforce Agency meeting in Pittsburgh. The common theme was green and energy. Phil is now a member of the executive committee. Phil also attended the National Association of State Boards of Education in Fort Jackson, South Carolina.

Reconfiguration – Steve Duval

Steve discussed the state budget cuts that necessitated a major transition to expand our presence throughout the state in a new fashion via shared resources, itinerant services and an increased web presence. A copy of the LEON (Labor Exchange on the Net) website presentation produced by Steve will be distributed electronically to members.

Data Warehouse Project – Garret Oswald

Garret reported on the Data Warehouse Project being built by the Department of Education. DOE received a 3.5 million dollar grant to construct it. The purpose of the grant is to consolidate student educational, employment and wage records and track the data. The database will be launched in 2009 and as a partner, the Maine Department of Labor wage data will be incorporated. There are a number of pilots ongoing in Maine. We are determining what our benchmarks for the warehouse will be.

MJC members received an invitation to attend a meeting at the Augusta Civic Center on 9/30/08 regarding a USDOL Employment and Training Administration planning grant of \$250,000 received by the State of New Hampshire. This grant targets economic development planning for Oxford County in Maine, northern Vermont and New Hampshire. Mike Gilroy from the ETA and Australian David Bruele will be speaking at the seminar.

Garret will let sub committee chairs know when the annual meeting with the governor will be.