



# Spokane Area WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL

## NOTES

### SAWDC POLICY COMMITTEE

Tuesday, January 27, 2009, 8:09 a.m. – 9:27 am

Ripples - Red Lion Inn at the Park

Anne Lockwood – Note Taker

Mark Mattke - Editor

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### **MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Polly Crowley      Ron Dalla      Alethea McCann      Dixie Simmons      Beth Thew  
Diana Wilhite

### **STAFF PRESENT:**

Mark Mattke- Workforce Strategy & Planning Director      Anne Lockwood-Secretary

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### **ITEM #1 - REVIEW OUR POLICY CHARTER AND ALIGN YOUR THOUGHTS TO THE ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF OUR COMMITTEE RESPONSIBILITIES:**

The Council wants to develop support for key issues in the local, state, and federal arenas as a board and be able to adopt positions to influence policy development. The Policy Committee will notify the Council of positions which are also in alignment with the SAWDC Strategic Plan. The Council will then take action as appropriate with the various stakeholders, e.g., state legislature, Congress, Governor, etc.

***On a motion and a second to approve the Policy Committee Charter. Approved unanimously.***

### **ARTICULATE AND STRATEGIZE SAWDC POSITIONS:**

### **ITEM #2 - SUPPORT DIRECTING 1.5% (OR OTHER PERCENTAGE) OF THE INFRASTRUCTURE FUNDING ALLOCATED TO THE STATE AS PART OF THE FEDERAL STIMULUS PACKAGE TO INVEST IN LOCAL EFFORTS TO CONNECT SKILLED WORKERS TO JOBS ON FUNDED PROJECTS AND PREPARE WORKERS FOR LONG TERM CAREER SUCCESS IN THESE TARGETED INDUSTRIES:**

- The federal Stimulus Package is anticipated to invest up to \$4.5B in workforce development programs and services which deliver training to workers, strengthen the capacity of the nation's One-Stop Career Centers, and create additional capacity for youth programs. The Policy Committee is interested in remaining up to date with the priorities and key elements of this legislation and developing positions in advance to ensure our Council makes sound decisions relating to expenditures of these funds.
- Much of the funds will be distributed by formula from the US Department of Labor to the states. The allocation formula which determines the level of funds distributed to each Workforce Development Area (WDA) is determined by a

number of factors including the number of unemployed people in the area. Additional competitive funding will be available and will be pursued where opportunities are found to exist with regional partners.

- The SAWDC has acknowledged a change in focus for the workforce system from programmatic to more service-oriented. Job seekers and businesses are not concerned with fund sources and program requirements, but rather by the quality and range of services they can receive from our system.
- GMAP measurements as defined by the Employment Security department may be a topic that the Policy Committee examines. The Policy Committee is interested in addressing systemic issues and the metrics our system uses are important as they guide how services are delivered. Our mantra is “Keep it simple, keep it fresh, measure what matters.”

Measurements are set federally and by the state. To be able to effect changes to the policies and measurements, the Policy Committee would need to work jointly with the Services and Oversight Committee. The Services and Oversight Committee will determine if there are areas needing improvement in the metrics and then this committee can work to develop recommendations on which changes are most needed. As an example, measuring the number of people how get a job may not be as important as the number who received training to get a better job and enter the labor market in an in demand occupation.

Alethea will meet with the Services and Oversight Committee today at 1:00 pm to discuss this issue.

**TABLED FOR ACTION AT A LATER TIME:**

**Measurements with Software**

WIA 10% funds are used in the maintenance and implementation of the statewide SKIES MIS. As a policy committee, we may seek to influence the state and raise awareness of the lack of software communication between state and federal programs and agencies. By identifying desired outcomes, our area can help demonstrate the need for greater interactivity and a more user friendly MIS that serves the interests of multiple partners.

Common software that communicates information and tracks a customer across all services could be used to help manage skills upgrades, financial aid and resources, and obtain employment. The community college system was cited as a good example of duplication of efforts. The colleges track people under three or four different programs, depending on the information needed, and the colleges' software does not talk to the State's SKIES system. Question raised: How can we use what we have to help develop this system?

*Alethea to send out an e-mail to have the committee inform her about what information is needed out of SKIES.*

**ITEM #3 - IDENTIFY KEY ELEMENTS IMPORTANT FOR INCLUSION IN RE-AUTHORIZATION OF THE WORKFORCE INVESTMENT ACT OR NEW WORKFORCE LEGISLATION.**

WIA was originally proposed as a 5-year enactment and expired in 2003. Each year Congress has re-funded the workforce system but not taken up WIA re-authorization. This year there is a good chance that the Congress will be able to either re-authorize the WIA or write new workforce legislation. Most workforce groups believe it is time for a

major revision to WIA, but want to be sure to incorporate the lessons learned over the past decade. Local Workforce Investment Boards are the linchpin of successful workforce development as the economic landscape varies much from region to region. The Policy Committee will review suggestions for revising the law and what needs to be retained to ensure our workforce system continues to meet the needs of American businesses and workers. A recommendation on core principles will be developed and presented to the Council for adoption.

#### STATE LEGISLATION

House Bill 1323, Senate Bill 5048, speaks to clarify WDC and EDC roles and establishes how WDCs will coordinate with EDCs across the state to work together more effectively.

*Mark to provide the Policy Committee with particulars of who in the legislature, from our local area is working on what bill and/or committee that relates to the relevant legislation.*

#### WDCs IN STATE STATUTE

If the WDCs could be put in State statute, the WDCs might be able to tap into the State's general funds and also create more awareness of workforce development and its priorities for the State.

#### **ENSURE SUFFICIENT WIA FUNDS APPROPRIATIONS IN UPCOMING CONGRESSIONAL SESSION WHICH SUPPORT PUBLIC WORKFORCE INVESTMENT SYSTEM AND INFRASTRUCTURE TO MEET LOCAL COMMUNITY NEEDS**

Tabled for future discussion.

#### **OTHER BUSINESS**

- 1) Next meeting:
  - Will discuss changes on reauthorization
  - Feedback from the Services and Oversight Committee on GMAP and other shared issues.
    - Discuss to talk about what information the SAWDC wants to get from SKIES. What does the SAWDC want to know? How to measure our outcomes?
  - Alethea to do research on the SKIES program.
  - State Legislative Update

**NEXT POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING:** February 27<sup>th</sup>, 8:00 am at RIPPLES. Alethea to make arrangements.