

BRAD LITTLE
GOVERNOR

Wendi Secrist
Executive Director



Deni Hoehne
Chair
B. J. Swanson
Vice Chair

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL

317 West Main Street, Boise, Idaho 83735-0510

Meeting Minutes

Date: Wednesday, January 13, 2021
Time: 9:00 a.m. – 2:30 p.m. (Mountain Time)
Location: Zoom

Council Member Attendees: Deni Hoehne, Lori Barber, Shelli Bardsley, Elli Brown, Donna Butler, Linda Clark, Brian Cox, Jane Donnellan, Oscar Evans, Audrey Fletcher, Jeff Greene, Sarah Griffin, Dave Hannah, Tom Kealey, Kelly Kolb, Kate Lenz, Liza Leonard, Clay Long, Joe Maloney, Jan Nielsen, James Pegram, Jani Revier, Tom Schultz, BJ Swanson, John Young

Staff: Paige Nielebeck, Wendi Secrist, Amanda Ames, Matthew Thomsen, Jeffrey Bacon, Caty Solace

Guests: Craig Shaul

*Workforce Development Council is hereafter referred to as WDC

Call to order at 9:00 a.m.

Roll Call/Introductions –

****Review/Approve Agenda***

Mr. Evans requests unanimous consent to approve the January 13, 2021 agenda as presented. There are no objections.

****Approve Minutes from October 8, 2020 Meeting***

Mr. Kolb requests unanimous consent to approve the October 8, 2020 meeting minutes as written. There are no objections.

Executive Director's Report

Budget

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL OPERATING BUDGET - December 31, 2020										
STATE EXPENDITURE CATEGORY	WDTF Budget	Total WDTF YTD Spent	Total Ending WDTF	WIOA Budget	Total WIOA YTD Spent	Total Ending WIOA	TOTAL BEGINNING BUDGET	TOTAL YTD Spent	TOTAL YTD Spent %	TOTAL ENDING BALANCE
Salary & Benefits	\$395,300	\$190,681	\$204,619	\$96,700	\$45,542	\$51,158	\$492,000	\$236,223	48%	\$255,777
PERSONNEL	\$395,300	\$190,681	\$204,619	\$96,700	\$45,542	\$51,158	\$492,000	\$236,223	48%	\$255,777
Administrative Services & Supplies	\$6,000	\$845	\$5,155	\$1,000	\$4	\$996	\$7,000	\$849	12%	\$6,151
Communication Costs	\$4,000	\$2,913	\$1,087	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$4,000	\$2,913	73%	\$1,087
Computer Services & Supplies	\$26,500	\$13,262	\$13,238	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$26,500	\$13,262	50%	\$13,238
Employee Development, Memberships & Subscriptions	\$7,500	\$306	\$7,194	\$21,500	\$17,074	\$4,426	\$29,000	\$17,379	60%	\$11,621
Employee Travel Costs	\$25,000	\$329	\$24,671	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$25,000	\$329	1%	\$24,671
Contracts, Events, & Other Council Activities	\$528,500	\$71,581	\$456,919	\$24,300	\$0	\$24,300	\$552,800	\$71,581	13%	\$481,219
Rentals & Operating Leases	\$8,500	\$3,302	\$5,198	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$8,500	\$3,302	39%	\$5,198
OPERATING	\$606,000	\$92,536	\$513,464	\$46,800	\$17,078	\$29,722	\$652,800	\$109,614	17%	\$543,186
Grand Total	\$1,001,300	\$283,217	\$718,083	\$143,500	\$62,620	\$80,880	\$1,144,800	\$345,837	30%	\$798,963

STATE EXPENDITURE CATEGORY	TOTAL BEGINNING BUDGET	TOTAL YTD Spent	TOTAL ENDING BALANCE
TRUSTEE AND BENEFITS (Spending Authority for Grant Reimbursements)	\$11,750,000	\$769,700	\$10,980,300

WDTF Financial Summary - December 31, 2020	
WDTF Cash Balance 12-1-20	\$15,266,474
Revenue	\$7,267
Interest	\$5,528
Payments	\$171,303
WDTF Cash Balance 12-31-20	\$15,107,967
Obligated Employer Grants	\$1,170,176
Obligated Industry Sector Grants	\$3,116,750
Obligated Innovation Grants	\$134,698
*Obligated Outreach Projects & Allocated Budget	\$952,857
Short Term Financial Assistance Program	\$1,988,959
FY 20 WDTF Admin Costs	\$718,083
WDTF Obligated Balance	\$8,081,522
Unobligated Balance	\$7,026,445
Proposals Under Review	\$2,000,000
Unobligated Balance if all funded	\$5,026,445

*Includes all Outreach funding made available for the Committee to allocate for FY21.

WDTF FY21 Revenue	Transfer In	Interest	Collection Cost
July	\$288,860	\$9,995	
August	\$735,854	\$8,536	
September	\$8,499	\$6,072	
October	\$306,682	\$5,828	
November	\$588,911	\$5,553	\$8,553
December	\$7,267	\$5,528	
January			
February			
March			
April			
May			
June			
FY21 Totals	\$1,936,073	\$41,511	\$8,553

The Executive Committee provided Ms. Secrist the ability to extend WDTF grants contracts of grantees impacted by COVID-19 for an additional 6 months. Over half of the WDTF grantees have requested additional extensions. The Executive Committee is going to discuss providing grantees continued flexibility with the ongoing pandemic.

Annual Report

Ms. Secrist reviewed the WDTF annual report. Please see attached packet.

Supporting Idaho's Youth

At the July council meeting, Cathleen McHugh (State Board of Education) and Craig Shaul (Idaho Department of Labor) presented research on the characteristics of Idaho's youth who do not go on to any type of education after high school. Approximately 22,000 seniors graduated from high school in 2020, but historically only 48% of those individuals plan to immediately go on to postsecondary education. To further understand challenges facing our youth, we are working with the Idaho Policy Institute to specifically engage out-of-school youth in focus groups. This research will help the Council moving forward figure out what individuals need to be targeted, how to reach these individuals, and what services they need to successfully connect to the workforce.

Veterans and Native American Workforce Issues

Mr. Evans and Ms. Secrist are working with Senator Crapo's office on addressing Veteran and Native American workforce issues.

Senator Crapo sponsored legislation to enable the Department of Defense to release information to states on services members coming out of the military who are interested in relocating to a particular state. This would help connect veterans to workforce or education opportunities within that particular state. Ms. Secrist reviewed the Vet-Friendly Employer one-sheet provided by the new Idaho Veterans Chamber of Commerce. Please see attached document.

Next Steps

The WDC invested \$250,000 into the expansion of Next Steps. There will be an opportunity for the Council to take a detailed tour of the site expansion. If anyone is interested in attending the tour, they can reach out to Ms. Solace.

Youth Apprenticeship Grant

IBE has hired their full youth apprenticeship team. IBE is close to signing up the first few apprentices. Two or three of the apprentices are in cybersecurity programs. IBE is discussing the startup of Loan Officer and Drone Operator apprenticeship programs.

Doug Park

Doug Park served on the WDC's Outreach and WBL Committee. He is responsible for helping create the Council's strategic plan. Mr. Park has passed away. He was a strong supporter of the WDC and was always willing to help do anything to assist us.

Chair's Report

Chair Hoehne briefly reviewed the Committee Reports. Please see attached packet.

Executive Committee

The Executive Committee recently approved two grants.

- Idaho Rural Water Association for \$499,675
- Palouse Pathways for \$21,580

Teacher Externship Program

The Outreach Committee approved funding for the 2021 teacher externship program. The externship program is a joint initiative between the WDC and the STEM Action Center. The Executive Committee is discussing adding the externship program to the WDC operating budget since it is an ongoing project. The organizations who have participated in the externship program have had great experiences.

State Board of Education and WDC Executive Committee Meeting

The Executive Committee met with members of the State Board of Education to ensure the two entities are collaborating and aligning efforts. The WDC and State Board of Education are meeting regularly to keep communication open and ongoing.

The State Board of Education is working with the Idaho institutions to create a program where online learning is available to anyone who is a college student. The program is called Online Idaho. This will enable anyone in the state to take online courses from any Idaho institution. Online workforce training courses will be available through Online Idaho. This will provide access to training and education pathways to anyone in Idaho.

The WDC shared all the apprenticeship efforts around the state. The WDC is going to need to work with the institutions and schools on apprenticeships efforts. The WDC will also be looking for assistance in capturing data.

The relationship between the WDC and the State Board has been very valuable.

Governor Little's Recommendations to the WDC

Chair Hoehne met with the Governor to discuss the Council's work. Governor Little is pleased with the work of the council.

Governor Little offered Chair Hoehne two suggestions:

1. Find more opportunities to create jobs in rural Idaho. Rural areas are growing rapidly and need the support of the WDC. People are having to migrate to urban areas out of necessity because of the lack of opportunities.
2. Provide an opportunity for board development with the Council. Governor Little is recommending this to all of his boards. The members of the council are obligated to spread the news of all resources available to jobs seekers and employers. This could be a valuable tool to the Council members.

Ms. Hoehne briefly presented on board development options. Please see attached presentation.

Communicating the Council's Work & Impact

Ms. Solace presented on communicating the Council's work & impact. Please see attached presentation.

Discussion

It would be beneficial to mention something about opportunities being available to all demographics.

It would be helpful to spell out acronyms for those who are not familiar.

Break: 11:00 a.m. – 11:15 a.m.

****Committee Updates/Requests***

Outreach Committee

At the October council meeting, the Outreach Committee proposed an approach for WDC and WDTF outreach. The Council requested the Committee to brainstorm other options to get the desired outcomes.

The Committee is working towards potentially having the outreach efforts be a WDTF Outreach project proposal.

Discussion

Will the WDC actively reach out to regional groups to ask them to bring outreach projects to us?

- The Committee is looking at underserved areas in the state and identifying entities that have the capacity to support outreach (e.g., state agencies, higher education, etc.).

If the council members have any contact who might be a good fit for these projects, please reach out to Ms. Solace or Mr. Young.

***Short-Term Financial Assistance Policy Update**

The Policy Committee has been working on the short-term financial assistance policy. The WDC received funding from the CARES Act to start a short-term financial assistance program. The first step was to survey employers on their short-term workforce training needs. The survey identified the areas of training in high-demand and offer those trainings through the short-term financial assistance program. Idaho Launch will be utilized to provide the short-term training to Idahoans through the end of the year and then the WDC's short-term financial assistance program will take over and continue supporting short-term training for Idahoans.

Ms. Swanson reviewed the Short-Term Financial Assistance Policy. Please see attached packet.

Ms. Swanson requests unanimous consent to approve the Short-Term Financial Assistance Policy as presented.

Discussion

The Policy Committee has had great discussion on this topic and is ensuring the funds are being used carefully. Every dime of the WDTF needs to be spent to better Idaho and the wellbeing of all Idahoans.

There are no objections.

***2021 Legislative Priorities**

Ms. Swanson reviewed the 2021 Legislative Priorities. Please see attached packet.

Discussion

Within the Governor's recommendation for the Build Idaho Future Initiative are things specific to Idaho Career and Technical Education.

- \$1 million for secondary one-time program expansion and modernization.
- \$2.5 million for postsecondary one-time program expansion and modernization.
- \$500,000 for Workforce Training Centers to develop and deliver content to constituents across the six regional markets.
- \$750,000 for Workforce Training Centers to develop and deliver content specific to food processing and manufacturing.
- \$3 million for the College of Eastern Idaho's (CEI) Future Tech building.

Ms. Swanson requests unanimous consent to approve the 2021 Legislative Priorities with the additions above. There are no objections.

WIOA Youth Program Discussion

The Council is responsible for setting policies on how recaptured WIOA funds are distributed and used. The WDC identified special projects for the recaptured WIOA Youth funds to be spent on. If the funds are not spent by June 30, 2021, the funds go to IDOL. IDOL then has an additional year to spend the funds before they are returned to USDOL. The funds must be spent on eligible youth activities. WIOA requires that a state spend 75% of the WIOA youth funds on out-of-school youth. Up to 25% of the funds can be used on in-school youth. In 2017, the WDC adopted a policy that 100% of WIOA youth funds would be allocated to out-of-school youth. The reasoning behind the decision came down to funding amounts for in-school youth. The funding amounts to support in-school youth were too small to be effective in many areas of Idaho.

Ms. Secrist discussed this topic with the Executive Committee and the Committee brought up the question of why we are not helping Idaho youth before they drop out of school. The Committee suggested discussing with the full Council the possibility of changing policy to enable the use of funds for in-school youth.

Ms. Secrist reviewed the WIOA Youth Program information packet. Please see attached packet.

Discussion

Previously, how were funds spent on in-school youth?

- In the past, one way Idaho used the funds to place IDOL staff in technical schools to place students in work experiences. This program was widely liked by the technical schools.

Around 20 states have waivers with USDOL to be able to spend up to 50% of WIOA Youth funding on in-school youth. This could be an option for the WDC.

There is a need for in-school services. It seems like a better option to try to get a waiver from USDOL to provide funding to gaps in supporting in-school youth. If the WDC is not successful in getting a waiver then our options can be reevaluated.

It took IDOL staff awhile to shift focus to solely serving out-of-school youth. If the Council does decide to shift some funding to in-school youth, the Council should consider specific populations, so funds are not being wasted on youth who are already planning to go on to college, apprenticeship, etc.

The Vocational Rehabilitation programs are required to set aside 15% of their federal funding for in-school youth with disabilities. This is an area that VR needs to grow and expand. With COVID, it has been a challenge to meet the 15% requirement.

It will be important for the WDC to collaborate with the other entities involved in supporting in-school youth. Efforts will need to be targeted towards specific demographics.

There are benefits to reaching in-school youth before they become out-of-school youth. Out-of-school youth is a very hard population to find. The Boise State Public Policy is conducting research on out-of-school youth which will help determine if Idaho is serving out-of-school youth with the best methods, platforms, etc.

There are alternative high schools all over the state that serve high risk youth. Partnering with them would help keep the in-school youth from becoming out-of-school youth.

Many at-risk students are individuals with disabilities. VR tries to work with alternative high schools but find that many prefer to work with IDOL. It will be important to ensure the WDC or IDOL does not duplicate VR's efforts.

Could the funds be used to utilize probation officers to help with this population?

- Probation officers are in touch with in-school and out-of-school youth.
- IDOL reached out to probation officers for WIOA youth and adult programs.

Ms. Swanson met with Karen Wardell, a GED instructor at the Orofino Prison, and Ms. Wardell was very interested in the programs that could support her students. U of I is interested in helping provide education in prisons.

The Council would like to see a draft policy change and additional data before acting on this discussion.

Economic Outlook

Mr. Shaul presented Idaho's Economic Outlook. Please see attached presentation.

It is surprising that the Leisure and Hospitality industries did not take a bigger hit during COVID-19. How much of an impact did the PPP loans make in these industries?

- Several leisure and hospitality workers are not covered by unemployment insurance. The PPP loans have helped several industries. In certain areas of Idaho, the occupancy rates of hotels have been higher than expected. A lot of that has to do with neighboring states being shut down. Going forward, it is a concern that if the vaccine is not distributed in a timely fashion, it will majorly impact these industries.

Eastern Idaho has a large construction project with INL which will bring many construction jobs to the state. What does the construction industry look like in the rest of Idaho?

- Housing in Idaho has not slowed. There is heavy construction going on all around the state.
- Construction did not see a big impact from COVID-19 like many other industries. Demand for construction workers is very high.

Lunch: 12:45 pm – 1:00 pm

Workforce Development Training Fund Grants – Employer Grants Update

Mr. Thomsen provided an overview of Employer Grants. Please see attached packet.

Discussion

Is there a per employee/trainee threshold for funding amount?

- The quantitative funding model determines the amount of funding per person for the employer.
- \$4,000 per person is the max an employer can receive.

Aerocet

Aerocet was unable to join us today. Mr. Thomsen provided an overview of the grant. Please see attached packet.

Aerocet targeted internal, incumbent workers. They wanted to first try the program with existing staff they felt would be successful in the program. They plan on bringing on new staff using the same model.

Plant Therapy

Ms. Kitchen provided an overview of the Plant Therapy employer grant. Please see attached packet.

How many new and existing employees have received training?

- Ms. Kitchen will get those numbers to the Council.

House of Design

Ms. Anderson provided an overview of the House of Design employer grant.

What is the retention rate of new employees being trained?

- This year House of Design only had 15 people terminated (some were temporary workers). Out of the 80-90 hires, only 20 have left the business. They offer a lot of internal promotion opportunities.

Chair's Closing Remarks

The next council meeting is on April 14. Part of the agenda will be dedicated to board development. The meeting will last a full day.

Please consider hosting a teacher extern. Mr. Thomsen will send out an e-mail with information about the externships.

All Council members should commit to communicating about the WDC with at least one entity in their network by March 31. This could be facilitating a presentation that staff make or talking with an employer about ways the WDC can help. We want to see the word about the WDC being spread throughout the state.

Over the next quarter, Ms. Secrist will meet with each council member individually. She would like to discuss different community organizations, outreach efforts, and get feedback on the work of the council.

**Mr. Maloney requests unanimous consent to adjourn. There are no objections.
Adjourned at 1:27 p.m.**