

C.L. "BUTCH" OTTER
GOVERNOR



Trent Clark
Chair

B. J. Swanson
Vice Chair

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL

317 W Main Street, Boise, Idaho 83735-0510

Grant Review/Workforce Development Policy Committee Meeting Minutes – January 10, 2019

Grant Review Committee Members: Deni Hoehne, Jay Larsen, Michelle Stennett, Justin Touchstone, Steve Widmyer, Ken Wiesmore

Policy Committee Members: B.J. Swanson, Kelly Kolb, Joe Maloney, Marie Price, Jake Reynolds, Christi Rood, Todd Schwarz, John Smith, Scott Syme, Roy Valdez, Lori Wolff

Guests: Jan Nielsen, Jason Hudson, Matt VanVleet, Brian Cox, Trent Clark, Jani Revier

Staff: ~~Matthew Thomsen, Paige Nielebeek~~, William Burt, Wendi Secrist

Called to order at 3:10

Welcome

Review Agenda

Roll Call

Noted above.

Grant Review Committee Perspective on WDTF Policy

Ms. Hoehne shared the perspective of the Grant Review Committee based on their experience over the past year in recommending grants for approval and the discussions on grants that have occurred during Council meetings. The committee would like more direction and guidance, via policy, to decide which types of training should be approved or not approved.

- The problem is that without clarity in the policy, the committee doesn't have a defensible way to tell a grantee no. Safety training is one of the questionable areas. Transferrable skills should drive our investments but we continually see safety training and other types of training that are just a cost of doing business.
- Discussion ensued about whether the committee is making a drastic change by allowing the last Industry Sector Grant. A question was asked, what is the focus and the purpose of the grants? Ms. Hoehne gave examples of different grants that had different purposes
- Mr. Clark asked the committees for priorities to shape scoring model. What will we not fund? A question was asked whether we are trying to entice businesses to come to this state or are we creating incredible opportunities for our citizens? Are we an incubator to try new workforce development models?
- One way to push things to the Industry Sector side is to use opposite assumptions. Employer Grants would have higher threshold and only be approved if all conditions are met. Industry Sector grants

would follow the opposite assumption and be approved as long as they don't violate any of the conditions.

- A question was asked about the mix of employer grants vs. industry sector grants that have been awarded. Ms. Secrist distributed a chart showing that between the inception of the sector grant program in 2014 and the end of 2017, 14% of the grants awarded were sector grants. Just in calendar year 2018, 29% of the grants awarded were sector grants. We are moving in the right direction.
- A suggestion was made to give the Grant Review Committee a list of non-allowable trainings. Ms. Hoehne reinforced that this would be ideal, but members agreed that it could be difficult to create a comprehensive list of what is not allowed because employers are asking for so many different things.
- A question was asked whether progress has been made after the last Council meeting when it was requested that the Policy Committee examine the two bullet points that were struck from the draft policy. Ms. Secrist reviewed a comparison of other states' policies. A point was raised that the name of the program is Workforce Development "Training" Fund. Any time we do training, especially transferrable skills training, we are meeting the mission. Therefore, we need to continue being flexible with what is allowed. A question was asked if the grants that have been approved since 2014 have been successful. Ms. Secrist referenced the last evaluation report findings. She stressed that we are making changes that will allow us to gather more information to gauge success better.
- Ms. Hoehne was asked for more detail about which trainings the Grant Review Committee has struggled with. She responded with a list of different trainings they have questioned. She did mention that the type of training is scored differently (ex. structured on the job, training that leads to industry credentials, apprenticeships, etc.) and asked if that matters to Council?
- A member shared that for Employer Grants where they are creating new positions, many of the trainings for new hires are more comprehensive and thorough than the standard annual trainings. Leadership training is also very important because it is teaching new people that come into the company the "culture".
- There was general consensus that the policy committee needed to meet again to discuss specific trainings and what is allowed and not allowed – and this may require another in-person meeting. Mr. Clark brought up that this will be an ongoing process (the policy committee) and that the Quantitative Scoring Model should be updated annually. It was requested that Ms. Hoehne share her list with the Policy Committee.

Labor Market Information Tool

Ms. Secrist spoke about the yearlong process that resulted in the development of a dynamic web-based tool to look at occupations in demand.

- A member suggested the tool could be used to focus our funds where the shortage is.

Scoring Matrix for Employer Grants

Ms. Secrist distributed a copy of the current scoring model and a draft model the Policy Committee has been reviewing. She spoke of the challenges with the old model, such as the UI experience rating, and how it prohibits the grant review committee from seeing the individual scores by column.

- The draft model takes the unemployment insurance tax experience rating out and adds the points to the County Unemployment Rate (the weighting of .5 becomes 1.0). Alternatively, we could shift to another indicator.
- Another change, based on October's policy updates, is to tie the points awarded for wages to the County Average Wage (CAW).
- Another change is to separate the type of training from the wages, by adding them instead of multiplying. This becomes important in valuing apprenticeship training. The apprenticeship model acknowledges that the apprentice does not come in with all the skills needed for their job. Thus, their wage is lower at the beginning and progresses as their skills develop. When the two factors are multiplied, the result is lower than what we might see in valuing registered apprenticeship.

- The scale to determine how much should be awarded per job was also modified. Previously if you scored 40 points or below, it was up to discretion of the committee. Now it has a decreasing scale with set amounts, and no discretion. The upper limit of the scale will be discussed by the Policy Committee at their next meeting.
- A handout was shared showing a comparison of what some of our past grantees would have scored on the new model vs. the old model. The new model gives a slight edge to potential grants that are more aligned with the CAW.
- A question was asked how quickly the new scoring model could be approved and deployed. The Policy Committee should be finalizing it at their February meeting and the recommendation will come to the Council in April.

Innovation and Industry Sector Grant Scoring Rubrics

A handout was shared showing the factors for scoring rubrics for industry sector and innovation grants. These rubrics need to be developed by the committees as they currently do not exist. A question was asked if we could also match the Employer Grants to the “in demand” jobs. Ms. Secrist said that staff is ready to work on this.

Adjourned at 4:34 by BJ Swanson and Joe Maloney.