

Region 2 Workforce Investment Board

Minutes

July 8, 2011
1618 SW 1st Ave.
Portland, OR

In attendance:

Board Members: Chair James Paulson, Vice-Chair Don Jensen, Warren Fish, Warren Jimenez, Roy Rogers, Eileen Drake, Kevin Dull, Carl Moyer, Deanna Palm, Steven Morris, Jackie Sandquist, Caryn Lilley, Vickie Burns, Bob Tackett, Kimberly Branam, deDrae Cottrell, Steve Rudman, Ron Hauge, Jay Bloom

Staff: Andrew McGough, Patrick Gihring, Pam Hester

Guests: Mary Li, Multnomah County Department of Human Services Manager

Handouts:

- April 2011 minutes
- Mid-Year Review
- Aligned Partner Model

Call To Order

The meeting was called to order by Chair James Paulson at 7:35 a.m. Quorum was announced.

CONSENT AGENDA

Carl Moyer moved to accept the April 2011 minutes. Ron Hauge seconded the motion. Motion was unanimously approved.

MID-YEAR REVIEW

Andrew McGough introduced a video from the “Over 50 and Out of Work” series. The Over 50 and Out of Work project uses video to document the stories of older, unemployed Americans and the variety of issues unemployment has on them and their families

McGough explained that of July 1, 2011, we are beginning the year with a funding decrease of \$3.5 million. As a result, Worksystems (WSI) has reduced staff by 20%; the Access Center in Forest Grove was closed, and the hours at New Columbia were reduced. We will probably see a similar reduction of staff at our partner organizations in the field.

The unemployment rate is 9.3% which equates to 185,500 Oregonians. In addition, about 400,000 Oregon workers are underemployed putting Oregon at #3 in the nation for underemployment. Nearly 24,000 in our region will exhaust their unemployment insurance (UI) by the end of the year. Many agencies are also experiencing reductions. Adult education funding is down 9% and TANF is potentially down 50%. The only way to address these declines is to look at alignment of services and build more partnerships.

ALIGNED PARTNER MODEL

Patrick Gihring, WSI Adult Services Program Manager, discussed the partnerships that have emerged over the last two years and the Aligned Partner Model. The State Integration Model was initiated in 2008 and involved a major reorganization of the One-Stop System. The model features co-location and programmatic integration between Workforce Investment Act (WIA) program providers and the

Oregon Employment Department (OED) working together to build a set of services that can more effectively serve our common customer pool. We also changed the way we organized services and partnered with other providers to fill some of the gaps in support services.

Locally the integration of WIA and OED was just the first step. We immediately set to work on developing a more robust set of partnerships and alignment of resources. We've developed a system that's optimized for partnering for workforce development services, consistency in processes and services, and coordination of direct access to aligned partners. Through these partnerships, we are also striving to better integrate our competitive grants to build on our collaborative efforts and maximize results for customers.

Pam Hester, WSI Senior Project Manager, presented the Action for Prosperity Pilot project. The purpose of the model was to take advantage of existing expertise instead of re-creating/replicating services. Multnomah County and Worksystems combined resources and co-funded WorkSource Liaison positions. The 8 Sun Programs in Multnomah County provided case management and support services. The 5 WSPM Centers dedicated training resources and a full range workforce services. One of the keys to the success of the pilot was the WorkSource Liaison position. The Liaisons provided training on WorkSource products, career mapping, assisted with trouble-shooting, and set the platform for when clients go to the WorkSource Center. The Liaisons provided on-going technical assistance to the case managers about our system with the goal of the case managers becoming part of the WorkSource system. Over 70% of the clients in the program became employed with an average wage of \$11/hr.

Central City Concern (CCC) is another example of the aligned partnership model. CCC has a dedicated WorkSource Liaison to provide training and technical assistance to their clients to help them access the WorkSource system.

Based on the success of the model, WSI expanded the model to partner with Home Forward, Volunteers of America, and the Re-entry Transition Center in Multnomah County. In Washington County WSI is partnering with Department of Housing Services and Community Action. In spite of budget cuts, WSI is moving forward with collaborating with the Department of Human Services (DHS) to coordinate cases and resources and has identified specific plan coordinators who are charged with working closely with case managers and WorkSource Liaisons.

Mary Li, Multnomah County Department of Human Services Manager, provided information on the Action for Prosperity Model. Through the Multnomah County Community Action Anti-Poverty initiation they first determined what package of services was needed for a household to be stable:

Housing

Access to a variety of support services and life skills

Access to WorkSource training and development product and services

The Anti-Poverty Initiative aligned services with Multnomah County, City of Portland, Home Forward and Worksystems, Inc. ARRA provided most of the funding for the initiative. The pilot focused on unemployed people who could quickly be put back to work within one year. These were people who had been employed but lost their job as a result of the recession. Last year the program provided services to 300 households. 61% of the clients working with the Liaison became employed last year compared to 50% that came through the general labor exchange. Because the ARRA Stimulus funds have ended, the second phase of the partnership is being funded using current resources. This model works with a variety of situations and the model that Multnomah County feels they need to use for all their anti-poverty and support services. Home Forward came to Multnomah County with an offer of "mid-term" rent assistance of 2-3 years using the same model. WSI agreed to continue their partnership using this model. The Department of Human Services is now part of the

partnership. This partnership helps clients phase out of receiving benefits instead of suddenly losing them and has broken down barriers to providing services.

Steve Rudman, Executive Director of Home Forward, explained the role of the Portland Housing Authority in the partnership. Home Forward serves 15,000 households. Some of their clients are what they call “career barriered” meaning that they can’t compete with people who have more education and training. The alignment provides an opportunity to work together combining resources and focusing on what each agency can provide and does best. With rent assistance there is a disincentive to work since rent assistance is based on income. They now have asset building programs that encourage people to work and economically integrate into the community. To do this we must continue to look at ways to align services and combine resources to provide opportunities to get people on the pathway to self-sufficiency.

2010 presented a number of ongoing challenges - the economy remained sluggish, jobs were scarce, and many businesses continued to struggle. Despite these obstacles, we built new partnerships, seized new opportunities and explored new ideas. The unrelenting grip of the recession and the reality of doing more with less inspired us to dig deep and consider every option to better serve our customers and community. Through our growing network of partners we demonstrated that by working together we can make a difference regardless of the challenge. We are proud these efforts and look forward to getting the region back to work.

MEETING ADJOURNED AT 8:58 a.m.