

## **SOUTH CENTRAL COLORADO WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD MEETING**

Alamosa Workforce Center  
Conference Room  
Tuesday March 10, 2015  
1:00 PM to 3:00 PM

**Members present:**

Roni Wisdom  
Scott VanGieson  
Michael Yohn  
Mike Jones  
Dawn Farrington  
Debra Gomez  
Clarke Becker  
Betty Velasquez  
Barb Pacheco  
Shannon Garcia

**Representing:**

Board Chair  
Vice Chair  
LEO  
Private Ag  
TTA (Phone)  
TTA  
Rural Consortium Director  
SE/SC Region Director  
Alamosa WFC  
WFC

**Call to Order:** Roni welcomed all board members and called the meeting to order.

**General Updates:** Roni asked for general updates from staff since it had been a while since the last board meeting. Debra stated they have been busy and that they have a new staff person. Debra noted that they had been doing more presentations throughout the region and have been very involved with the community. Debra also noted that they have been working with the Restorative Justice Program as well. Barb stated that she has been busy trying to get a Healthcare SECTORS group going. Barb also stated that it is getting very busy and more job openings have been coming available. Dawn asked that the youth council be discussed at some point during the meeting.

**WIOA Discussion:** Roni stated that WIOA will be coming into effect and the regulations will be coming out soon; she then asked Clarke to share information that he might have regarding WIOA. Clarke informed the board that the National Association of Workforce Boards (NAWB) Conference is coming up soon; Clarke noted that he has been in the past but will be going again along with seven other Consortium Staff and board members. Clarke noted that Lee Wheeler-Berliner from the Council will also be attending. Clarke stated that the Act has been signed but now the rules are being created, he noted that the rules were to be out January 18<sup>th</sup> but they were not released and have not been to date. Clarke stated that CDLE has had representation at meetings in Dallas regarding WIOA to make sure that Colorado has a voice and is at the table. Betty provided a PowerPoint with the known's and unknowns of WIOA to date. Clarke stated that one change that will come about with WIOA will be surrounding the procurement process. Another change Clarke discussed is that what we now called regions will become areas. Clarke noted that Mesa County has petitioned to become a federally recognized region separate from the Rural Consortium. Clarke

stated that there is talk of how many planning areas there will be, and there is still discussion around what the planning areas will look like. Clarke stated that at this time there are a lot more questions than answers. Clarke stated that the draft rules will not be out by NAWB as originally thought but it will be a great learning opportunity for all in attendance. Clarke also stated that beginning on July 1<sup>st</sup> Workforce Investment Boards will become Workforce Development Boards. Clarke stated that within the Consortium there are three regions with contractors and he fully expects that those contracts will be modified for WIOA. Dawn said that she was assuming that the contract would just be modified based on performance measures. Clarke also noted that participants coming in under WIA now will be judged under WIOA regulations. Clarke stated that the Workforce Development Council is trying to be proactive with WIOA. Clarke also discussed that there will need to be new state legislation because HB-1083 will expire at the end of June; Clarke noted that there is a need to have information in front of the Legislature soon. Clarke also noted that Joe Barela, the Director of Arapaho Douglas Works, is on 6 month loan to the Department of Labor as WIOA develops. Clarke stated that there will most likely be amendments and waivers as WIOA rolls out. Clarke noted that at this time Broomfield will be staying within the Consortium.

Betty referenced the mandatory planning partners under WIOA in the PowerPoint that she handed out; she noted that these stakeholders will be invited to a meeting that Lee Wheeler Berliner will be conducting in the South Central Region. Betty and the board looked at those that are at the table already and those that will need to be brought in. Betty then referenced the optional partners; she also noted that a new MOU with these partners will need to be put into place. There was discussion about the potential partners that can be contacted. There were also some questions regarding the local region. Clarke stated that he does not believe that the local regions will change, the only one that may is Northwest and Rural Resort but he doesn't even believe that they will change. Roni said that the board needs to discuss is rebuilding locally. Roni noted for every non private member added to the board two private will also need to be added. Roni then discussed a project she has been working on with Rio Grande County DHS and the Workforce Center in working with people with barriers that have been out of work for a while and trying to pair them up with an employer that will assist them in gaining work experience and possibly hiring them. If there is an issue their case manager from DHS will work with them. Roni noted that they are trying to get housing transportation involved as well. Roni stated that they are trying to get individuals employed long term rather than having them work only for a short period of time. Roni noted that the group has been working on applying for grants to assist in paying for individuals that go to work for a certain period of time. Michael asked if there was a state bill that was implemented to assist with the programs like the one that Roni was discussing, Clarke stated that it isn't a house bill but it is the Governors initiative; Hire for Colorado.

Roni discussed that the board needs to be relevant to what is going on in all counties in the region; Roni also noted that it is really important to get more employers on the board. Mike stated it is very difficult to get employers interested in serving on the board unless there is a benefit for them, he suggested a possible script to utilize with employers. Betty stated that it could be framed as to how the Workforce Center helps benefit their agencies through all of our free services. Betty also suggested that an Employer Forum has been discussed before as a way to reach employers. Mike stated that he thinks there needs to be more information given when someone does call to post an order in the system as to what the center has to offer. Clarke stated that it is important that staff is

aware of what is needed in the community; staff need to understand what is needed from business. Roni discussed that the board does need to find out what business wants and needs; she referenced sectors and the difficulty that there has been in the region with a sectors initiative. Michael suggested possibly contacting the mushroom farm, and he noted that there is a meeting tonight with a solar farm that could be coming into the area. The board then discussed that the construction jobs that come in from the solar farms are only available for approximately three months but they will more than likely hire around 200 people during the construction phase and then once that is complete 3-4 will be hired permanently. Scott stated that it is hard with those companies because they have a job for a few months but there is no longevity. Discussion was had surrounding job retention in the companies that were at the table as well as the age range of individuals utilizing the Workforce Center services. Roni asked about the types of businesses that are currently posting jobs in Connecting Colorado; Barb stated that there has been construction, solar company positions, concrete finishers, restaurants positions, hotel positions, and a few ag orders. Michael stated in the paper today there is a variety of openings currently in many different types of industries. The board then discussed the Unemployment Rate. Mike discussed that maybe the board should focus on recruiting HR representatives to be on board and not necessarily the executives. Clarke stated that under WIOA he has not seen anything in the act stating that it needed to be an executive. Roni asked if a governmental organization couldn't represent the business sector because they are very business oriented. Clarke stated that he has not seen anything to state otherwise. Roni asked if the board would like to have an Employer Forum or have a road show. Mike thinks that the personal approach will work best and Roni agreed. Clarke stated that the board can identify people then go speak with them about the benefits of the board. Betty stated that in Otero County there is a HR Roundtable where HR agencies come together to meet and share information; if there is a group like that locally that would be a forum to bring in the Workforce Board information. Dawn suggested recruiting existing customers that post jobs. Barb will get a list of businesses for the board, Roni asked for the info Monday or Tuesday of next week. Roni also asked the other members for input on potential members; Betty suggested CDS, because of the large service area they cover. The other members stated that they would think about it. Betty asked about Blue Peaks Development Center, Barb will contact them because Roni noted that they are hiring.

Roni asked that an email be sent out to board members letting them know about upcoming events that will be taking place that the Workforce Center is involved in. Betty stated that weekly events can be sent out to the board.

Roni noted that she likes the idea of a script of why the board is an important board to belong to and how it can be valuable to an employer. Betty stated that she can send out the PowerPoint of the role of a board member if that would help in creating the script.

There was then discussion of how the planning affects the numbers especially the wage measure. Betty stated that now there is a focus on enrolling more individuals and focusing on the hard to serve. There was then discussion of how Mesa County could be leaving the Rural Consortium and how that could affect numbers in the Consortium.

Betty suggested doing one hour GoTo Meetings to discuss numbers, and then meet in person and have more of a hands on meeting. There were not any objections from the board.

Scott asked what customers that are coming into the Workforce Center are looking for; Debra stated she works with training and the majority of people coming in ask for assistance with a CDL, or things relative to the medical field mostly. Barb stated they see a little bit of everything and it is hard to pin point.

There was then discussion of the Veterans that are registered in the system and the referrals that are made to the local VSO's and what occurs after that. It was discussed that currently if the Workforce Center refers to a VSO they are unaware of what occurs as a result of that referral. It was discussed that there needs to be follow-up to ensure that services are being provided and Veterans are getting assistance they need. There was then discussion of whether or not skills that Veterans gain while in the field can be utilized and transferred to civilian positions. Betty stated that training has been requested for staff and she also discussed an online crosswalk that references skills gained in the military and how they correlate with civilian jobs.

Roni informed the board that in May the Colorado Rural Workforce Consortium meeting will be held in La Junta.

Betty informed the board that she will schedule a WIOA Meeting for the South Central Region; she will keep the board informed as to when it will take place.

**Approval of Minutes:** The previous board meeting minutes were motioned for approval by Mike the motion was seconded by Scott, and the motion carried.

Discussion surrounding the Youth Council was tabled until the next meeting.

**Adjournment:** With no further business the meeting ended.

**Next Meeting:** Tuesday April 21<sup>st</sup> at the Monte Vista Workforce Center from 1:00-3:00

Respectfully Submitted,

*Shannon Garcia*