



# Humboldt County Workforce Investment Board

## MINUTES

Friday, December 15, 2006, 8:30 am – 10:30 am  
Humboldt County Office of Education • Sequoia Room  
901 Myrtle Avenue • Eureka, CA

**Members Present:** Janet DePace (Chair), Cedar Reuben (Vice Chair), Emilia Bartolomeu, Terry Coltra, Joe Davey, Ben Fewell, Barbara Groom, Randy Hansen, Linda Hartman, Mariann Hassler, Carol Hill, Kim Kellenberg, Len Mayer, Libby Maynard, Stephanie McCaleb, Jeff Nelson, Tina Nerat, David Perry, Bob Sampson, Jon Sapper, Liana Simpson, Jim Smith

**Members Absent:** Jeff Bobbitt, Debi Callahan, Maura Eastman, Gregg Foster, Maggie Gainer, Jim Hubbard, Bob Laffranchi, Bonnie Neely/John Woolley, Kermit Thobaben

**Others Present:** Jim Bragg, Michael Millenheft, Greg Werronen, Chris Witt, Jacqueline Debets, Jose Quezada, Dorre Howard

### 1. OPENING:

**1.1 Call to Order:** Chair Janet DePace called the meeting to order at 8:39am with a quorum.

**1.2 Self-introductions of WIB members, staff and public present:** Everyone introduced themselves.

**1.3 Adjustments to the Agenda:** Add a discussion of the PALCO layoffs as 3.2. Adjust numbering of other items accordingly.

### 2. PUBLIC COMMENT: None

### 3. DISCUSSION & ACTION

**3.1 Consent Agenda:** The following items are recommended for approval via a single vote of the membership. Members who have questions about any of these items may request that the Chair pull that item off the consent agenda for discussion. *Approve minutes from October 20, 2006 meeting.*

**Motion** by Mariann Hassler to approve the consent agenda, second by Bob Sampson, motion carried unanimously.

**3.2 PALCO Layoffs:** 81 people have been laid off. 70 attended a rapid response orientation. One already has a job and one is in a masters program. Job fairs have been held. Considering the late notice this is moving very fast and is going smoother than other layoffs. Housing has not been an issue as of yet. Cuts were of employees with 1 year of service to over 30 years of service.

**3.3 Targets of Opportunity update:** Due to delays in getting final data from EDD, the draft report is delayed. It will be out next week. The Executive Committee will review it in January and it will be circulated to the full membership before strategic planning. The final draft presentation will be on the Full WIB agenda for the February 16, 2007 meeting.

Because we are now using regional data, no data will be suppressed and reports will be more helpful, but that is why it is taking longer to get. As a result of having this data, we have been able to write four grants, one of which has been approved to help continue this project.

**3.4 Strategic planning retreat:** The Executive Committee set the date of January 31, 2007, 8a-4pm at the Humboldt Area Foundation. The facilitators from our last strategic planning session, Virginia Hamilton and John Baker of the CA Workforce Association, will facilitate the retreat. John Melville of Collaborative Economics will also be on hand to assist in applying the Targets of Opportunity research to strategic actions. All members encouraged to attend.

**3.5 Local Hiring preference policy (see WIB Report #92FW):** The WIB took action at the June 2006 Full WIB meeting requesting that staff and the Executive Committee look into a local hiring preference policy for the WIB to discuss and potentially recommend to the Board of Supervisors.

Staff looked into this and found we don't have a need for a local hiring preference policy because 85% of workers on government projects in our area are local and Federal guidelines mandate 50% local workers.

**Motion** by Liana Simpson to accept the staff recommendation not to implement a local hiring preference policy, second by David Perry, motion carried unanimously.

**3.6 Legislative briefing:** Bruce Stenslie of the CA Workforce Association is on the phone today to provide an update on reauthorization of WIA, current leadership, possible policy changes and budget.

Mr. Stenslie thanked us for the opportunity to speak with us. We have been waiting four years for WIA to be re-authorized. He said on the House side, George Miller is chairing. He finds higher education most important; we want access to training and services. WIA re-authorization will be competing in committee with 'no child left behind' which the Democrats don't really like. On the Senate side, Ted Kennedy will chair. In terms of budget, eleven bills have been approved. We did not get more money, but the big cuts that had been expected won't occur. The Democrats are fearful of increasing the deficit. It will be at least 1-2 years before we get more money. As far as local area designation, the Feds are looking for efficiency, but the Democrats are committed to local control. Membership requirements could change, including a requirement of 15% labor. California lost \$26 million in WIA funding this year, a 1/3 reduction, due to the formula used. The Federal cut was 7%. We also lost 40% of our dislocated worker money. We have an opportunity to get the formula changed now, will be looking for letters from us to our legislators.

Questions:

- Will the definition of out-of-school youth change? Currently, those at risk who are in an alternative school are counted as in school. The definition of out-of-school youth will likely change to include those in alternative continuation schools. It is also possible that the 70/30 out-of-school split might change to 50/50.
- Will there be a change in money for veterans? There is a possibility of more discretionary money being targeted at veterans.

**4. BREAK**

**5. PRESENTATION: Newcomers Center:** Chris Witt of Eureka Adult School is here today to provide a report on the Newcomers Center program that the WIB is funding through a 15% grant.

The purpose of the Newcomers Center is to train non-English speakers for the workforce, and address other needs they may have to succeed in the workforce. The WIA grant is being used to add staff and to expand the Newcomers Center to Fortuna and McKinleyville. One-on-one case management is provided to non-English speakers. A curriculum was developed for the adult education program. Traditionally, adult school funding is academic only, but this grant was used to expand services to businesses. A curriculum specific to business was developed. Business folks met with ESL teachers to let them know what non-English speakers need to know to work for them, such as how to fill out a job application, what a W2 is, and arranging for time off to go home at Christmas. There are also vocational counselors. Kits were developed for work sites so that a non-teacher can provide training in the workplace. The Center has been creative in their outreach methods. Posters and word of mouth are used. Outreach is done at job sites. Employers are queried about their training needs. One-on-one training is provided. The goal is to serve employers and meet the mandates of the grant.

Questions:

- How many people are needed for a class to be held? The break-even point is 10-12.
- Do you train for restaurants? Since businesses have different needs, a kit was developed with instructions that will cover a variety of needs, such as telephone skills or safety. Also, they came up with a list of words a person would need to know for their job. At start of each class, the instructor has everyone bring a word they need to know.
- Do you work with Hmong? We haven't yet, but all languages are covered.
- What kind of a grant was this? Governors 15% Discretionary Funds from WIA.
- What is the documentation process? The same as that used by ETD: right to work documentation, must register for selective service if between 18-26 years of age.

Staff added that the Newcomers Center is holistic, covering not just language, but help in finding jobs and housing. It helps to integrate people into our community by providing what they need. That is why people are attracted to the Center. Also, this is attracting resources and services to the school that can be used for all students.

If you know a person or business that needs these services, please refer them to Chris Witt at: Eureka Adult School, Newcomers Employment and Advancement Project, 674 Allard Avenue, Eureka, CA 95503, 707-441-3329, [wittc@eurekacityschools.org](mailto:wittc@eurekacityschools.org).

**5.1 Additional WIA Youth Program Funds – Final Allotment (see WIB Report 89FW):**

**Motion** by Mariann Hassler to add this as an emergency item to the agenda, second by Emilia Bartolomeu, motion carried unanimously. This was previously discussed in two Youth Council meetings and two Executive Committee meetings.

The Youth Council has been unable to achieve quorum in order to vote on this item. Staff and the Executive Committee recommend that the final allotment of PY 06-07 youth program funding be set aside to be used for youth work experience.

**Motion** by Jim Smith to set aside these funds for youth work experience, second by Emilia Bartolomeu, motion carried unanimously.

**6. REPORTS:** The following are submitted as written reports.

**6.1 Staff:** We were approved for \$185,000 Rapid Response special project to continue Targets of Opportunity work and business service integration into the Job Market.

**6.2 Youth Council:** Working on a grant application for high-risk youth project.

**7. ANNOUNCEMENTS:** None

**8. CLOSING:** The meeting adjourned at 10:35am.

**The next Full WIB meeting will be Friday, February 16, 2007, 8:30-10:30am.**