



Humboldt County Workforce Investment Board

Notes

Friday • October 17, 2008 • 8:30 am – 10:30 am
Humboldt County Office of Education • Annex
901 Myrtle Avenue • Eureka, CA

Members Present: Greg Aslanian, Emilia Bartolomeu, Terry Coltra, Janet DePace, Ben Fewell, Ahn Fielding, Maggie Gainer, Linda Grimm, Barbara Groom, Randy Hansen, Mariann Hassler, Beverly M. Lewis, Jeff Nelson, Tina Nerat, Cedar Reuben, Bob Sampson, Jon Sapper, James Smith, Sallie Speaker, John Woolley

Members Absent: Ernie Behm, Helen Callahan, Joe Davey, Maura Eastman, Carol Hill, Bob Laffranchi, Val Martinez, Libby Maynard, David Perry, Bryan Plumley, Liana Simpson, Alex Stillman

Others Present: Sean McLaughlin, Jeff Zander, Jacqueline Debets, Jose Quezada, Sandy Alcaraz

1. OPENING:

- 1.1 Call to Order: Chair Cedar Reuben called the meeting to order at 8:37 a.m. without a quorum.
- 1.2 Self-introductions of WIB members, staff and public present: Introductions were made around the table.
- 1.3 Adjustments to the Agenda: None.

2. PUBLIC COMMENT: Sean McLaughlin (Access Humboldt) wanted to let everyone know they're committed to WIB and many other partners. Any ideas for programming are welcome.

3. DISCUSSION & ACTION ITEMS:

- 3.1 Consent Agenda: Unable to accept consent agenda; have not met quorum.
- 3.2 Budget 2008-09: Budget is similar to other budgets this time of year. We're at a bit of a valley right now; we have a little over one mill dollars in grants to apply for in the next few months. Regional Innovations grant, a Veterans grant for half a million dollars and another Rapid Response grant for one million. There was a rescission this last year so we have less carry over than usual. We are continuing to have layoffs. Has the contract for Rapid Response been resolved? Yes it has, North Coast Small Business Development Center received the contract; they will receive 30% of our annual allocation. *Will there be additional Dislocated Worker funds available?* We think that our existing timber grants will be sufficient through the layoffs that we are experiencing now. We can enroll people immediately; we think that will be sufficient. Anything beyond that and we may have to go for additional assistance. Other timber related companies have also been affected by Green Diamonds closure. Some layoff at California Redwood Company, those layoffs are temporary; these people can enroll in Rapid Response. These are Federal dollars, not state dollars. Fifteen percent discretionary pot would be the only thing affected, but may not be related. Rapid Response funding shouldn't be affected. Humboldt County's unemployment rate has tracked parallel or a little below the rest of the state. Is

there need for additional Dislocated Worker/Rapid Response funds in light of the closure of Green Diamond? Dennis Mullins description is the spike that was seen is over dramatized; he has anticipated a bit of a hike that will bear out over time. Other counties are higher than Humboldt. Whether the state will have VW funding is unknown. There's a Federal UI claims but that doesn't really affect our seasonally adjusted rates. Our unemployment rate is at 7.4% right now. Unemployment isn't necessarily about loss of jobs but those people who are collecting benefits. **Motion** made by Bob Sampson, second by Maggie Gainer to approve the 2008/09 budget. Motion carried.

3.3 Local Strategic Plan Modification: This is a plan that is required by the state, which is updated yearly. Requires a 30-day review by the public. We anticipated some of the questions so when the directive came out we were ready to move. Only correction to be made was making the change from Humboldt Child Care Council to Changing Tides. This will go to the Board of Supervisors for their signature on the 28th and then will be sent to the state on the 29th. The Executive Committee reviewed the document twice. **Motion** made by Maggie Gainer, second by Terry Coltra to approve the Local Strategic Plan. So carried. Regional Innovations is a Federal grant to be used for moving out of Targets of Opportunity and moving out regionally. We will partner with Mendocino County on this one.

3.4 StepUp for youth Jobs: Jose Quezada gave a quick PowerPoint presentation on StepUp; following are highlights.

- ❖ Will have a 9 minute video at the end of this presentation
- ❖ StepUp is a public and private partnership that matches youth to jobs in the area
- ❖ Youth matched to jobs that make sense for the youth and employer
- ❖ Workshops provide tools for youth to get their own job
- ❖ Assessment gives youth an extra set of eyes looking out for jobs
- ❖ John Woolley and Terry Coltra hosted first StepUp Employer Breakfast
- ❖ Jeff Nelson hosts 2nd StepUp employer breakfast
- ❖ **Summer 2007**
- ❖ 75 youth matched to summer jobs
- ❖ 21 into private sector jobs
- ❖ Digital Pathways – Hoopa begins
- ❖ **Winter 2008**
- ❖ BOS signs off on MOA
- ❖ WIB, Probation and Social Services pledge \$450,000.00 over 3 years
- ❖ **Spring 2008**
- ❖ 2nd Digital Pathways in eureka
- ❖ Sequoia Gas hosts Eel River Valley employer breakfast
- ❖ Eureka Natural Foods hosts Eureka employee breakfast
- ❖ **Winter/Spring 2008**
- ❖ WIB staff begin to build systems for start-up July, 2008
- ❖ **Summer 2008**
- ❖ 200 plus youth touched by StepUp
- ❖ 121 youth directly hired for summer jobs
- ❖ 116 youth received incentive payments
- ❖ Humboldt digital Pathways
- ❖ Hoopa High School
- ❖ Increased enrollment in high school computer classes

Video team organizer Tom Voorhees thanked Jose for all the work done; introduced the team involved with making the video. This video team was able to put this together in a very short period of time. *How old are each of you?* Eighteen and nineteen years old. They received their experience through digital classes and have been doing this only since April. *Are you*

interested in continuing with this type of experience? Next thing on the bill is working as teachers' aides for the next Digital Pathways class.

3.5 Targets/Occupations of Opportunity: Many times the word gets out about Targets of Opportunity in a social environment. Key talking points would help get this information out, possibly on a business card or maybe a lapel button. Actual businesses that represent each target area would be great. The momentum is picking up as this information gets out. It's important that the training institutions start gearing up with apprenticeships that can provide the specialty skill areas that can respond quickly. We'll make these key talking points available in a way that is easy to carry around. We took the Strategic Plan and put into italics what has happened since June 2008. We have done lots of presentations, which have gotten positive feedback. CR seems to be the linchpin towards these growing opportunities. Dr. Marcee says the college is done planning, they will use this report to change the way the college is going to move forward with their curriculum. The college is very serious about using this information to help them move ahead. Should have long term and lasting results. Dr. Marcee is planning to use this information to help him with enrollment, which has already gone up. Targets of Opportunity and Occupation of Opportunity have been presented to other teams; Eel River Valley, Fortuna school board, Humboldt County Planning Commission and Mendocino leadership. Planning Summit; there will be plenty of opportunities to work on this. Speakers that are valuable to business will be presenters, possibly a potential speaker from IDO. Big pieces; we did a training on Occupations of Opportunity. Presented to counselors from all over the county, 70 were in attendance. Used ONET to help do a hands-on lab. There is still a lot of work to be done here. Really saw how counselors and others are beginning to see where employers are coming from. Want to see this go regionally. It made the Occupations of Opportunity real, a hands on thing. Ashley Bailey called Jacqueline the Friday before the workshop wanting to ask about the closing of businesses locally. She went to the workshop and jumped on the bandwagon for Targets. Youth Program and StepUp program are aligned with the Targets of Opportunity. Asked the Youth program Operators how they were going to connect their students with the Targets in their proposals. Jacqueline is absolutely available to make presentations to local businesses such as chambers and local councils.

4. PRESENTATION: Ken Owens of Cognisense Labs and HSU is working with Sun Valley Floral Group to innovate robotics for some of the field labor, which may be part of the solution to filling jobs at Sun Valley.

- ❖ Developing a Local Autonomous Technology Industry
- ❖ Automated wildlife Monitoring
- ❖ Agriculture – Sun Valley Group
- ❖ Robotic Bromilia Processing
- ❖ Robotic Rose Planting
- ❖ Automated Fertilizer Production: AlgaRhythms – producing fertilizer from waste water
- ❖ Alternative energy Inspection – Wave Energy
- ❖ Fusion energy Control
- ❖ Workforce Development – New HSU Courses: Robotic Embedded Systems, Robotic Sensing, Robotic Control
- ❖ Cognisense labs Inc. – Intel Environment Award, Economic fuel, National Science Foundation SBIR
- ❖ Cognisense Labs Projects – Showed video

A few months ago we were talking about the problems with Sun Valley; this is a very viable solution. *Is there a project timeline to use robotics at Sun Valley?* Within the next year a prototype should be ready.

- 5. REPORTS:** Written as a summary on the back of the agenda. The intent is to look for outside funding. *Do you have any sense of where the funding came from when Ken visited Holland?* Funding came from the Dutch government; it was a joint venture. *Any idea of the differential between the robotics and personnel costs?* Cost is about 1 cent per bulb to plant with the robotic arm. This would certainly cost less than manual labor. Redwood Coast energy Authority will be moving from the educational phase into the energy-producing phase. Looking at financing tools to help with biomass and wave energy.
- 6. ANNOUNCEMENTS:** Not sure of the location of the next WIB meeting; watch for announcement. Invited on October 29th to the Goodwin Forum for a discussion concerning the economy and labor impact on our community. This will be a round table discussion. "Wall Street to Main Street, what does it mean to us?"
- 7. CLOSING:** Meeting adjourned at 10:30 a.m.