

**Minutes of the  
Q1 Workforce Development Council  
Thursday, February 8, 2024  
Virtual TEAMS connection**

**Members present:** Senator Michelle Axtman, Pat Bertagnolli, Josh Blackaby, Kellie Carlson, Jason Ehlert, Tifanie Gelinske, Cindy Griffin, Proxy Claire Gunwall for Chancellor Mark Hagerott, Katie Ralston Howe, Tim Johnson, Howard Klug, Landis Larson, Guy Moos, Matt Marshall, Representative Emily O'Brien, Stan Schauer, Wayde Sick, Taya Spelhaug, Damian Schlinger, Kasper Ziegler

**Guests present:** Paige Kuntz, Dalberg/LAMP associates

**Staff present:** Phil Davis, Ruth Lacher, Tammy Barstad, Sherri Frieze

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**CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL**

Cindy Griffin, Chair, called the meeting to order at 10:30 a.m. welcoming members and guests via the TEAMS video/audio conferencing platform.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**Motion:** It was moved by Howard Klug, seconded Becca Cruger, to approve the December 7, 2023, minutes. Motion carried.

**WDC BYLAW UPDATE**

*Katie Ralston Howe*

Bylaws were updated in January to reflect an audit change that was required by the Department of Labor last autumn.

Changes include:

1. Designating a proxy in place of a member.
2. Notification to the Director by email.
3. Specify if the proxy is to vote in place of the member, if not specification is given, the proxy will not be allowed to vote.
4. One meeting a year will be allowed for this circumstance.

Circumstances will be handled on a case-by-case basis.

**LMI UPDATE for JANUARY 2024**

*Phil Davis*

Phil talked about the top 5 occupational groups with open jobs

- Healthcare, Farm, Fishing & Forestry, Management, Sales & Related, Transportation.

Open jobs in ND = 14,859

5.1% less than January of last year

3.7% higher than prior month

Unemployment Rate = 1.7% current unemployment in December 2023 vs. 3.5% nationwide

Labor Force Participate Rate = 67.8% ND vs. 62.2% nationwide

**Job Service Virtual Job Fair in January attendance:**

97 employers

634 attendees, with almost 300 Philipinos.

**Virtual Pavilions include:**

Healthcare

Manufacturing

government, education, and finance

Oil, gas, skilled trades, and transportation

The virtual job fair was promoted by social media and digital/radio ads. Partnered with Unemployment insurance with flyers sent to those on unemployment, and partner agencies of voc. rehab, adult ed, parks and rec, game and fish, and the Commerce Department with Find the Good Life.

### **Unemployment Insurance**

Vendor of Geographic Solutions – the vendor is the same one that we use for job openings. Those that use Jobsnd.com and ND Workforce connections. Those two systems will be tied together for those that need to look for work or submit a resume. The progress to join the two online may take up to four years.

### **OFFICE OF LEGAL IMMIGRATION (OLI) UPDATE**

*Katie Ralston Howe*

*Dalberg and LaMP Consultants*

In December, partners from Dalberg and Labor Mobility Partners (LaMP) consultant team came to the WDC meeting to work with Commerce for the study and development of goals for the OLI.

LaMP associate talked about the barriers to success, cultivate key learnings from other states, and propose initial recommendations. Dalberg & LaMP are currently in the 3<sup>rd</sup> part of Phase 1, with 125+ individual stakeholders consulted, 7 focus groups consulted during in-person workshops, 5 cities visited within ND, 2 workshops held with OLI and stakeholders, and 30+ reports and data sources reviewed.

Phase 1 key findings/recommendations will be brought to the April WDC meeting with the analysis and strategies of the report.

### **NGA WINTER WORKFORCE POLICY INSTITUTE TAKEAWAYS**

*Cindy Griffin*

*Katie Ralston Howe*

Katie and Cindy, along with Zac Greenberg from the Governor's Office attended the NGA Winter Workforce Development Policy Institute in Washington, DC on January 31<sup>st</sup> – February 2, 2024.

- ND continues to get recognition on the initiatives we are doing.
- ND selected for an NGA Workforce inclusion initiative.
- ND has active participants, with not all states having their chairs at the meeting.
- Childcare was a big topic and ND is aligned with how other states are moving.
- Economist describes ND as having a high growth rate, 1% percent growth is related to 4,000 workers
- WIOA reauthorization – changes for ND
  - Change from 4-year state plan to a 2-year state plan
- Topics of interest were:
  - youth apprenticeship
  - career pathways
  - federally approved registered apprenticeship program in Illinois, that is fostering entrepreneurship with food trucks
  - Wallet concept for childcare – offset cost for workers
  - Spaces on colleges/universities for childcare
  - AI taskforces that are being formed.
  - Housing – hotels being transformed into housing

## **NGA DISABILITY INCLUSIVE WORKFORCE COLLABORATIVE**

*Damian Schlinger*

ND, along with six other states are accepted into the competitive collaborative. The collaborative timeline is January through June 2024. Team members & liaisons include: Voc Rehab, Job Service, Department of Commerce, DPI, Developmental Disabilities from HHS, HRMS, Governor's Office, and consultants.

Damian talked about demographics of the workforce, retired, disabled, caring for children, laid off, elderly and the talent pools; work age with disabilities, college graduates, high school graduates and incarcerated individuals released each year.

Workforce partners successes and opportunities:

- Co-enrollment across WIOA programs
- 22 states that have combined workforce systems
- Recent outreach with Job Service to employers
- Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC) tax credits

Goals from ND's application; State as a Model Employer (SAME)

1. Develop tools for employers throughout the state
2. Skills based hiring model
3. Centralized accommodation fund for state and employers
4. Accommodations process and data
5. Remove barriers to application and interview by exploring different processes
6. Gain understanding of current market penetration of population with barriers
7. Behavior health initiatives
8. Programs to prepare young with significant disabilities for employment

## **WORKFORCE INNOVATION OPPORTUNITY ACT (WIOA) STATE PLAN**

*Phil Davis, Robyn Throlson*

*Sara Mitzel, Katie Ralston Howe*

The WIOA Unified State Plan is currently out for public comment; January 19 – February 18<sup>th</sup> and must be submitted via the Federal portal by March 4<sup>th</sup>, 2024. Every four years the WIOA Unified State Plan needs to be rewritten and updated every 2 years with the four agencies of Job Service ND, Voc Rehab, Adult Education, and the Commerce Department to receive federal funding for WIOA core programs.

### **WIOA CORE PROGRAMS:**

- TITLE I – Adults, dislocated workers, and youth  
Phil Davis, Job Service ND  
Katie Ralston Howe, Commerce (WDC)
- TITLE II – Adult Education and Literacy  
Sara Mitzel, DPI – Adult Education
- TITLE III – Wagner – Peyser Act  
Phil Davis, Job Service ND
- TITLE IV – Vocational Rehabilitation  
Robyn Throlson, DHHS – Voc Rehab

**Topic covered by the Speakers**

*TITLE I - Katie Ralston Howe*

- Purpose and Goals of WIOA
- WDC Strategic Vision and overarching goal
- Governor Burgum's 5 strategic initiatives
- Strategies of Recommendation, built in advancements in non WIOA programs/initiatives
- IIJA, IRA, CHIPS funding initiatives
- Apprenticeship
- Assessment and Alignment

*TITLE I/III - Phil Davis*

- ND Current Labor Market, by county and by state
- ND Labor force by age group
- ND population increases due to natural increase and international migration
- ND employment by industry
- ND Job Service Workforce Services
- ND Job Service Workforce Centers
- ND Job Service Workforce Programs
- WIOA Performance Results

*TITLE II - Sara Mitzel*

- Mission and Goals for ND Public Instruction, Adult Education
- Populations served by Adult Ed.
- Adult Education Programs
- Adult Education Centers
- Adult Education students served
- Adult Education employment outcomes
- Workforce areas in the Integrated Education & Training Program
- Ongoing Goals

*TITLE IV – Robyn Throlson*

- Vocational Rehabilitation (Voc Rehab) Purpose
- Voc Rehab Services
- Assessment of individuals; The Big Eight
- Support with employment goals and services
- Occupational categories of individuals achieving employment
- Pre-employment Transition Services
- Services for Students
- Connecting with Employers: Services to Businesses
- Scope of Services for Businesses
- Themes from the Needs Assessment
- Voc. Rehab Performance Measures

**NEXT STEPS**

***Katie Ralston Howe***

Q2 Meeting – April 4, Bismarck

- Subcommittees will share list of priorities to get feedback from the WDC
- Subcommittees will continue building out recommendations through July

Q3 Meeting – August 15 or 22, Bismarck

- Final recommendations presented to the WDC for approval

**ADJOURNMENT**

With no further discussion, the meeting was adjourned unanimously at 2:00 p.m.