



Two Year Plan Task Force
MARICOPA WORKFORCE CONNECTIONS
Maricopa County Human Services Department
234 North Central, Suite 3201, Phoenix, AZ 85004
February 8, 2011
Minutes

I. Call to Order

Chair Kelsie McClendon called the meeting to order at 10:01 a.m.

II. Roll Call: Quorum

Present:

Patrick Burkhart Shawn Hutchinson (T)
Ben Candler (T) Randy Kimmens (T)
Che Collins Kelsie McClendon (T)

Absent:

Tony Maldonado
Paul Sanders

Staff:

Kristen Merser

III. Minutes January 19th – Action Item

Ben Candler made a motion to approve the minutes from January 19th; Che Collins seconded; minutes approved.

IV. Discussion of Two Year Plan – For Information Only

Patrick walked through the PowerPoint handout:

The first part contains items from 2008 that will need to be amended. Patrick would like to sharpen up the 3 core value concepts, the vision, and the value proposition from the last plan. Critical issues in 2008 were stagnant wages and increasing poverty levels. Per capita income and tax revenue has declined. Six employment industries were emphasized in last plan.

The graph on slide 11 shows the long climb back to pre-recession employment. Nationally, 30% of those unemployed have been out of work for one year or longer. Political trends are in question - unsure if it will be flat federal funding for DOL. DOL is focusing on green, special populations, youth and innovation grants.

Marshall Vest's group at University of Arizona employment forecast shows a robust comeback in construction, assuming that vacant commercial space will be absorbed by 2013. By 2018, 61% of all jobs in Arizona are expected to require postsecondary education or higher nationally. Patrick expects that the healthcare industry may require rapid response rather than recruiting. Strong growth expected in manufacturing, warehousing, related transportation, green technologies including weatherization.

The economic recovery will be prolonged and the housing crisis is expected to carry on for several more years. Federal funding will be flat at best, and state/local sectors will experience slow, uneven growth; *financial services* may come back, but *retail* may not. There will be sustained high unemployment populations of untrained, uneducated, older veterans, at risk youth, disabled, and ex-offenders. MWC will remain dedicated to excellence in serving special populations.

The two year plan strategic position should include building a collaborative effort to reach out to businesses with high volume, low cost services and training. The Maricopa Human Capital Collaborative (MHCC) and its 33 to 50 Access Points will also be featured in the plan. MWC is partnering with the community college system to provide a low cost, high volume training model to serve more people than the current \$4,000/pp WIA system. The WIA system is so expensive largely because of customer choice option where private schools are often chosen over community college programs. Patrick wants a well coordinated regional business services team model by the end of the month.

Discussion:

Patrick will update on the economic outlook at the next meeting. The state is expected to invest itself into four or five industry clusters, which will be published by the Commerce Authority within 90 days. Sectors will probably include: aerospace and defense; high tech manufacturing; solar, green and sustainable. All local areas will have to find a way to support that sector strategy.

The Department of Labor guidance letter showed low high school completion rates in Arizona. Forty-percent of AZ adults over 25 have a high school diploma or less meaning that many of them will be unable to participate in the

economic recovery. The group agreed that this ratio needed to change in order to fulfill long-term economic recovery and discussed putting in processes that increase high school completion rates and create a pipeline to college and to the workforce. Processes would include capturing young drop-outs.

Che just returned from a policy forum in DC and said that there is not enough focus on soft skill barriers like interpretation, competency, reading, writing, and speaking. Capstone Certifications are workforce programs that help people complete the programs that are much more rigorous than in the past. She expressed concern that if a person's reading score is at a 3rd or 4th grade level, they would probably be unable to complete a computer-based 6-week weatherization program. Community colleges have limited staff for lower level reading courses. Students can go from a 3rd grade level to 6th grade level in a two year Job Corps program. CAN programs require 12th grade math and 10th grade reading level so employers don't consider people who don't meet minimum requirements.

Randy has 90-100 programs on the GCC campus. Employers said that they like community college degree programs because students obtain program skills and soft skills by the time they get a degree, but it takes two years. Students are given an occupational review process and assessment. GCC works to get a statistical summary of quality of incoming students and break it down demographically into older and younger students. Randy will provide the results to Patrick within the next few days.

The group discussed identifying the pipeline sectors, associated training programs, targeted businesses, and available entry/continuing education programs. For example, a small solar advisory board could meet quarterly and ask what green programs will be available; who are the employers we are working with; what employers would we like to engage, and forecast employment opportunities for the next two years. List school programs and how students can get involved. A direct source such as an advisory committee collaborative will give the effort central communication so services are not overlapping or duplicated. Get lists of federal contractors to engage them and identify employment opportunities.

The Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs (OFCCP) and WIA are trying to reach out to each other and Patrick will work to get a representative on the Board. A low cost online delivery system would be offered to students as well as a service to advise employers on how they might get funding through the WIA like subsidized continuing training and help applying for grants. Full-time enrollment in school creates a barrier for unemployment benefits. Performance measures create an issue for two-year degrees because WIA is designed to be a short-term program. Randy will talk to the district about how WIA can help out toward the end stages of a degree. A link between the end of two year degree program and employers should be created. May supplement an Associate's Degree with a transitional OJT internship program, or a certificate program offering 8 weeks of classes on campus followed by an 8 week internship with the employer. Need to setup a tracking system for graduates and employers. Will plan to invest 70-80% into the identified industry focus areas, but dedicate the rest to other programs.

Shawn noted that his electrical apprenticeship training has an 85% success rate, and participants are placed into employment directly by the apprenticeship program. He would like considerations to focus on the ability to overcome barriers to begin the apprenticeship program. Many applicants can't qualify because they don't meet the standards of reading, writing and math. He suggested offering reading and math courses in career centers for those with GEDs or diplomas that don't score well on the TABE test.

At the next meeting March 15th, the task force will discuss the economic overview and forecast on how to build on these ideas. They will need to consider inputs and outputs. A group of MWC staff members is working on the policy part of the two-year plan.

V. Call to the public

No public present

VI. Adjournment

Patrick made a motion to adjourn the meeting; Che seconded the motion; Chair Kelsie adjourned the meeting at 11:17 a.m.