

GEORGIA MOUNTAINS REGIONAL COMMISSION
WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD
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March 27, 2014

Minutes

The Georgia Mountains Regional Commission Workforce Development Board (GMWDB) met on March 27, 2014 at 3:30 PM. The meeting was held at the Hall County Government Center. Handouts were made available as visual aids. Also, a sign-in sheet was distributed and the following were present:

Members Present

Tim Bala
Thomas Bridges
Tammy Caudell
Nikki Simmons
Bill Chafin
Rex Farmer
Sam Norton
Pat Freeman
Andrea Gibby
Mary Wareham
Danny Lewis
Greg James
Danette Smith
Brian Tam
Mark Ivester
Ken Schubring

Staff

Diana Eddins-Wiggin
Diane Jackson
Jessica Williams
John Phillips
Ginger Little
Nona Turk

Guest

Call to Order/Welcome

Andrea Gibby, Board Chair called the meeting to order and welcomed the attendees. She thanked Hall County for the use of their beautiful building. Andrea asked if there were anyone present for the first time. Nikki Simmons with Job Corp introduced herself. She covers 16 counties and Hall County is one of the counties she serves. Andrea requested that everyone give a brief introduction of themselves. A quorum was established.

New Business

Department of Labor Data Sharing Agreement

John Phillips, GMWD Director explained that the Executive Committee approved the Department of Labor sharing agreement. The agreement would allow GMWD to get statistics for customers coming into the program and also for customers leaving the program. The information will show if customers are working and where they are working. Faith Bryan, Information Services Director with GMRC, conducted computer security training for the GMWD staff last week. The training was a requirement of the Data Sharing Agreement. The Sharing Agreement will become a part of GMWD's process to obtain the required customer information.

Lumbee Regional Development Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)

John Phillips explained that the Lumbee Regional Development's (LRD) Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) allows the Lumbee to assist Native Americans within the GMWD area. John stated that LRD has signed MOUs with all of the other Workforce Development areas. Sam Norton asked what the Lumbee Regional Development would do if they came into our area. John explained, if a person is a member of an organized tribe, then the Lumbee Regional Development would assist those people. The Federal Government gives them the authority to assist Native Americans. Pat Freeman asked if the people that take part in the program had to be in one of the recognized tribes. John stated that the people need to be State or federally recognized. Sam Norton made the motion to execute the Lumbee Regional Development MOU. Bill Chafin seconded and motion passed unanimously.

Training2Work (T2W) Offender Job Training Program

Diana Eddins-Wiggin, Adult/Dislocated Case Manager Supervisor, gave a brief update on the T2W Offender Job Training Program. The GMWD has already started the T2W Offender Job Training program. GMWD is partnering with Goodwill to assist offenders at Lee Arrendale State Prison. GMWD and Goodwill met as a group with the staff at Lee Arrendale. Staff at Goodwill, with GMWD's assistance would be screening potential applicants for the program and would also select potential training programs for the ten people the program will be assisting.

Goodwill of North Georgia MOU

John Phillips explained that GMWD is trying to reach out to more youth in our area. GMWD will be partnering with Goodwill in the Youth Career Connect Program. The MOU will allow Goodwill to be able to get the federal grant to assist the youth. Sam Norton made the motion to accept the MOU. Brian Tam seconded and motion passed unanimously.

Update on Regional Youth Detention Center

Jessica Williams, Youth Case Manager Supervisor shared that GMWD has one student that has completed his 40 hours of seat time for GED testing and is ready to take his GED. He is very excited for the opportunity. She stated it was good to see the hope that he now has due to the possibility of getting his GED. GMWD also has a couple more youth that are interested in getting their GED. GMWD staff has been going to the RYDC once a week to meet with the youth and give an overview on the program and the services GMWD can offer. GMWD has developed a good relationship with the clerk and the

probation officers. She also stated that the Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) has also helped. Danny Lewis, Executive Director asked if GMWD had any plans for a graduation ceremony that the parents could attend. Jessica stated that GMWD offers an incentive to the participant. Danny Lewis stated that there are a number of programs that the county puts on and he receives invitations to attend. He tries to attend as many as he can to support the young people that have turned their life around. The ceremonies can be very emotional. Jessica stated that GMWD can bring the suggestion up to the RYDC to see if it would be possible.

New Executive Director, GOWD (Ben Hames)

John Phillips informed the Board that Governor Deal appointed Ben Hames as the new Executive Director of the Governor's Office of Workforce Development. Mr. Hames grew up in Hollywood, Georgia, therefore he is very familiar with the GMWD area. John met him at a Directors meeting and also had the opportunity to attend a dinner with him at the last SETA Conference. Executive Director Hames is very open to any suggestions that Workforce Development (WD) may have and is very willing to speak with WD areas.

2014 Local Plan

John informed the Board that the Local Comprehensive Plan is on the GMRC website for the 30 day public review. After the 30 day review the Board will meet in April to vote on the plan. The meeting in April will put the Board back on its regular schedule of meeting the first month of each quarter. Today's meeting is to make up for the January meeting that was canceled due to inclement weather. He requested that the Board read the plan. John directed the Board to the handout included in their packet that outlines the major changes to the plan. Individual Training Account Policy raised the training dollar amount from \$5,500 for one year to \$6,000 and the two year limit from \$8,500 to \$10,000. The other major change were in the Supportive Service Policy. The main supportive services GMWD offers are childcare, transportation and youth incentives. The Governor's Office has asked that WD set a limit of \$3,000 per year for each customer. However, WD can submit a waiver for special circumstances in defined populations. These changes in the plan will go into effect July 1, 2014. There may be some customers that may not be able to attend training due to not being able to afford childcare. The 20% rule was also added to the plan. The 20% rule states that 20% of the youth are required to be between the ages of 14 and 16 years old. The GOWD requested a Business plan which was included. GMWD also added the Rapid Response program, updated all graphs, and the On-the-Job Training program information.

Other

Andera Gibby, Board Chair directed the Board to the handouts that showed information on statics that took place within the past year. One of which was a list of the plant closings within the GMWD area. Also, there are comparisons of customer numbers from 2012 through the present. Included in the information was the GMWD second quarter performance. The report showed GMWD met or exceeded all measurements except for one youth measure with an overall of exceeding.

John Phillips stated that the Board wanted to know how GMWD was improving over the past year. He said that in 2012, GMWD enrolled 184 people in the program. In 2013, GMWD had enrolled 284 people which was a 64% increase. The youth program had 184 in 2012 and for 2013 enrolled 246 youth. This was an increase of 62 youth. In 2012, GMWD had 1,695 that came into the office for some type of

service. Jan. 2013 thru Dec. 2013, 3,130 people came into the office. This year we have had 736 as of today. This gives a total of 5,561 people that have come in the office for assistance.

Danny Lewis stated he would like to thank Pat Freeman for providing the GMWD office with a worker that assist with the front desk. This allows the regular person to pick up some other duties.

Mr. Lewis also pointed out that the last two companies on the list of closings were due to a fire. In Clarkesville there was a fire on March 5th. There were seven buildings that were partially or totally destroyed and about 50 people became unemployed. GMRC helped place many of the people into other buildings. Two churches are allowing one of the restaurants that closed to use their church to cook food to help them make some of the money back that they lost. Then the next Wednesday night, March 12th, Shenanigans in Dhalonega burned, which affected about 30 people. Both groups were provided assistance by the GMWD. DCA should also be complemented on the work that they provided as well.

John Phillips stated that we partnered with the Department of Labor, Gainesville Career Center and the Habersham Career Center to assist these individuals and companies. GMWD was there with the Mobile Training Unit (MTU) to allow people to file for unemployment. Having the MTU there saved them from having to drive a long distance to apply for unemployment.

Sam Norton stated that he is proud to be affiliated with this organization. When the 30 people lost their jobs in Dhalonega, this meant that 30 families were impacted. He stated that the WD staff did a great job in trying to help these people.

John stated that Dan Thornton, Rapid Response Coordinator, did a fabulous job organizing the event and bringing everyone together to help the affected people.

Budget

Nona Turk directed the Board members to the spreadsheet included in their packets. She stated that the current amounts are through the end of February. The balance on the Adult funds that GMWD should spend by June 2014 was \$366,000, youth funds including, Youth In and Youth Out was \$214,000 and the Dislocated Worker fund balance was \$532,000. The obligations as well as employee payroll, reimbursements and utilities will decrease the amounts for each fund. Nona stated if GMWD runs out of adult funds before June 30th, GMWD can transfer dislocated funds to the adult funds. Nona explained that at the end of the first year of the grant, if 80% had not been spent or obligated, then the GOWD can take back the difference between the 80% and what we actually have obligated. The GOWD is looking at possibly changing this due to the sequestration and the government shut down.

John Phillips stated that the GMWD On-the-Job training program is growing. He stated if the Board knows of any companies that may need our services, to please let GMWD know.

The Board discussed ways to advertise GMWD services to the public and several ideas were mentioned. One was to organize and host area job fairs.

Danny Lewis stated that in the month of February GMRC wrote 460 participant checks totaling \$161,000.

Andrea Gibby directed the Board to the last page of their handouts and explained that this was information on Horticulture which the Board requested at the last meeting.

Old Business

Approval of Minutes

Ken Schubring made a motion to approve the December 11, 2013 meeting minutes. Sam Norton seconded and motion passed unanimously.

Adjournment

Bill Chafin made a motion to adjourn, Brian Tam seconded and motion passed unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 4:20 pm.


Andrea Gibby, Chair


Deborah Mack, Secretary