**Operations Committee Minutes**

**March 7, 2016**

**Mankato Workforce Center**

**Mankato, MN**

Those present: Christine Bauman, Heather Gleason, Diane Halvorson, Nancy Haag, Connie Hines, Reggie Worlds

**Training Day**

Heather Gleason reported that the next training day is scheduled for June 9. The topic is focused on safety. The main speaker will be Stefan Salmonson from PROtective Services.

**Continuous Improvement**

Heather Gleason reported that we are still in need of another team member. The team will be doing customer surveys again this summer. The team has also been brainstorming ways to address the topics of concern on the assessment completed by staff. The statewide severe weather tornado drill is scheduled for Thursday, April 14th. The team will facilitate additional practice drills after the training day.

**Events**

Heather Gleason reported that there are a number of career exploration opportunities for high school students coming up including:

April 6 – New Ulm Career Fair April 20 – Mankato Career Expo

April 13 – Fairmont ACE June 13th – 15th Mankato Scrubs Camp

**Manufacturing Group**

Connie Hines reported that City of Fairmont and Ignite invited area manufacturers to hear about employer needs. One of the areas mentioned was managing generations.

**Brain Gain**

Connie Hines reported on a group from Fairmont that is focused on bringing youth back to the area.

**FEDA**

Connie Hines reported that the Fairmont Economic Development Authority reached out to the WorkForce Center to see if there are any gaps that they can fill not covered by the WorkForce Center.

**Madelia Strong**

Connie Hines reported that there was a Rapid Response event for workers impacted by the Madelia fires. There were just a few interested in dislocated worker services. Many workers are continuing with their previous employer in a new location.

**Fairmont Internet**

There was discussion about switching the internet service provider at the Fairmont office for a significant savings in monthly charges.

**Resource Room Computers**

A report was distributed of computer usage in the resource room. DEED would like to reduce the number of computers statewide. The committee reviewed the current number of computers in each office. The recommendation was not to support a reduction in Fairmont and check with the staff at the New Ulm and Mankato offices.

**Staff Update**

Reggie Worlds reported that the receptionist position interviews will take place soon. The TAAACCT grant position description was approved by DEED and will be posted soon.

Reggie Worlds reported that Tom Norman, DEED, is no longer the Director of Workforce Development services. Rick Caliguri will be the Interim Director. The position is expected to be filled in the coming months.

Nancy Haag reported that a new Vocational Advisor, Danielle Morenco, has been hired to work in Brown County.

**NEG Incentive Grant**

Diane Halvorson reported that the NEG incentive grant arrived which includes OJTs, transition jobs (work experience) and incumbent worker training.

**Wanted Analytics**

Reggie Worlds reported that Wanted Analytics usage is very low. There are discussion about having local training.

**Veterans Audit**

Reggie Worlds reported that they will have a Veterans Services audit this week.

**Meeting with Mankato and Refugee Services**

Reggie Worlds will be meeting with several agencies to address disparities including Jessica O’Brien, MN Council of Churches; Bukata Hayes, Diversity Council; Abraham Noor from metro to provide training to local staff.

**DEED Survey**

During the month of March, Devin Colvin, DEED conducted an Creative Job Search online survey. There has been an increase in workshop attendance.

**MVAC Agency Update**

Project Community Connect is scheduled for April 5th to connect homeless individuals to community resources. MVAC tax clinic offers free tax preparation services. MVAC Warm Your Heart event was held last week and the fundraiser proceeds will go to transportation supports. MVAC Food Hub purchases food from area farmers and sells it to local institutions. Community Support Agriculture shares are available for purchase. MVAC unveiled an updated website.

**TRIO Grant**

Diane Halvorson reported that South Central College applying for a grant to partner with the Workforce center. Mitzi Kennedy, Director of TRIO at SCC presented information on the grant proposal at the meeting. TRIO low-income first generation, underrepresented groups. They would like to provide workshops at the WorkForce Center to facilitate getting participants into college.

**Online Applications**

Diane Halvorson discussed that some areas are moving to a consolidated online application for all of their programs.