

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL

Minutes of November 22, 2005

Welcome and Introductions

Karen McGee, Chair of the Workforce Development Council, welcomed the Council members shortly after 1:30 p.m. and thanked them for being present at this special teleconference meeting to consider the report from the hearing officer in the matter of workforce area redesignation. For the record, Chair McGee took a roll call with the following Council members identifying themselves as attending: Lois Bauer, Joe Burgoyne, Cheryl Engel as alternate for Dr. Marilyn Howard, Dwight Johnson, Betty Kerr, Karl Kurtz, Roger Madsen, Patrick Minegar, Kirby Ortiz, Con Paulos and Dr. Jim Schmidt.

Chair McGee welcomed new members ~ Dwight Johnson, Interim Executive Director, Idaho State Board of Education, appointed following the retirement of Gary Stivers; Betty Kerr, Vice President of Kerr Oil Co. in Coeur d'Alene, succeeding Fred Ostermeyer; and Dr. Jim Schmidt, Principal, Dehryl A. Dennis Professional-Technical Education Center, succeeding Janet Aikele.

Consent Agenda (Minutes of May 11, 2005)

Chair McGee noted that a quorum was present and referred the Council to the Consent Agenda, Minutes of May 11, 2005. Noting that references to Pat Campbell should be changed to the male gender, Chair McGee asked if any other changes or additions should be noted. None were offered. Karl Kurtz moved that the minutes be approved; Pat Minegar seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

Appeal of Workforce Area Designation (Transmittal #1)

With the first agenda item, Chair McGee noted the Council could accept, reject or modify the hearing officer's findings regarding the Appeal of Workforce Area Designation. She reminded the Council that they were not to reconsider the Governor's plan, as was done in May, but would only consider the record of the hearing held on September 28 and made available to members; no additional testimony or additional considerations were allowed.

Chair McGee summarized the issues as they were discussed in the hearing officer's report:

- Appeals may only be heard from those areas qualifying or claiming to be eligible for automatic or temporary and subsequent designation. The law and processes established in the state plan do not allow for appeals of decisions regarding "optional" designation.
- In his conclusions of law, the hearing officer found that none of the petitioners qualified as a single unit of government with a population of 500,000 or more nor did they meet any of the other criteria qualifying them for automation designation. The population figures were not disputed.

- Further, he found that Region III, Sage was originally appointed under “Temporary and Subsequent” criteria but that this criterion is no longer available upon the expiration of the initial plan.
- The hearing officer acknowledged the many other arguments made by the petitioners and found that these issues were outside the jurisdiction of the proceedings.
- The recommendation of the hearing officer is that the Council find that none of the areas qualify for automatic or temporary and subsequent designation and that optional designation is not a matter under these proceedings.

The order cannot become final without the final recommendation of the Council to accept, reject or modify the hearing officer’s recommended decision.

Chair McGee offered to accept a motion on the report of the hearing officer. Con Paulos made a motion that the Council adopt the hearing officer’s findings, conclusions and recommendations in their entirety. Dwight Johnson seconded the motion. The Chair completed a roll call vote of other members:

Lois Bauer – Yes
 Joe Burgoyne – Yes
 Betty Kerr – Yes
 Karl Kurtz – Yes
 Roger Madsen – Abstain
 Karen McGee – Yes
 Pat Minegar – Yes
 Kirby Ortiz – Yes
 Jim Schmidt – Yes

The motion passed with 10 yes votes and one abstention.

Workforce Development Training Fund (Transmittal #2)

Chair McGee moved the Council to the next item on the agenda, Legislative Proposals, the first to extend Workforce Development Training Fund and the second to offset losses in Unemployment Insurance (UI) and Employment Service (ES) funding, and asked Bob Fick to present Idaho Commerce and Labor’s request for an endorsement of the two legislative pieces.

The first asks for the Council’s endorsement of the department’s legislative proposal to extend the Workforce Development Training Fund program until January 1, 2012. Mr. Fick said this program provides financial incentives to employers to train workers for new jobs. It is one of the most successful programs the department sponsors and is an essential economic development tool that benefits both employers and workers. Since 1996, over 17,000 workers have been trained and their post-training wages average \$11 per hour. Dwight Johnson moved to have the Council endorse the department’s proposal to extend this program. Pat Minegar seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Reed Act Appropriation (Transmittal #3)

Mr. Fick then presented the second legislative proposal to be offered by the department. It asks the Idaho Legislature to approve the department's use of \$7 million in Reed Act funds during the next two years to offset reductions in federal funding of Unemployment Insurance and Employment Service operations. Reed Act monies are collected from Idaho employers via the Federal Unemployment Tax Act but eventually allocated to states to pay UI benefits or, with legislative approval, to support program operations. The Legislature has previously approved this use. Karl Kurtz made a motion to endorse the Reed Act legislative proposal. Dwight Johnson seconded the motion. By voice vote, the Council unanimously endorsed the proposal.

New Business

Chair McGee asked if there was any new business. Dwight Johnson informed the Council that the Idaho State Board of Education was finalizing its proposed changes to the math and science requirements necessary for high school graduation. Dwight stated that he would like to present these changes to the Council some time before the Legislature convenes in January 2006. He asked that a special Council meeting be called for this purpose. Kirby Ortiz asked if the Board had considered what effect these changes might have on potential dropouts, especially among the Hispanic population. Dwight replied the Board had considered this and also had researched similar effects in other states that have adopted more rigorous standards; these states reported they think most of the results have been positive. Dwight stated a fuller discussion of this question and others are the reasons he requests a special Council meeting be considered. Chair McGee asked if there was agreement that a special meeting should be called in December. There was consensus and Chair McGee concluded that notification and information will be sent when the meeting date is set.

Next Meeting Date

Chair McGee announced that the next scheduled Council meeting will be held on January 30-31, 2006 in Boise and is a joint meeting with the economic development advisory councils.

- January 30-31, 2006 Idaho Economic Symposium

Adjournment

There being no other business, the Council meeting was adjourned at 2:10 p.m.

Additional Note:

Dave Whaley and Cindy Hedges were unable to join the meeting until after the votes had been taken but requested that it be noted for the record that they were in support of the hearing officer's recommended order and the two legislative proposals offered by Idaho Commerce and Labor.

Attendance:

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Council Members:

Steve Ahrens (absent)
Lois Bauer
Joe Burgoyne
Millie Flandro (absent)
Jennifer Giro (absent)
Cindy Hedge
Cheryl Engel for Marilyn Howard
Dwight Johnson
Betty Kerr
Karl Kurtz
Roger Madsen
Karen McGee
Patrick Minegar
Kirby Ortiz
Con Paulos
Jim Schmidt
Jim Soyk (absent)
Dene Thomas (absent)
Dave Whaley

Alice Taylor
Randy Tilley
Mitch Toryanski
Roy Valdez
Kay Vaughan
Rich Watson
Judy Welker

Guests:

Jim Adams
Rico Barrera
Craig Bledsoe
Carol Brassey
Cheryl Brush
Leandra Burns
Jay Engstrom
Sam Greer
Bob Fick
Joe Herring
Larry Hertling
Jeanie Irvine
Rick Jackson
Dale Langford
John McAllister
Greg Metsker
Megan Ronk
Kathleen Simko
Georgia Smith
Ann Stephens