

Sonoma County Workforce Investment Board

Minutes of November 8, 2017

Members Present: Kristyn Byrne, Debbie Antonsen, Judy Coffey (*via telephone*), Amy Crabb, Keith Dias, Paul Duranczyk, Brandy Evans, Kristina Holloway, Stephen Jackson*, Scott Kincaid*, Chris Knerr, Al Lerma, Jerry Miller, Carol Waxman, Chris Snyder*, George Steffensen, Steve Stobel, *Ananda Sweet*, and *David Wayte*

Absent: Tim Reese and Pedro Toledo

Notified Absent: Yale Abrams, Ed Barr, Robin Bartholow, Steve Herrington, Steve Herron, Roy Hurd, Bill Nordskog, Lynn Stauffer, and Katrina Thurman

Staff: Katie Greaves, Patricia Andrews, Amanda Gayda, Hope Hamby, Tiffany Hill, Nancy Keene, Michelle Revecho, Jessica Taylor, Crissy Tuidier, and Judy Oates

Other Attendees: Elizabeth Goldman (for Katrina Thurman)

* Attendees with asterisks arrived late or departed early.

Attendees in italics are new members.

I. Introductions and Public Comment

Kristyn led the group in a moment of reflection in honor of Chris Paige.

II. Approve Minutes of Minutes of August 9

Motion to approve the minutes from the August 9, 2017 meeting: Brandy Evans /s/ Chris Knerr. All approved (Kristyn Byrne, Judy Coffey (*via telephone*), Amy Crabb, Keith Dias, Brandy Evans, Kristina Holloway, Chris Knerr, Al Lerma, Chris Snyder, Steve Stobel, *Ananda Sweet*, and *David Wayte*). There were no “nay” votes. Debbie Antonsen, Paul Duranczyk, Jerry Miller and George Steffensen abstained. The motion carried.

III. Check In With WIB Members

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Kristyn allowed members to comment on the challenges members are facing professionally and personally due to the fires.

IV. Impact of Sonoma County Fires Guest Speakers

Sonoma/Santa Rosa Recovery

Chris Rogers

Santa Rosa City Council Member

Santa Rosa lost more than 1,500 homes in Coffee Park and Fountain Grove. The City wants homes rebuilt quickly and efficiently and will expedite plan approvals for homes that will be rebuilt in the same footprint with the same square footage and height. The City expects it to be a two week approval process. For those that are making changes, plan approval will be expedited but a month protest time for their neighbors must be allowed. Temporary structures will be allowed on the property while homes are being rebuilt. These structures can also remain once the home is rebuilt and used as an additional living unit. Fees will be waived on homes building a secondary unit on their property.

Last night the Board of Supervisors and City Officials discussed the rebuild, which will take place in three phases:

Phase 1 – Clean Up

Phase 2 - Temporary Housing

Phase 3 - Permanent housing

WIB Members asked the following questions:

Q. Is it possible to extend the time for people to sign up for clean up? Many feel they have not had time to review options and some could be out of pocket up to \$100K if they run into issues doing it on their own.

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A. Strongly recommend getting the forms done and turned in as soon as possible. As of today, only one fifth of homeowners have turned in the forms. We expect a lot of people to come by on the last days.

Q. What if people turn in their paperwork too late? Will it cause them legal issues?

A. Not sure.

Scott Kincaid arrived

Q. What is the plan for red tagged burned businesses? Specifically Goodwill?

A. All parcels have to go through household hazard check to prepare for debris removal. Pink tag means that the business has been checked and is ready for debris removal.

Job Link Response

Jessica Taylor

Program Manager, Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Program

In response to the fire, a lot of our staff were immediately deployed to the Emergency Operations Center (EOC), the Local Assistance Center (LAC) and the local shelters. The rest of the staff remained to support those in the field and the needs of the public. In the first 28 days, over 4,500 Unemployment Insurance (UI) applications were received and there was a 200% increase in people coming into our lobby. San Francisco supplied mutual aid staff to help with outreach to Spanish speaking residents. It is slowing down but there is still a higher than average need for support services. Debbie Antonsen from EDD shared that unemployment due to the disaster does not have the usual one week waiting period. UI benefits are also available to the self-employed.

Job Link hosted a meeting at our site on October 16th with members of local Chambers of Commerce and Human Resources Directors to discuss the needs of both the affected businesses and the affected employees. Job Link assisted with the job fair on November 7 at the Graton Casino, which had over 170 employers and more than 800 attendees.

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We are educating the public about questionable cleanup efforts. Chris Snyder shared that the construction industry will be looking for hazmat certified workers. Anyone hiring non certified people for cleanup of potentially toxic items are breaking the law and may face felony charges. Some of these groups do not even have workers compensation insurance. Please direct any information you hear about bogus clean up companies to one of the WIB Labor representatives so we can check them and protect people from being taken advantage of or put in dangerous situations.

Staff is now preparing to address any rolling lay-offs over the next year.

Stephen Jackson arrived

Sonoma County Economic Development Board Response

Al Lerma

Director of Business Development and Innovation

The Economic Development Board staff has contacted the governor's office and can help individuals affected by the fires find low interest and state-guaranteed loans. Small businesses, including small farms, nurseries, agriculture-related enterprises and nonprofits that have suffered an economic loss and/or physical damage may apply for the Disaster Relief Loan Guarantee Program which offers loans up to \$1 million for Disaster Relief Borrowers. Up to 95% of the loans will be through local lenders.

The Small Business Administration were at the LAC and are now available at the Temporary Business Recovery Center located at Stony Circle down the hall from the Economic Development Board office. The SBA offers low-interest, long-term disaster loans for physical damage, working capital, and economic injury. Interest rates are 3-7% with longer terms.

There is a resource guide available on their website with information about these loans and includes information on property taxes, EDD extensions, and disaster insurance. The EDB is also working on a Spanish speaking social media campaign and will coordinate with the Mexican Consulate to tour the LAC.

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The Board will be reviewing and adjusting their five year plan to add a new scope of work to address strategies for disaster recovery efforts for the next six to twelve months.

Emergency Grants in Process

Katie Greaves

WIB Director

WIB staff has been working to support disaster efforts and our focus is on keeping jobs and employees here in Sonoma County. To this end we are centering our efforts on workers and help with rebuilding. There are two grants in process to help with these efforts:

1. La Cooperativa

The WIB and up to nine other counties declared disaster areas due to the fires have partnered with La Cooperativa for a \$31 million dollar grant for subsidized employment opportunities for fire disaster area clean up targeting public properties. The effort will target hiring people displaced by the fire as well as the long term unemployed. La Cooperativa is a certified organization that can access this type of federal funding and be the employer of record. They worked with Lake County after their fires. Our role will be to assist with connecting the workforce to La Cooperativa and connecting La Cooperativa to the work sites.

2. Additional Dislocated Worker Funds

We are working to secure a grant through the EDD for eighteen months starting January 2018. The effort will focus on assisting dislocated workers affected by the disaster to either return to work in their current industry or retrain them to work in Building and Trades as part of the rebuilding process. The grant will allow us to enhance supportive service to address any barriers to employment and training

Chris shared there will be a strong need for a more intensive skill set for the debris removal and rebuilding in all of the trades. Hazmat and other training are available through the unions with classes

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becoming available as the needs arise. The recent gas tax increase which provides \$60 billion in infrastructure funding. This means a lot of repair work of Sonoma County roads in the future.

Debbie asked if Job Link could provide her with a list of people who filed for UI through their office. Jessica said she would share that list and that Job Link will also be reaching out to these people with information about positions in the trades industry.

Kristyn called for a five minute break to allow Judy Oates to swear in new and renewing members of the WIB.

IV. WIB Response to Sonoma County Fires

A. Job Link Policy Changes

Jessica requested guidance from the WIB regarding policy changes to the use of training funds for Additional Assistance Dislocated Worker Funds grant. She asked for a vote on the following three items:

Request 1

Set aside training funds for the Building and Trades Industry through June 30, 2019, as follows:

- 1. Dislocated Workers: Those impacted by the wildfires will have the option of returning to their prior industry or training in a priority sector, with particular focus on Building and Trades.***
- 2. WIOA Adult Program: All WIOA enrolled Adult participants.***

Job Link currently has 100 clients enrolled for Individual Training Accounts that allows them to receive financial assistance for training. Those clients will retain the amount of funding already approved. Dislocated workers who do not choose to enter the trades will still get assistance as long as the standard funding is available. It is important to note that not all construction industry work is trade work.

Chris Snyder stepped out of the room.

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Keith Dias made a motion to suspend the priority criteria for WIOA Adult Program in order to prioritize training funds for WIOA Adult Program clients entering the Building and Trades fields. The grant time frame for the use of this fund is January 1, 2018 to June 30, 2019. The WIB will review the use of the training funds quarterly to re-evaluate capacity to offer training in other Sonoma County priority sectors. Scott Kincaid seconded the motion.

Ayes: Kristyn Byrne, Debbie Antonsen, Judy Coffey (*via telephone*), Keith Dias, Scott Kincaid, Chris Knerr, Al Lerma, George Steffensen, Steve Stobel, and Ananda Sweet

Nays: Amy Crabb, Brandy Evans, Carol Waxman, Kristina Holloway, Stephen Jackson, and Jerry Miller

Abstain: Paul Duranczyk, and David Wayte

The motion carried.

Request 2

Expand the menu and amount of Supportive Services available to participants at the discretion of staff.

Al Lerma made a motion to support use of additional funds from the grant to expand services to support clients in their job search at the discretion of staff. There was no second. Scott Kincaid amended the motion to support use of additional funds from the grant to expand services to support clients in their job search at the discretion of staff *with a cap of \$10,000 per person*. Stephen Jackson seconded the motion.

Ayes: Kristyn Byrne, Debbie Antonsen, Judy Coffey (*via telephone*), Amy Crabb, Keith Dias, Paul Duranczyk, Brandy Evans, Kristina Holloway, Stephen Jackson, Scott Kincaid, Chris Knerr, Al Lerma, Jerry Miller, Carol Waxman, George Steffensen, Steve Stobel, Ananda Sweet, and David Wayte

Nays: None

Abstain: None

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The motion carried.

Kristyn noted the time of 5:00 pm and asked the Board if they would stay an additional ten minutes.

Chris Snyder returned to the room.

Request 3

Jessica Taylor asked if the WIB would support WIOA funds being used for pay for relocation expenses for workers displaced due to the wild fires to relocate to other counties/states as needed. Workers would be encouraged to stay local but anticipate a low number will need this assistance. The amount of assistance would be determined at the discretion of staff.

Kristyn Byrne called for a motion on the item. Seeing none, the matter of using WIOA funds for relocation assistance was dropped.

Due to the time, the remaining agenda items were held over to the next WIB meeting.

- B. Resource Allocation – Job Link Priorities
- C. Policy & Strategy at Community Level
- D. Member Roles

V. Next Meeting

Date: February 14, 2018

Time: 3:00 pm

Location: Santa Rosa Room

VI. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 5:10 pm.

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