

Minutes of the Nov 18, 2010 meeting of the Uintah Basin Regional Council

Attending: Randall Bennett, Tom Nordstrom, Deena Mansfield, Tammie Lucero, Greg Todd, Matt Watkins, Shelly Ivie, John Wahl, Lee Hill, Richard Wallis, Mark Holmes, Brian Raymond

Guests: Geoff Lisek, Miles Nelson, Richard Wallis

Staff: Peggy Killian, Bob Gilbert

Randall welcomed everyone. Minutes approved unanimously.

Randall asked Deena to provide an update from the Healthcare Task Force: She said that for the first time in a while, there is a full class of 24 students in the LPN class. We were just getting to the RN selection of nurses. John said that 14 have been approved as of last week, which is right where we want to be. The instructors are in place to continue to offer the programs. Pass rates for the state exam have been good. The 2010 RN graduates are just getting into the testing process. At the Task Force meeting, we had a great discussion with USU about a BSN program, which USU wants to propose. Group was in support of USU moving forward with that. We also reviewed other medical programs. Will get back together first of next year.

Lodging/Tourism Taskforce: Tammie said we have some areas of improvement that we could work on. We are starting a campaign on customer service, and will be moving forward with that. A media campaign will be targeted to businesses to raise awareness of customer service. We are looking at what other communities do, such as Moab. Dinosaur Quarry reopening, which will be in the fall of 2011, is the focus of the efforts. We want to have articles in the newspapers about customer service. Jeff Axel, spokesman for the Quarry, attended the meeting and talked about how they are going to promote the opening. We are involving Dinosaurland Travel Board members and the Chambers of Commerce. Tammie said there is a big conference coming for the Falconer's Conference next year. Expect between 300-500 people.

Tammie also reported on the Business Expansion And Retention (BEAR) program: DWS has provided some funds for Eastern Utah to visit businesses and collect data, using the BEAR program. It involves reaching out to businesses and offering them services and programs. Interviewers visit with the businesses one at a time, and then, if wanted, are connected with resources and expertise. Carbon and Emery Counties were getting all the rural grants for its small businesses, a huge success for the BEAR program. Involves collaboration with all groups that are involved in business expansion. Legislature may also kick in some dollars for BEAR. GOED will be funding the fees for the software. Tammie applied for a grant last week for additional funding for \$5000 and was awarded. Mark said he has an application to hire a person part time to be involved. Tammie said that she may be looking for a part-time person to do interviews.

Peggy reported on the Youth Council: We have a lot of available funds to help youth receive training and services. We have been trying to have our workers more visible in the community to connect with the youth. The priority points have been revised from 12 points to 8, to make it easier to qualify youth for service. Strengthened our pathways with DCFS to get more foster youth in for services. Also, we are working to get referrals from our partners, and doing door openers

and letting people know services. Working on a leadership project, where youth generate ideas and develop a project that helps them gain experience.

Shelly said that our youth population is population of prevention. Many youth are see a history of drug abuse and it is hard to get them employed if they follow what they have seen. We want to have an awareness campaign on choices you make now that will have a tremendous impact on your future. For instance, there was a lady picked up for substance abuse, who had been an RN, and now she is struggling to find employment opportunities. Someone who didn't pay a ticket 10 years ago, now owes \$2000 and can't pay it, and is part of their record. We want to get out the message that choices being made and following the law are important. Lee: maybe we need to start in elementary or junior high school. It is really unfortunate when a youth with a record is denied for the military – and the youth might have thrived there. Need to talk to them about choices. Some parents aren't so good at this either. Needs to be reinforced at house, or it won't stick. Where I went to high school, everyone went on to some kind of post high school training. Here the bottom 40% don't go on to something. Kids learn to read at home, and they need that. Shelly: Lee, we'll get in touch with you. Elementary school is where it happens.

John and Miles Nelson from USU-CEU then reported on the Green grant: both the UBATC and USU-CEU have similar challenges and opportunities. We see a main audience for this grant as the incumbent workers. Green grant programs can train and give workers additional training/skills. We are ramping up on core curriculum, getting ready to go. Want to make sure there is adequate core courses, without taking a lifetime to get through them. Some are pushing for 1 and 2 year degrees, but we feel it should be done quicker. We feel we have incumbent worker needs. Some workers can test out if they are skilled already. A focus is getting CNG ready to go in Eastern Utah. Train the Trainer courses will begin in December and January. Start running classes in early February, including tank inspection and retrofit classes in early February. We will be installing kits in two college cars. Questar wants to come to class and be part of the CNG conversion course. Certification is available upon passing of national test. USU-CEU and UBATC have worked hand in hand and are moving forward. Green construction could be implemented at the housing construction/building trades programs – have them build to the energy star equivalent. It will increase the housing prices, but we hope it will work out.

John: When grant was written, there was a requirement for a core curriculum, which caused more time in building core. We are bringing top mechanics in to help with course. Thanked Miles for all his time and effort in getting the program to this point. The courses will touch some on retrofit housing, energy management; will be some incumbent training. Need to show there is a market on some of these things. We could bring in some outside experts to give training to those in the HAVC industry, for instance. We want to do a gas measuring program that will be offered in parts – those that have application for us. Our area has tremendous potential for tractor-trailers to start conversions. There is a grant that is available for conversions of semi/big trucks. More targeted to urban counties, but John said he could apply for it. Questar wants more fleets converting to CNG to expand, and would be willing to do a bigger filling station(s). School bus fleets, construction equipment and tractor-trailers: those would pay off.

We have a mandate to train 230 workers in eastern Utah, broken into categories. We have started on Navajo youth building hogans. We will get all of the programs up early next year. Our focus will be on incumbent workers who will get reskilled and ready to go.

The Council reviewed the new Energy Cluster Acceleration Partnership report. Moved that the Council state that we are in support of the Energy Industry Cluster, and that we send it to Mayor Ted Wilson and send it immediately. Greg seconded. Motion passed unanimously. Is important that the state energy policy focus on Sustaining the Core as well as other energy alternatives.

Shelly then gave her Service Area Director's Report: We continue to implement our changes and work towards having a trained workforce, and be ready for new and existing businesses that are looking to expand. Within 10 years, 80% of jobs will require some kind of postsecondary education/training. Have a large population receiving food stamps, medicaid, financial assistance. Most of our customers are required to work or participate in work activities. Have 64,000 on the caseload that are able to work, and we are preparing them to enter employment. People who can work do work - our new program. We are working with our current caseload – approaching employers that can help with paid internship sites, nonpaid intern sites, OJT opportunities, Back to Work program, which gives an employer an incentive to hire. Individuals may have some skills, but not all to change jobs. With our OJT program, we can pay up to half the wages while they are learning the skill. It compensates the employer during the training period for those customers who can use it. We will work with UBATC and other schools to help them place students. UI fund has been decreasing, but is still solvent. Want to get those who are not working, working again.

John said he would like to thank DWS for their support. We are training a lot of adults, seeing a lot of enthusiasm in those who are being trained. Don't see anywhere near what he has seen in terms of those who want to go slow. More want to finish quickly and get back to work.

Randall suggested that we get an Energy Task Force going to stay abreast of energy issues.

Bob reviewed the economic update with the Council, and said he would forward out the slides prepared by John Krantz.

Next meeting set for Feb 17 in Vernal.

Meeting adjourned at 10:50 am.