Agenda - April 22, 2009 - EC

NoRTEC
MEETING
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
1:00 P.M. - 4:00 P.M.
WEDNESDAY, APRIL 22, 2009
HOLIDAY INN
1900 HILLTOP DRIVE
REDDING, CALIFORNIA

I. CALL TO ORDER
II. ROLL CALL
III. HEALTH INSURANCE COVERAGE FOR NoRTEC RETIREES (ACTION)

Staff Recommendation: NoRTEC will pay 50% of the cost of health insurance coverage for employees who have provided 15 years of continuous service, and are at least 55 years old at the time of retirement. This coverage shall begin on the date of retirement and continue until the employee is eligible for Medicare coverage.

Michael prepared a cost analysis (/cb/WIB/Retiree_Health_Benefits_04042009.pdf). A "worst case" scenario would be if all three eligible NoRTEC employees retired on July 1, 2009. In that case, NoRTEC would incur a total cost of $8,701.92 for the 2009/2010 program year. For the subsequent four program years, the total cost to NoRTEC would be $5,800.28 per year. That cost would drop to $2,900.64 per year after that.

Our insurance company will only allow retiree health benefits if NoRTEC agrees to pay 1/2 (or more) of the monthly premium.

Recommended Action:

Executive Committee to recommend to the full WIB and Governing Board that *NoRTEC will pay 50% of the cost of health insurance coverage for employees who have provided 15 years of continuous service, and are at least 55 years old at the time of retirement. This coverage shall begin on the date of retirement and continue until the employee is eligible for Medicare coverage. This agreement may be revoked or altered by a majority vote of the WIB and Governing Board at any regularly scheduled meeting.*

IV. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SUCCESSION PLAN (ACTION)

Staff Recommendation: The NoRTEC Executive Director will hire Stewart Knox as the NoRTEC Assistant Director, effective July 1,

2009, with the understanding that he will become the Executive Director when the current Executive Director steps down.

1. NoRTEC has a hire from within policy, so does not need to advertise the position, unless it wants to.
2. The Executive Director has the authority to hire staff, but only the WIB and Governing Board can hire/fire the Executive Director, so they need to approve the plan up-front.
3. The current Executive Director would like to stay in this position until July 1, 2010, but the progression of his neurological disorder is unpredictable and may lead to a much earlier resignation.
4. The current Executive Director will stay on after resignation as a consultant to work on the NoRTEC management information system, if needed and able.
5. Stewart is an excellent choice for the next Executive Director of NoRTEC.
    a. He has practical, relevant experience. He began his career in Workforce Development working for Kathy Schmitz in Tehama County as a teacher in their Summer Youth program. He was soon promoted to the position of Community Coordinator. From there he moved on to run the One Stop in Colusa County, then the Verdugo consortium in southern California, where he was the Executive Director of their WIB. Most recently, he returned to northern California as the Executive Director of the North Central Counties Consortium before returning to NoRTEC as our WIRED Project Director. Stewart is on numerous State committees, he is a sought after speaker at conferences and forums, and is currently in his second year as President of the California Workforce Association.
    b. In addition to his ample experience, he has a deep respect for our programs, he believes administration's role is to support the programs, he is a proponent of our business first model, he is recognized in the State as a leader in the developing field of renewable energy, he is a successful fund raiser, he is a good public speaker, and he is proud to be a part of NoRTEC.

Recommended Action:

Executive Committee to recommend to the full WIB and Governing Board that they hire Stewart Knox as the NoRTEC Executive Director, at the same pay and benefits as the current Executive Director, *effective when the current Executive Director steps down.*

V. REVIEWING AND RECOMMENDING SERVICE PROVIDER PROPOSALS FOR THE NoRTEC WORKFORCE INVESTMENT AREA (ACTION)

Proposals are due to the NoRTEC Administrative Offices by April 15. Staff will compile them into an electronic format and email them to the committee members on April 16. Staff will prepare a written evaluation of each proposal in time for the April 22 meeting. A copy of the Request For Proposals is online at /rfp_2009_2010/nortec.html

Recommended Action:

Executive Committee to recommend to the full WIB and Governing Board which service providers to select for the NoRTEC service area.

VI. PLANNING FOR STIMULUS PROJECTS (ACTION)

We are aggressively pursuing stimulus funding opportunities for our area. A caveat is that our first priority is to our base programs funded by the Department of Labor. We are receiving over $10 million in stimulus funds to augment/expand our basic programs; adult ($1.8 million), dislocated workers ($1.37 million), rapid response ($1.26 million) and youth ($4.3 million). We are obligated to make this a success. Our next step is to explore the opportunity to partner with Community Colleges for special projects through the Chancellors Office and the Governor's initiatives, as well as looking at DOL national funding priorities for renewable energy and health care projects. Approximately $750 million will be made available in the upcoming months through a competitive process from DOL; $500 million towards green jobs, and $250 million around allied health careers.We anticipate working with the programs to apply for project funding from both of these DOL funding opportunities.

Outside our own system, we are partnering with the Department of Agriculture, Department of Commerce, HUD and the Department of Energy Department of Energy through the State Departments of the California Energy Commission, California Air Resource Board, and the Public Utilities Commission, to secure alternative funding for business assistance, training opportunities and job creation activities.

With the Department of Agriculture, we have applied for a Rural Business Enterprise Grant (RBEG - through CEO Roundtables, workshops and outreach identify 10-15 small and emerging businesses that are creating new green technologies or products to provide in-depth assistance - business plans, access funds, marketing, feedstock and resources to produce and market their products; estimate 25-50 new jobs.). We are also looking at their newly created Rural Energy for America Program (REAP - provides grants (and loans) to rural small businesses and agricultural producers for up to 25% of the cost to purchase and install renewable energy generation systems). On another front, we are meeting with United States Forest Service officials to explore training and employment opportunities for our local workforce.

The Department of Commerce is releasing funds for Wireless and Broadband Deployment and Broadband Technology grants. We are currently exploring opportunities for private sector business to expand Broadband in our area, and create some jobs while they are at it.

The State will also see a significant increase in funding around HUD weatherization projects and energy efficiency models within the Energy Commission.

Within the State, the Governor's office has recently released funds through the California Conservation Corp that will be available to the WIB's in coordination with the Community Colleges.

The following is a list of potential funding sources for local training, job creation and business assistance projects.

Currently awaiting NOFA's to be released:
Department of Commerce: Broadband

Department of Energy: Energy Conservation and Training Grants
USDA Forestry Service
Governor's Office of Volunteerism: California Conservation Core
DOL: Green Jobs/Renewable Energy
DOL: Allied Health/Health Career Ladders
Governor's 15%: Health Career Ladders
DOL: Youth Build
Infrastructure Jobs: Currently developing local matrix of four EDA districts in conjunction with EDC's
Public Housing Rehabilitation projects
CSBG Weatherization projects
CDBG connection to shovel ready projects
Neighborhood Stabilization Program: redevelopment of foreclosed houses

The only one that we have in the hopper now is the RBEG grant (USDA Rural Business Enterprise Grant: $150,000).

Recommended Action:

Executive Committee to recommend to the full WIB and Governing Board the approval of NoRTEC staff pursuing stimulus funding that is expected to enhance NoRTEC's ability to provide job training, businesss assistance, job creation and employment oppportunities.

Note: Two additional nonstimulus funding applications are with WAL-MART's Private Foundation for $245,000, and a small one with Butte College for $24,000. Briefly, the WAL-MART funding is to conduct outreach to businesses in the region through multi-sources to create awareness of a North State Green Jobs Initiative and services/resources available to them. The Butte College funding is for the development of a team of CEOs that will meet quarterly with WIB staff and Butte College staff to design and articulate courses around green jobs/renewable energy programs.

VII. BUTTE COUNTY REQUEST TO CHANGE THE NoRTEC MEETING DAY (ACTION)

NoRTEC, since the late 1980s, meets quarterly, on the fourth Thursday of the month in January, April, July, and October. Thursday was selected to accommodate the Boards of Supervisors. Supervisor meetings are regularly scheduled for Tuesdays, leaving Monday, Wednesday, Thursday or Friday to select from. Because of travel distances, Mondays and Fridays were eliminated, leaving Wednesday and Thursday. One consideration was that overage from Supervisor's meetings spilled into Wednesdays. Another was that, due to the disances to be travelled, Wednesday meetings would require Tuesday night travel. With due consideration, Thursday was selected for the regularly scheduled NoRTEC meeting day.

The fourth week was selected to allow the quarterly reports to be presented. They are due to the State by the 20th of January, April, July, and October. Meeting sooner than the fourth Thursday following the end of a quarter, would be too early to prepare the reports.

Meeting in the following month would effect the timeliness of reporting this information to the WIB and Governing Board.

Unfortunately, the Butte County Board of Supervisors have their Butte County Association of Governments and Butte County Air Quality Management District meetings on the fourth Thursday of the month, and are unable to attend the NoRTEC meetings. According to their letter, these meetings require the attendance of every member of their Board (/wgb/meetings/agenda/butte_sups_letter.pdf). "We ask that NoRTEC change its meeting day so that Butte County is allowed to have its representive attend the meetings."

Recommended Action:

Executive Committee to recommend to the full WIB and Governing Board which day, week, and months to hold the NoRTEC quarterly meetings.

/WGB/Meetings/Agenda/Butte_Attendance.html

VIII. OLD BUSINESS

Members may bring up prior business for discussion.

/WGB/Meetings/Agenda/eca_action_042209.html

IX. NEW BUSINESS

Members may bring up new business for discussion.

X. ADJOURNMENT

NoRTEC is an equal opportunity employer/program. Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities.

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