

Productivity Board Meeting Minutes
October 7, 2005

WELCOME & INTRODUCTIONS

Brian Sonntag, State Auditor, called the meeting to order at 10:07 a.m., and welcomed all in attendance, then began introductions.

ATTENDANCE

Board Members present: Brian Sonntag, Linda Villegas Bremer, Kathleen Brockman, Mike Kerschbaum, George Masten, Wanda Riley, Terry Teale, Joyce Turner and Scott Turner.

Board Members absent: Sam Reed

Staff present: Josi Brooks, Chana Clark, Lonni Rickard and Tracy Workman.

Guests Present: Kevin Bovenkamp, Ron Dixon, Margaret Hoyer, Kathy Smith and Howard Yarbrough, DOC; Molly Hughes, Ron Smith and Stan Washburn, SHS; Priscilla Mayo, DOP; Art Mead, FTE Newsmagazine

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The Board moved, seconded, and voted unanimously to approve the September 2, 2005 minutes as written.

MONTHLY UPDATE

Tracy Workman reported that staff held coordinator training on September 21st for coordinators from the Gambling Commission, Military Department, the Departments of Natural Resources and Employment Security.

With the overwhelming response from the coordinators training is scheduled for October 19, 2005 from 10:00 am to noon, with 16 coordinators signed up.

Tracy reported the flyer featuring David Hess from the Department of Transportation is very well received, with particular interest coming from those employees in the field. A flyer featuring an employee from Washington Technical College is in the works for Higher Education.

Planning for Public Service Recognition Week is underway, with letters going to all agency directors and higher education institution presidents confirming their representative for PSRW. Response is good with a couple agencies assigning coordinators who did not participate last year.

EMPLOYEE SUGGESTION ADOPTS

Brian Sonntag reviewed and concurred with the agency and staff recommendations. It was moved, seconded, and *the Board voted unanimously to accept agency and staff recommendations.*

MULTIPLE AGENCY SUGGESTIONS

Brian Sonntag reviewed and concurred with the agency and staff recommendations. It was moved, seconded, and *the Board voted unanimously to accept the agency and staff recommendations.*

EMPLOYEE SUGGESTION NON-ADOPTS

Linda Bremer reviewed and after, concurred with agency and staff recommendations. It was moved and seconded, and *the Board voted unanimously to accept agency and staff recommendations.*

APPEAL (1) – SUGGESTION #200400122

Chana Clark gave a brief overview of the appeal, and the suggester, Ron Smith from the Department of Social and Health Services (SHS), had an opportunity to address the Board. Mr. Smith stated that he felt his suggestion was “doable”. Stan Washburn, SHS presented the agency prospective, and said that Mr. Smith referenced only a part of the complete process. To adopt Mr. Smith’s suggestion, would require incredible rework of the entire program structure. Linda Bremer added, that from a programmers’ perspective, this fix would be a “spaghetti” affect, in that you only see a portion of what is being affected, when in fact, the entire process becomes affected. Mr. Washburn said that currently such a fix is in place, and in approximately two years this situation would not be an issue, but to write “ghost” warrants would cause more problems than fix them.

The Board discussed the suggestion and appeal, asking questions of Mr. Smith and Mr. Washburn. George Masten moved that this be ‘tabled’, which was seconded. Brian Sonntag asked for a vote which was held with 5 “for” and 2 “opposed”, with one abstention. This will be reconsidered for next month. Brian said if there was any additional information to summarize that the suggester or agency could provide, it would be appreciated.

APPEAL (2) – SUGGESTION #200400115

Chana Clark gave an overview, citing the history of this suggestion and subsequent appeal. Brian then turned the floor to Ron Dixon for his rebuttal of the agency's decision to rescind the award. Mr. Dixon assured the Board that this suggestion did not fall within his job duties, and supplied dates that the idea was implemented. Due to some problems, the implementation was not actually installed until AFTER he submitted the suggestion.

Howard Yarborough, Department of Corrections, then spoke for the agency, claiming the entire misunderstanding was his fault alone. Mr. Yarborough said the focus was on the savings, and not on whether or not this suggestion fell within Ron's job duties. This was caught "after the fact", and Mr. Yarborough apologized to the Board for the mistake. However, when the agency realized their mistake, an internal audit was performed. The audit confirmed that this was, indeed, part of Ron's job duties; and there was timeliness involved. Mr. Yarborough then said the procedure was flawed.

Mr. Dixon then spoke again, saying this did not have anything to do with his job, according to his most current job description. The suggestion was submitted with the support of his immediate supervisor. Mr. Dixon said that this is not the way the Employee Suggestion process was intended to work, and that he did not want to see other state employees have to go through this kind of issue in the future.

The Board then discussed all the new information, along with a review of the correspondence in the file. George Masten said he was not convinced that the procedure was flawed. Terry asked if why, once the Board had taken action, this was being overturned by the agency, and referred to the Board process. According to the board statutes, when the Board acts on an agency recommendation, the decision is final and that an agency has no authority to file an appeal. Brian Sonntag said that they are dealing with an employee who had a great idea; dealing with a suggestion that had gone through the process. Brian said that he was not sure there is any process set up for the agency to appeal their own recommendation. George moved to deny the agency's appeal based on no such rule, which was seconded. After a unanimous vote, Brian reiterated that the Board's decision of May 6, 2005 will stand, and the agency was directed to proceed with payment of the original award of \$6,537.

NEXT BOARD MEETING

The next Board meeting is scheduled for November 4, 2005 in the Office of the Secretary of State, Legislative Building at 10:00 AM.

Reminder: The reviewers for November are Brian Sonntag (Adopts/Multiple Agency) and Mike Kerschbaum (Non-Adopts). *Both reviewers will also review appeals and Teamwork Incentive Program applications that are presented.*

ADJOURNMENT –There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:30 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

TRACY N. WORKMAN
Special Programs Manager
TW/jb 10/14/05