WISCONSIN STATE USE BOARD MEETING

January 29, 2015, 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Opportunities, Inc.

930 Stewart Street, Madison, WI

**Opening Business**

Call to Order – The meeting was called to order by Jean Zweifel at 10:09 a.m.

Introductions

Board Members Present:

* Jean Zweifel, Greenco Industries
* Enid Glenn, Department of Workforce Development, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation
* Bill Smith, National Federation of Independent Business
* Helen McCain, Department of Administration

Board Staff Present:

* Nadine Malm, Department of Administration
* Mason Aumanstal, Department of Administration

Audience:

* Brian Wakeham, Department of Administration
* Rich Weigold, Industries for the Blind
* Jeff Martinelli, Industries for the Blind
* Cheryl Colella-Gehrke, PDQ Manufacturing
* Logan Tell, PDQ Manufacturing
* Brandi Grayson, Rehabilitation for Wisconsin
* Cheryl Edgington, Department of Administration
* Todd Krukowski, Goodwill Industries
* Craig Poshepny, Riverfront, Incorporated
* Karl Schmig, Riverfront, Incorporated
* Toby Johnson, Superior Vocations Center, Inc.
* Ryan Hoffman, Beyond Vision
* Jim Kerlin, Beyond Vision
* Amanda Sweet, Beyond Vision
* Rob Buettner, Beyond Vision
* Isobel O’Rourke, Kenosha Achievement Center
* Ken Maciejewski, Opportunities, Inc.
* Traci Logothetis, Opportunities, Inc.

Teleconference Participants:

* Gary Goodsell, Careers Industries
* Stacy Quickstad, Careers Industries
* Lincoln Burr, Rehabilitation for Wisconsin
* Ron Opicka, East Shore Industries
* Tracy Nelson, East Shore Industries
* Paul Thornton, Black River Industries
* Kathy Kaeding, Department of Corrections

Approval of October 9, 2014 Minutes – **Enid motioned, Helen 2nd – Motion approved**

Chairperson Report

* Nothing to report

**New Business**

Fair Market Report – Nadine sent the Fair Market report information to the sub-committee before the meeting. The only product that was above the fair market price was a hygiene kit. Nadine worked with the work center and they were able to lower the price. Nadine confirmed that the work center is now within the fair market price, but the work center is also looking to get a new supplier for the hygiene kit as Nadine was able to direct the work center to some suppliers that are more in line with institutional needs. Jean confirmed that the check on fair market is a good step to take since it saves the State money. Nadine also noted that there was a question that came from a sub-committee member about meeting again once the fair market review was done. Jean asked the board their opinion of the possibility of meeting again, now that the fair market review has been completed. Bill stated that he doesn’t believe a meeting is necessary, Jean agreed that, barring an issue that requires the board’s attention, there is no need to reconvene with the sub-committee. Nadine will continue to report to the board any results she comes across as well as any difficulties that arise. There is no need to schedule a sub-committee meeting at this time.

Annual Report – Nadine has completed almost all of the annual reports, but due to a complication with a shared email in-box, some of the reports have not been found. The work centers were subsequently contacted who complied with the request for the report once again. There was only a difficulty with one work center’s report as the contact person at the work center is no longer with the work center. The work center is now working with another Agency and the Agency is working to get the report completed with the work center. If Nadine is unable to obtain the specific report, she will continue with the annual report without the work center as last year’s report did not show a large spend report for the work center. Jean asked for clarification that the work center is working with Nadine to the best of their ability; Nadine confirmed the work center is doing what they can to assist in the matter.

Appreciable Contribution Survey – Nadine allowed Mason the opportunity to explain the results matrix about the questionnaire. Mason explained that the results simply show a statistical breakdown of the responses that were received against the number of total responses. Mason also noted that some work centers added their own items that they apply for indirect costs and these were also added to the breakdown of responses as they were received. Nadine clarified that the survey asked the work centers to confirm which items they apply to appreciable contribution as well as indirect costs. Nadine advised that this information should be used when determining definitions for appreciable contribution as well as indirect cost. Jean asked how many questionnaires had been sent out. Nadine confirmed that all 63 active work centers received the survey while Mason advised that appreciable contribution and indirect cost information was only gathered from work centers that have active contracts with the state. Nadine believes that about 75% of the work centers with state contracts responded to the survey. Nadine also noted that some responses were received from work centers that hold service related contracts and this is notable because the questionnaire was more closely related to commodity contracts. Helen asked if any comparison was done with work centers that don’t have state contracts to the responses received to see if there was consistency between the two groups. Mason confirmed that this comparison was not done, because the responses to the questionnaire from work centers without active state contracts were not collected. Jean noted that GreenCo Industries uses the same appreciable contribution strategy whether the contract is a state contract or not. Nadine asked if a teleconference was needed for the board to discuss the appreciable contribution survey further. Bill does not believe that further discussion was needed at this time. Enid asked for clarification as to the purpose of the questionnaire. Nadine reported that the questionnaire was to be used for creating new definitions when determining fair market cost analysis. Nadine asked if the staff to the board should work to create the new definitions. Enid confirmed this should be done. Jean noted after the definitions are created, the board would review and determine the course of action at that point.

Battery Set Aside – Nadine noted that batteries are currently on set aside with Opportunities, Inc. Opportunities Inc., is working with a Wisconsin manufacturer to supply batteries while the contract is being completed. Ken Maciejewski from Opportunities, Inc. added that the contract is almost completed, the pricing is still being worked out and the best practices are still being considered. Nadine noted that a 90 day extension on the set aside would be beneficial.

Approval of the extension for the battery set aside request – **Helen motioned, Bill 2nd – Motion approved.**

**New Business**

WISBuy presentation by Brian Wakeham, State Bureau of Procurement – Nadine advised that there was a recent change to the ordering process by the State of Wisconsin; Nadine introduced Brian Wakeham to discuss the system. Brian noted that the WISBuy system is simply an e-catalog service that allows end-users of the state and local governments to access and obtain products as well as Maintenance, Repair and Operation (MRO) services. Brian stated that this is a stand-alone service designed for purchase-card (p-card) functionality. Brian explained that the user will go into WISBuy, create a requisition and complete the transaction using a p-card. The system started with seven contracts and 21 suppliers: office supplies, MRO, as well as IT and janitorial services – services that are used frequently and create a lot of purchase orders. Brian further noted that service contracts can be a little difficult as many e-catalog systems are designed specifically for product/commodity purchasing. Brian announced that the second phase of development for WISBuy will focus on State Use contracts and how to tailor the ‘punch-out’ experience for those purchasing from work centers. Brian explained that the work center catalog system on WISBuy is in development; currently, spices and disposable sterile gloves are on the WISBuy system and ready to be purchased by all state agencies in Wisconsin. East Shore Industries of Algoma has declined participation at this time until the state implements the new Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) due to questions of purchasing with credit cards. The WISBuy team has been working in conjunction with work centers and Nadine to get these contracts ready for WISBuy. The goal with WISBuy is to have a minimal impact on the business processes of current systems; therefore it is imperative for the work centers to communicate their needs with regard to delivery methods including fax, email or cXML. The state can be flexible when it comes to how the work centers will be connected with WISBuy. The biggest benefit to the state for getting work center contracts on WISBuy is the ability for the state to monitor and promote the use of mandatory contracts (state agencies are required to purchase from specific vendors if the contract is mandatory), in turn, this will provide greater spend to the work centers. Brian made note of Ann Hommer as a good resource for getting connected with WISBuy and the test site. Brian and Nadine will act as a point of reference for the business end of the contracts (rather than the technical aspects). Brian urged work center personnel to get familiar with WISBuy by accessing the site and getting familiar with how it works. Brian opened the floor for questions or comments. Helen wanted to note that the implementation of the ERP is moving rapidly ahead of the July 1st launch date. Being that the ERP will allow for greater visibility of purchase orders using ‘direct check,’ making it important to get work center information available on WISBuy; if the state and the work centers work together, WISBuy will clarify which contracts are mandatory. The use of mandatory contracts has been hard to enforce, owing to the fact that it’s difficult to make people aware of their availability. Training and outreach will be the first step to making a successful transition for all parties, however, the conversion will only work if work centers have a presence on WISBuy. Rich Weigold from Industries for the Blind inquired about the process of placing an order and specifically asked if purchasers are able to buy directly from the vendor or if orders are centrally processed internally with the state. Helen noted that end users would place an order on WISBuy by using the catalog and a purchase card (p-card), the order would then be sent through to the vendor that the end user is purchasing from after the order is processed. Helen further stated that existing catalogs can be accessed by users of WISBuy by using the same punch-out system that was noted earlier. Helen advised that it would be important to differentiate between items on a mandatory state contract and other items the work center may sell to minimize confusion. Rich then asked if WISBuy was created to have a more centralized ordering process – for instance, Industries for the Blind currently sells items to many different Department of Correction (DOC) facilities, would these orders come from one DOC office or would the ordering process continue the same as it is now? Helen noted that this is a question that may not be answered at this point but did indicate there continues to be greater centralization for many state agency purchasing programs. Helen noted that she is not aware of how this will continue to unfold. Jim Kerlin from Beyond Vision asked if WISBuy is able to ‘lock-in’ on items that are on mandatory contracts effectively ensuring that any items available on mandatory contracts can only be purchased under the specific contract similar to the current federal purchasing system. Brian noted that the blocking capabilities do exist, and Helen added that work continues on this, however, it’s unlikely that WISBuy will be able to prevent users from ordering items that are available through other vendors. WISBuy, however can show Brian and the WISBuy team what items are being purchased that are available under mandatory contracts allowing the state to take corrective actions and take an educational approach to these purchases after they have occurred. Helen again stated that getting work centers on WISBuy will allow for greater visibility of mandatory contracts that state purchasers may not be familiar with. Enid asked if there is self-registration in WISBuy, and if so would that ensure a spot in the forthcoming ERP when it launches; Brian confirmed that this is in the works as the current process involves loading all p-card users into WISBuy that will correlate to the new ERP. Brian clarified to say that WISBuy is currently operational and went live in April of 2014; the system does allow the state to see who has made purchases and pull spend reports. Helen further stated that there was a limitation with the previous system because it only allowed for usage by p-card users; the new ERP is going to allows for purchases via purchasing order, Brian said that once the centers are loaded on WISBuy, the state will easily be able to add the work centers to the new ERP. Jean inquired how work centers will be added to WISBuy; Brian noted said that work centers will work with the state through Nadine who will work with the WISBuy team. Nadine clarified that the work centers have an initial meeting with Nadine and the WISBuy team where there is a discussion about what requirements WISBuy has and how limitations on both sides can be worked through.

Approval Process of Meeting Minutes – Nadine received a request from a work center requesting that the process for meeting minute approval be changed so that the minutes are accessible sooner rather than waiting three months for the board to approve the minutes. Nadine looked through the statute and didn’t see anything indicating the need for waiting. Nadine advised a possible solution is to have the minutes sent to the board in two or three weeks for approval and they could be posted if the board members approve the minutes. Nadine added that the information may not be as fresh or pertinent when the minutes are posted. Bill understands the concern but sometimes the meeting minutes need further discussion, clarification and revision in order to be approved; Helen agrees that the meeting minutes often include delicate subject matter that needs addressing by the board. Jean also agrees and thinks that early-approval of meeting minutes could easily lead to confusion. Bill advised that if there is a specific concern that someone has, the board can address these items on a case-by-case basis. Nadine asked for clarification about how the process should go and expressed concern about approval of minutes by piece-meal. Jean advised that concerns should be brought to Nadine, and Nadine can approach the board who will then discuss the information and provide insight. Jean noted that it’s standard procedure to have meeting minutes approved before they are posted.

State Use Board Meeting Dates – Jean noted that it’s been difficult to reach quorum for board meetings. Jean asked if there was a better day to have meetings on other than the second Thursday of the month. Nadine offered to send future dates earlier to get the dates on calendars. Bill and End noted that conflicts are unpredictable and moving the date or getting the dates earlier likely wouldn’t have much of an effect. Nadine offered the January meeting as an example – the initial date for the meeting dated January 29 was January 8th, but the quorum threshold was not going to be met. Nadine offered the suggestion of moving the January meeting to the final Thursday to hopefully get information from the State Use Program Association (SUPRA) meeting to the board sooner rather than waiting around three weeks for getting this information. Jean asked the board if the January meeting should be moved to a later date. The board agreed, but also noted that a motion was not needed. Nadine noted that the next board meeting would take place on the road (typically meetings in July take place at a work center). Jean discussed concern about having quorum at that meeting as it has been an issue when the board changes the location.

Cancellation of high-top tennis shoes – Nadine received a letter from Ventures Unlimited who holds the contract for canvas shoes for the DOC where shoes were used by the incarcerated in the gym and for general wear. Ventures Unlimited asked to cancel the contract (that has effectively stopped at this time) due to the cost of minimum orders that they had to agree to purchase was too high. DOC was planning to purchase the remaining stock and prepare a bid to find a new vendor. Enid asked if there was still a need by DOC for this style of shoe even though Venture, Unlimited has stopped producing the shoes. Nadine confirmed that the need still exists. Helen inquired if there was another work center that is able to take over the contract, but Nadine has not looked into this as the request was not placed with the State Use program but rather was discussed between the work center and DOC directly. Jean stated that this is an issue for many work centers; Jean identified a similar difficulty GreenCo with a bra contract. GreenCo couldn’t get the materials or when they did get them, there was concern about the timing of the completion of the order; rather than be in violation of the contract, GreenCo opted to give up the contract. As to the cancellation of this contract that Ventures Unlimited currently holds, there is no action needed by the board.

Pens and Pencils Contracts – Industries for the Blind – Industries for the Blind requested an increase on the pens that they have on contract and expressed an interest in adding new items. Per Nadine, a new contract will be created. Currently there is a pens contract and a pencils contract. Due to various items being removed by suppliers, the pencils contract only has one item. Nadine would like to create a new contract for writing implements. After some negotiation, the prices are set and are within fair market pricing. Helen inquired if the writing devices come through Staples and Nadine confirmed but identified some difficulty working with Staples because of inability to get certain products as well as pricing differences between Federal State Use services rather than the lower pricing that would have been found with the Wisconsin State Use program. Industries for the Blind will continue working with Staples to ensure that these products are available. Rich Weigold did note that although prices increased on 14 items, there were 22 items that saw a decrease.

Approval of the new contract for writing implements –**Bill motioned, Enid 2nd – Motion approved.**

Set aside request for Door Hardware (Knobs and Levers) – Jeff Martinelli, Industries for the Blind (IB) – Rich Weigold requested this set aside for door hardware this included Jeff Martinelli, Industries for the Blind, Cheryl Colella-Gehrke, PDQ Manufacturing and Logan Tell, PDQ Manufacturing; PDQ Manufacturing (PDQ) would be the potential manufacturer for this set aside. Rich identified two potential benefits for this set aside: it would create job opportunities in the blind community and would save the state substantial money on door hardware. Rich noted that similar projects done in other states have been launched successfully. Jeff again noted the savings the state would enjoy with this set aside, the job opportunities for blind individuals and also noted that the state would be purchasing products made in the United States. PDQ and IB developed a list of 73 items including door closers, door hardware, knobs, levers and exit devices that would be delivered in kits to IB where the devices would be assembled. PDQ is currently working with the federal government and other state agencies. Logan Tell then discussed the history and profile of PDQ: PDQ has been in the business of manufacturing for 35 years dealing with commercial hardware dealing to a variety of government services. Logan noted that products are manufactured in-house by PDQ engineers and are installed in schools and office buildings all over the United States. Logan mentioned that PDQ designs their devices to specifications set by industry standards; this process is established and approved by the Builders Hardware Manufacturing Association (BHMA). Therefore a product labeled ‘Grade 1’ has been confirmed to have been built to the same specifications of another Grade 1 device. Jeff noted PDQ will provide the customer support for technical issues and difficulties. Jeff provided current pricing and estimated savings for items including Cylindrical Door Locks. Jeff noted that through Grainger, the Wisconsin State Contract price is currently $350.80 and $270.01 when purchasing from MSC Industrial; through IB and PDQ, the estimated price for “essentially” the same product would be $185.68 an almost 50% savings from the current contractual price. For a Door Closer on the current contract, the state would spend $398.60 when purchasing from Grainger, and $471.35 when purchasing through MSC Industrial. When purchasing the same product from IB/PDQ, the state would spend $173.42 a price 43% below the current cost from Grainger and 63% below the cost from MSC. Jeff estimates potentially 40 to 60 positions would be created if set aside is granted. Helen asked if this partnership would provide like-for-like replacements or if new systems would need to be added (particularly with regard to electronic card systems). Logan advised that access control devices use a plug and play system that allows use with different security types. Helen asked if PDQ and IB would establish contact with the state facilties development personnel as part of the feasibility study, because they are the ones that established the specifications currently in use. Jeff confirmed that a development plan is currently being put together, but again stated that there are universal standards that the hardware is being designed to. Jeff further expressed that 85% of the business for commercial door hardware is provided by three companies further acknowledging the need for universally designed products. Logan again reiterated that screw patterns, quality and compatibility are all standardized and confirmed by BHMA. Jeff stated that the number of products being offered may increase or decrease when communication with the end-users continues. Helen noted that there is a potential difficulty as there is a current contract that is ongoing with three vendors (Fastenal, Grainger and MSC Industrial); if the state does agree to go in the direction of IB and PDQ, it would need to be when the contract renewal process begins. There is also concern that the pricing provided by the current vendors were based on very specific contract language. Jeff noted that this set aside request is about feasibility and found that the current contract was renewed on March 1st 2014 and is up for renewal on February 20th 2017. It would take about that long for IB and PDQ to research and prepare for being added to the contract. Jean mentioned the absence of Fastenal prices for comparability, but representatives for IB and PDQ were unable to find the pricing information online. Helen then asked if the prices provided for MSC Industrial and Grainger were based on the discounts provided to the state, Jeff confirmed that the discount pricing is what was provided in the comparison analysis. Bill asked if the pricing and manufacturing is based on an ‘apples-to-apples’ comparison. Jeff confirmed that the products were compared side-by-side and there was found to be no significant difference. Jeff also stated that the reason that three companies own 85% of the market is because representatives for these companies are sent at the expense of the manufacturer to specify the designs with architects. Bill inquired asked if IB would need to make any investments to assemble these devices. Jeff noted that the facility is largely able to take on the task with little adjustments; the only capital that would go into assembly on the front-end would be the purchasing of the assembly kits from PDQ. Cheryl from PDQ said that the assembly is relatively simple and other assemblers use an air-line air compressor tool or an electric screwdriver which IB is currently set up for. Jeff confirmed that the process is very blind-friendly. Bill asked who PDQ’s biggest competitor is. Logan advised that Stanley Black and Decker is one, a conglomerate of approximately 120 different companies operating as Assa Abloy and another company named Allegion. Logan then discussed again the ‘apples-to-apples’ comparison that was mentioned earlier and stated that PDQ sits on three committees that establish the performance standards. PDQ meets, and in some instances, exceeds the minimum performance standards. As to the product lifetime, PDQ offers a warranty that is sometimes two times the warranty that other companies offer thus the projected cost should appeal even more as there would be long-term savings. Jeff asked Logan to clarify that other companies offer a 25 year warranty and Logan confirmed that on cylindrical locks, a 25 year warranty is standard. On Mortise locks there is lifetime warranty through PDQ, while others may offer a ten year warranty. Jeff also noted that although other companies offer a discount when bidding on contracts similar to the one being discussed, sometimes there is no significant competition. Whereas when there is an open bid and companies like PDQ get involved, pricing from larger companies drops dramatically; while there is a discount, greater bidding competition yields greater discounts. Enid asked if PDQ is a family business and Logan confirmed stating that PDQ is a family company based out of Leola, Pennsylvania outside of Lancaster. Enid also inquired if PDQ hires those with disabilities and Logan stated that PDQ started something very similar to this proposed plan three years ago with sub-contractors that allow PDQ to work with programs like IB. The project started as a community outreach but has evolved to a mutually beneficial partnership. Cheryl added that, due to the urging of work centers, once a quarter PDQ reassesses their methodology to see what processes PDQ takes on in the assembly/manufacturing process that can be done by organizations such as IB. Bill asked if PDQ has a relationship with other organizations like IB in other states; Cheryl sited organizations like San Antonio Lighthouse for the Blind, Central Association for the Blind in Utica, New York, VisionCorps in Lancaster, Pennsylvania and Georgia Industries for the Blind. Cheryl has previously worked with two different blind agencies and her mission to employ the blind has followed her to PDQ. According to Cheryl there are many jobs involving direct labor that can be done by the blind. Cheryl challenged PDQ to put more labor into products ensuring that there is enough work to justify the use of these programs. Enid asked if the wages are considered to be good. Cheryl confirmed that the wages (although different in every area) are above what is typically seen. Jean asked if PDQ only works with the blind, or if people with other disabilities were also considered for these positions; Cheryl is currently working only with blind agencies, but it is not out of the question to expand to those with other disabilities. The primary focus, from PDQ, is working with states with State Use Programs because they are able to be supported and funded. Rich thanked the board for their consideration.

Approval of the Set Aside request for the Research and Development feasibility study – **Enid motioned, Bill 2nd – Motion approved.**

Workforce Innovation and Opportunities Act (WIOA) Review - Section 511 – Enid provided language of WIOA legislation. The Department of Labor currently has oversight items related to WIOA and related programs. Section 511 is a new section pertaining to vocational rehabilitation. Federal legislation was passed in July of 2014 with an immediate effective date, however, the effective date of Section 511 is July of 2016 and addresses limitations to sub-minimum wage payment. The language of the Section outlines a series of steps that applies to individuals under the age of 24 before they can be placed into a job paying sub-minimum wage. Schools are also prohibited from working with contractors that pay sub-minimum wage. Section 511 applies to those currently working sub-minimum wage jobs. The written regulations were to be completed in January, but they have not been provided to DWD. But the Department of Education has indicated that Services Administration, the federal oversight agency for Wisconsin’s Department of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR), will have the program in place by spring of 2016. Enid wanted to address this with the State Use Board because it affects work centers and those with disabilities. The scope of Act 511 expands the role of DVR to monitor sub-minimum wage positions; DVR is still looking at how this will happen but the focus is on integrated community employment opportunities. Enid also noted that the Department of Labor has set up a national advisory commission on disability employment, Wisconsin’s representative and advisor is Lisa Pugh from Disabilities Rights Wisconsin. Former Commissioner of the Rehab Services Administration Fred Schroeder is also part of the 17 person committee. The overall goal for the advisory commission is to increase competitive disability employment opportunities. Enid wanted this noted on the record and urged the board to get familiar with the changes that are coming. Jean advised that DVR has not been referring anyone to work at work centers, but those that have in the past have been placed in positions that pay minimum wage or more and that includes during the assessment period. Jean doesn’t believe this will have much of an impact on the work of the board. One change that Jean did note is that schools have been referring people to work centers for transition to a new position but going forward, they won’t be able to do this unless the positions being considered pay above minimum wage. Going forward those currently serving in sub-minimum wage positions will need to be referred to DVR for oversight. Enid referred to the packet of information which she indicates includes information on the role DVR will play including the type of counseling DVR will provide, how DVR will enact peer mentoring, advocacy programs that DVR will utilize and the means and frequency of monitoring the program. Enid also advised that Businesses with fewer than 15 employees will be exempt from these sub-minimum wage requirements. Jean asked for clarification from Enid that people that are under 24 that are currently in a sub-minimum wage position would be able to continue in these positions; Enid confirmed this is the case. DVR of Wisconsin currently monitors the use of sub-minimum wage, but the expansion of WIOA effectively ‘ups the ante’ of the scope of DVR and their involvement in the program. For each of the 6 month periods in the first year and then annually following that initial term, DVR will attempt to divert employees to jobs that pay minimum wage or higher if they are able to. Enid would like to have this item added to the April agenda.

ACCSES Summit and SUPRA update – Nadine traveled to the SUPRA conference and with the permission of the board extended her stay by two days to attend the ACCSES summit that occurred before the SUPRA conference. The ACCSES summit discussed the Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) rule implementation that affects programs like the State Use Board and work centers around the nation. Nadine said that Wisconsin was identified as the model for how a state can save their work centers. The A-Team, a Wisconsin-based grass-roots advocacy group, was distinguished as an organization that promotes work centers and encourages employment for the disabled. Different representatives from different states all advised of what was occurring in their states as a result of the HCBS ruling. The essence of the presentations was “contact A-Team” in order to keep the work center options viable. Nadine was satisfied that Wisconsin remains a strong work center state, while some states are unfortunately closing their doors. The SUPRA conference was held at the same location as the ACCSES summit. Initial discussion revolved around what was discussed at the ACCSES summit as well as a mention of WIOA. Nadine also mentioned there was a discussion about efforts to repeal section 14 (c) of the Fair Labor Act in favor of the Transition into Integrated and Meaningful Employment Act (TIME Act). Nadine also referenced other programs and opportunities available; one program frequently mentioned was janitorial services certification. CMS certifies individuals for janitorial services and confirms the recipient understands the processes and knows how to work the equipment and materials related to janitorial positions. Other states at the SUPRA conference that currently utilize CMS certification find that it has a benefit when obtaining contracts since the certified people are documented as having an understanding of the services they are providing. There was discussion of a recycling business on the third day of the conference. Nadine made note of this because there’s not a lot of work in Wisconsin for the work centers when it comes to recycling, but there has previously been discussion of an electronics recycling bid through DOA. Nadine also expressed interest in a program in Pennsylvania where a work center is performing mattress recycling; without mattress recycling programs, it is estimated there would be 300,000 mattresses a year going to landfills. Under this program, there were only six mattresses out of 3,000 that went to the landfill and those were sent to the landfill because of concerns with bed bugs. The program requires equipment per OSHA standards, but it otherwise a feasible enterprise. The future of state use was further discussed at the conference with those providing information urging companies and work centers to look ‘outside the box’ for services that could be provided. One particular session of the conference focused on social enterprise; the work center discussed how they promoted their business – although the information was largely anecdotal, Nadine took the contact information of the representative in order to pursue brand building in other ways. Nadine then referenced a handout from the SUPRA convention that shows the products and services available. Many of the products and services have not changed from year-to-year, but there are a few items that Nadine found worth mentioning. One item is meal kits: specifically Nadine thought of DOC institutions or National Guard training. Another interesting item is toothbrushes; this is not a large dollar-volume, but there are several types of toothbrushes that can be produced (security types for those in maximum security DOC facilities, or standard toothbrushes that would be used in a dormitory). Also of note: sugar-free powdered gelatin, odor guard bags for soiled linens that would be used in long-term care facilities, and records retention services. Bill previously noticed that a tick-remover kit is a commodity supplied by a work center in New York; they are currently being sold in park systems. Nadine was not sure about how much use they would get from Wisconsin agencies. One specific work center in Pennsylvania had been providing safety vests but has added safety chaps and safety pants for those performing road maintenance – some current Wisconsin work centers do have the capability to provide textile-based goods and this may be worth looking into. Some projects are still in the research and development stages; one in particular is Carsonite Composites – Highway Delineators. These are highway signs with reflective tape, once assembled, the products are sold back to the Department of Transportation. Another product being researched is Sand-less Sandbags; Nadine saw a presentation with this product. The bag is submerged in water and the water is retained for levee support – when no longer needed, they can be sent to the landfill as they are bio-degradable. The work center providing this item (Envision, based in Kansas) is sewing and packaging the bags before sending them out for use. Nadine did advise that the cost is $25 for each bag and the price could be prohibitive. Air-scrubbers designed to remove allergens from HVAC systems were also being developed by work centers. A service that is currently being utilized in Texas is logistic services provided by disabled veterans; the workers track shipments and also act as customer service. Texas is also looking into the feasibility of door lock assembly.

**Old/Other Business**

No old business.

**Public Comment**

Paul Thornton from Black River Industries asked about the sneaker contract and referenced the difficulties noted about getting materials sent from oversees. Paul asked if DOA has ever considered a Buy America clause in contracts. Helen advised that there is a state statute regarding Services America that was passed some time ago. The difficulty is that at the Federal level, there is the World Trade Agreement which Wisconsin subscribes to; there is a provision in this agreement that states countries cannot be discriminated against if they have signed on with the World Trade Agreement. There has been some investigation as to whether Wisconsin can withdraw from that agreement and it is not currently possible. Helen noted that another problem that could provide difficulty is that there is no standard definition for American made; using the example of a computer, would every computer used by the state meet the threshold for non-compliance? Computer chips manufactured overseas would likely be used, so the question arises, if a computer is assembled in America, would it still be an American product? Helen again noted that services provided must be within the United States, but at this time, a Buy America clause does not look like a possibility. Ron Opicka from East Shore Industries inquired about Governor Walker’s changing of the University system and how it will affect State Use. Helen advised that she has not seen the final legislation, but understands that if University authority is created, they will not be subject to the state procurement laws. It’s unclear how this will unfold with regard to Minority Business Enterprises, work centers and Disabled Veteran-Owned Businesses. As Helen understands it if the university is given purchasing authority, they will have the ability to write the rules anyway that they would like and would not necessarily be subject to chapter 16 (the statutes governing State Use) or other legislative programs that DOA has under procurement rules. Helen also stated that the only information available is what is found in newspapers and urged an even approach until the information is in writing and comes from the Governor’s office. The University publicly expressed interest in continuing to be able to use DOA contracts when the contract meets their needs. The problem is that currently, when there is a state-wide contract, the university’s volume of use is included in the scope of the contract; if the University is given purchasing authority that will no longer be the case. This in-turn would mean that prices would increase owing to lower volume of sales for vendors. Other agencies are currently able to use statewide contracts even though they have their own purchasing authority; for instance Wisconsin Housing and Economic Development Authority, Wisconsin Drug Endangered Children and UW Hospitals (for example) are currently able to purchase on these contracts, but they are not required to and this will effect negotiations with vendors.

Adjournment – **Bill motioned, Enid 2nd and approved.**  Adjourned at 11:51 A.M.

Future Meetings:

* Thursday, April 9, 2015 10am – 12pm, DATCP
* Thursday, July 9, 2015 10am – 12pm, DATCP
* Thursday, October 8, 2015 10am – 12pm, DATCP
* Thursday, January 28, 2016 10am – 12pm, DATCP