

WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD
MINUTES OF MAY 31, 2000 MEETING

A regular meeting of the Workforce Investment Board was called to order by Chairman Lynn Blevins at 6:16 PM, Wednesday, May 31, 2000 at the Best Western University Inn, Canton, New York.

Members Present: Jack Backus, Lynn Blevins, John Bogosian, Don Brining, Sue Caswell, Richard Daddario, Greg Davis, Sherrie Furgison, Donald Hooper, Joseph Kennedy, Ron McDougall, Walt Paul, Linda Randi

Members Absent: Genevieve Baxter, Doug Beachard, John Deal, Robert LaClair, Jr., John Lancaster, Cynthia Lottie, James McFaddin, Joanne Novak, Peter Phelan, Walter Todd, Tim Weaver

Others Present: Edmund J. Russell, Jr., Raymond Fountain, David Williams and Gretchen Wood of the Office of Economic Development; Anthony LaGatta and Jim Picunas of the Department of Labor.

MINUTES

Moved by Mr. Davis and seconded by Mr. Brining, the minutes of the April 26, 2000 meeting were accepted. Approved unanimously.

CHAIRMAN'S COMMENTS

Due to the lack of a quorum at the meeting's start, Chairman Blevins asked that the Staff Reports be given first. A quorum was reached at 6:55 PM.

Chairman Blevins directed the Board's attention to the revised agenda, resolution and correspondence handed out prior to the meeting. He proceeded to distribute a list of committee assignments and a description of considerations/charges that each would be responsible for. Chairman Blevins informed the Board that the first meetings of the standing committees will take place at the June meeting and reports would be given at the following full board meeting.

Chairman Blevins noted that he and Mr. Fountain attended a Workforce Investment Board retreat for WIB officers and staff in Albany. Chairman Blevins indicated that Boards across the State have the same concerns and unanswered questions as the St. Lawrence County WIB.

FINANCIAL AND PARTICIPANT REPORT

Mr. Fountain remarked that the report was not substantially different from March's. Chairman Blevins asked if WIB members would continue to receive financial and participant reports during those months when committees only meet. Dr. Kennedy suggested that he felt it would be sufficient to receive the Financial and Participant Report quarterly instead of every month. After a brief discussion the Board agreed to accept the report. Mr. Daddario moved, seconded by Mr. Brining. The motion to approve the Financial and Participant Report for month ending April 30, 2000 was approved unanimously along with the quarterly reporting procedure.

OLD BUSINESS

Resolution Approving Memorandum of Understanding between the Workforce Investment Board and SUNY Canton

Mr. Russell advised the Board that a MOU with SUNY Canton was required in order for the College to be a recipient of Workforce Investment Act Title II funds. SUNY Canton has been the recipient of Adult Education funds in the past. Adult Education funds are now awarded through the Workforce Investment Act. Chairman Blevins asked if there was a specific time frame for the MOU. Mr. Fountain indicated that he felt that one-year would be sufficient and noted that there has been no direction provided by the State regarding the issue. Chairman Blevins indicated that an option should be made in the MOU for any changes that need to be made can be done so in writing. Mr. Paul concurred as he noted that this is a “living” document and that it is ever changing. Mr. Paul stated that SUNY Canton in accessing WIA Title II funds makes the College part of the One-Stop System requiring financial support of the System. Ms. Caswell moved, seconded by Mr. McDougall. The motion was approved unanimously with Dr. Kennedy’s abstention.

Resolution Approving Memorandum of Understanding between the Workforce Investment Board and One-Stop Operating Partners

Mr. Russell advised the Board that the operating partners are awaiting a decision by the New York State DOL on the process for negotiating cost sharing. Mr. Paul noted that a lot of hard work was put into this MOU by the partners and praised David Williams of the Office of Economic Development for all of his efforts.

Mr. Davis informed the Board that John Ray of VESID has problems with Attachment D of the MOU which is the universal registration form. Mr. Davis indicated that the attachment did not accord with VESID’s confidentiality guidelines. Mr. Williams stated that VESID statute prohibits universal forms because of confidentiality and indicated that the One-Stop used VESID’s form when serving their participants. Chairman Blevins asked that the MOU be signed by all partners and returned by June 13, 2000 as it must be to the New York State DOL on or before June 20. Dr. Kennedy moved, seconded by Mr. Backus. The motion passed unanimously.

Resolution Approving Memorandum of Agreement between the Workforce Investment Board and the Youth Council of the St. Lawrence County Workforce Investment System

Mr. Russell noted that this agreement was developed by Mr. Paul and Mr. Connor. Mr. Paul informed the Board that the Youth Council wanted this agreement to be a reflection of the WIA legislation and feels that it adequately reflects that. In an unrelated issue, Mr. Paul asked the Board to consider a proposal for the Youth Council to attend one full WIB meeting a year to familiarize themselves with Board members and the Board’s function. Chairman Blevins indicated that he felt it would be beneficial to do so. Mr. McDougall moved, seconded by Ms. Caswell. The motion passed unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS

Resolution Establishing the WIA Budget for the St. Lawrence County Workforce Development Area

Mr. Russell reminded the Board that the Workforce Investment Act takes effect July 1 and there still has been no direction regarding budgeting or reporting by the federal government. Mr. Russell indicated that staff has prepared a budget based upon fifty percent of the allocation that will be received so that accounts may be set-up July 1 and costs may be charged. Once direction from the state and/or federal government has been received, staff will bring forward to the Board another budget for their review and consideration. Mr. McDougall moved, seconded by Dr. Kennedy. The motion passed unanimously.

Resolution Authorizing Contract with North Country Library System

Mr. Russell introduced the resolution by informing the Board that the St. Lawrence County Board of Legislators increased the funding for the library system with the caveat that it work with the workforce investment system. Mr. Brining explained that the intention is to put a kiosk into each local library which would allow the user access to the workforce investment system and County services via the internet. Mr. Brining noted that transportation is a large problem for some St. Lawrence County residents, and the kiosks would allow the customer to tap into services such as vehicle registration, paying taxes on-line, job search, etc. Mr. Paul indicated that this is a great opportunity since libraries are now being seen as Title II “networks” regarding adult education. Mr. Fountain added that the One-Stop Operating System (OSOS) will also be available and that our service delivery area is currently a test site for the system. Mr. Daddario moved, seconded by Mr. Brining. The motion passed unanimously.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Marketing Committee

Mr. Backus provided the Board with a hand out of a three-phase marketing plan prepared by the committee and passed around a marketing report prepared by the Clarkson interns. Mr. Backus briefly explained each phase and indicated that the Board has approved \$7,500 for initial marketing expenditures. Mr. Daddario explained that the committee has chosen the recognition of the “One-Stop System” name as its main direction and noted that Phase 2 reflects that focus. A discussion then ensued about the importance of a website to display One-Stop and partner information as well as the site providing links to the partner’s own websites. Dr. Kennedy shared with the Board his experience in trying to keep development of a website “in house” and how he highly recommends contracting out any website designing to be done by a professional agency. Mr. Daddario stated that from a committee standpoint the outreach to be done by Phases 1 and 2 of the marketing plan needs to be done now while research and discussion of website design is in process.

STAFF REPORTS

Mr. Russell directed the Board's attention to the Schedule of Services for Newton Falls dislocated workers and noted that some participants will be attending summer school. Mr. Fountain indicated that he had the opportunity to review the grades of the SUNY Canton participants and noted that they were exceptional, especially in the technical programs.

Mr. Fountain, in discussing the heavy equipment class statistics memorandum prepared by Pamela Lewis and Lisa Horton, noted that four of the individuals in the class did not pass the road test required to obtain the CDL license. Mr. Fountain said that additional training for these individuals is being considered. Mr. Paul offered BOCES assistance if useful.

Mr. Russell pointed out that the One-Stop Career Center report card continues to show the increased levels of customer satisfaction in the services provided to participants. Natalie Haggart was praised for the amount of time and effort that she puts in to its preparation.

Mr. Russell shared with the Board a letter written from Rene-Paul Forier, Mill Manager, of Appleton/Newton Falls paper. Mr. Forier offered high praise for both the Office of Economic Development and the One-Stop Career Center for the services and information provided to displaced mill employees and the professionalism displayed by staff.

Mr. Russell addressed the Board on the misinformation that has been provided regarding the Chatham Forest Products, Inc., project. There will be 150 people employed and 400 timber harvesting and transportation jobs sustained by the OSB plant. Mr. Russell then explained that much of the misinformation has been provided by letters to the editor of local papers. There has been a great deal of emphasis from some writers that the OSB plant will be backed by St. Lawrence County tax payer money. Mr. Russell stated that the funding for this project will be done through bonds issued by the St. Lawrence County Industrial Development Agency. There is no recourse to the County, New York State or the Industrial Development Agency. Mr. Russell addressed the issue of Chatham not being a "clean" business in terms of air and water emissions. There is no definition of "clean" in the law—only permitability. If the DEC issues an air permit for the project, it is by definition "clean". Mr. Russell stressed to the Board the importance of this project moving forward and asked for their support in order to assure that large industry will continue to look at our region. Chairman Blevins indicated that job promotion is one of the roles of the WIB and that this would be an excellent opportunity for the Board's voice to be heard. Mr. Backus noted that the handful of residents that are opposed to this project are very vocal and that perhaps a letter signed by the Board's members should be done. After some discussion, Chairman Blevins felt that a letter to the editor would not be appropriate. Mr. Backus volunteered and Chairman Blevins charged the marketing committee with the press coverage on this issue.

MEMBERSHIP COMMENTS

None.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

None.

ADJOURNMENT

Chairman Blevins thanked Board members for attending the meeting. On motion of Mr. Daddario, the meeting adjourned at 8:03 PM. Motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Joanne M. Novak, Esq.