**ST. LAWRENCE COUNTY WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD**

**MEETING MINUTES**

**March 10, 2021**

**CALL TO ORDER:**

Chairman Sutton called to order the meeting of the St. Lawrence County Workforce Development Board at 8:02 a.m. via ZOOM.

**Members Present:** Shena Patrick, Ruth Doyle, Ron McDougall, Rich Daddario, Dave Evans, LouAnne King, Dallas Sutton, Zvi Szafran, Peter Reiter, Felicia Dumas, Dale Rice, Sue Caswell, Jack Backus and Don Hooper.

**Others Present:** Larry Fetcie – WIOA, Penny Taylor – WOIA, Barbara Lashua – Executive Director, Linda Schramm – ACCES-VR, Kendra Martin – Frazer Computing

**Absent:** L. Blevins, P. Fockler, L. Villeneuve, L. Pietroski, D. Ferris, Ellie Sullivan-Stripp

**MINUTES:**

Ms. Doyle moved and Mr. Szafran seconded a motion to accept the 1.13.2021 WDB Mtg. minutes; approved unanimously.

**CHAIRPERSON’S REPPORT:**

Mr. Sutton introduced our pending member, Kendra Martin, from Frazer Computing and guest, Linda Schramm, from ACCES-VR. Ms. Lashua provided the board with a brief bios of Ms. Martin and Ms. Schramm.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

None

**NEW BUSINESS:**

Resolution: Modifying the Financial, Administrative and Program Review Guide

Moved/seconded by Hooper/Backus; Approved unanimously

Resolution: Modifying the Youth Incentive Policy

Moved/seconded by Daddario/Doyle; Approved unanimously

Resolution: Outlining the Procedure the Workforce Development Board will use to Implement Review of 2021 WIOA Title II Proposals

Moved/seconded by Hooper/King; Approved, Evans - abstain

Resolution: Hiring Temporary Staff for the 2021 TANF and WIOA Funded Summer Youth Program

Moved/seconded by Daddario/Hooper; Approved, Doyle – abstain

Mr. Fetcie explained to the group the Summer Youth Employment Program application process.

Resolution: Issuing an RFP for Year-Round Youth Work Experience Providers

Moved/seconded by King/Hooper; Approved, Doyle, Evans and Dumas - abstain

**OLD BUSINESS:**

**Review of Expiring/Renewed Board Seats:**

Ms. Lashua reviewed the status of tenures on the WDB. Mr. Sutton noted the longevity of some of the Board members and thanked them for their continued dedication to strengthening the workforce in St. Lawrence County.

**Discussion Regarding No Response to the RFP for the One-Stop Operator Position:**

Ms. Lashua informed the Board that there had been no response to the RFP. Ms. Taylor explained the options moving forward to the group. Mr. Sutton said he will contact the Executive Committee to plan the path moving forward.

**Review of Staffing:**

Ms. Lashua discussed the current staffing, noting that an Employment and Training Counselor’s position had been filled by Marcy Labar. Staff is currently in the process of interviewing for a Keyboard Specialist. Additionally, the ½ time position Employment and Training Counselor (shared with DSS) is in the interviewing stages. Applications for the Principal Account Clerk had been received and interviews are pending. We expect to be a full staffing levels in mid-April. Ms. Lashua stated that, while nearly half of the staff currently had not been replaced for quite some time, those remaining continue to do an outstanding job of completing the tasks necessary to serve the residents of St. Lawrence County. Concerns were raised regarding our ability to meet the Department of Labor expectation of an 80% expenditure of PY’20 funds in the Youth category. This is, primarily, due to the decrease in payroll outlay beginning mid-September.

**Review of Potential Board Member Bio:**

The Board reviewed the bio. Sheet provided by Eowen Hewey, HR Manager, Arconic Extrusions. R. Daddario made a motion that Ms. Hewey be brought to the BOL for their approval. Mr. Reiter seconded. Motion carried.

**STAFF REPORTS:**

**Fiscal Manager/Title I**

Ms. Taylor submitted her report to the Board for their review. She reported that, while staff has been extremely busy enrolling customers in employment and training programs, there are concerns that we may not meet the 80% expenditure mark for PY’20 prior to June 30, 2021. If offered by NYSDOL, Ms. Taylor stated that she would apply for a waiver for this expenditure guideline as was done last year; although the benchmark was achieved. Ms. Taylor also informed the Board that PY’21 estimated allocations had been received. She reported that, while there had been some increases, we have seen an approximately 14 % decrease, overall, since PY’19.

**One-Stop Network Operator**

Mr. Fetcie submitted his report for Board review. He explained that the Partners have continued to meet monthly via ZOOM. He reported that the system remains busy as it adapts to changing conditions. M. Fetcie spoke of the recent truck purchase, housed at the CREST Center and funded through the IDA. The CDL program continues to grow and strengthen with strong enrollment and an ever-increasing passing rate. He referenced his submitted report and invited the Partners present to apprise the Board of notable events.

Mr. Rice remarked that the SUNY Canton Small Business Development Center recently added 2 staff members in St. Lawrence Co. and 2 in Clinton County to assist with COVID related programs, as well as an H.R. specialist to help with mental health, employee wellbeing and available resources. Mr. Rice informed the Board that they are starting to see more start up activities and ‘typical’ activities at the SBDC.

Mr. Sutton encouraged people to have businesses reach out to their financial institutions as the Payroll Protection Plan is expiring on 3.31.21. All applications must be completed and submitted by that date to be considered.

Ms. Patrick spoke to DOL programs and extended benefits for COVID affected individuals and families. She reported that with pandemic unemployment claims beginning to drop off, staff has more time available to reach out to customers for more typical DOL tasks. Additionally, Ms. Patrick informed the Board that anyone currently receiving Pandemic Unemployment Insurance need NOT refile past their one-year at this time. Ms. Patrick reported that virtual workshops will soon be offered via ZOOM (i.e.: interview/resume workshops). Fliers will be developed and sent out as participants must pre-register for virtual workshops.

Ms. Dumas reported that CARES funding is still available for those in need with rent, mortgages, utility bills, car repairs, school supplies and the like. Income qualifications will apply, but staff at the Neighborhood Centers will help people through the process to apply. Additionally, those who do not qualify for this program may qualify for others. All are encouraged to inquire. She also mentioned that those requiring technology to apply for any supportive programs can use the services at the Neighborhood Centers. Ms. Dumas explained that thrift stores under her program remain closed at this time.

Ms. Lashua reported that several North Country WDBs have banded together and garnered a 2.5 million- dollar H1-B Health Care Grant. The purpose of this funding is to provide education and training specifically in the health care field. A grant administrator has been hired to oversee the grant’s implementation and will be working out of the Plattsburgh area to service SLC. A meeting has been planned with the appropriate directors and staff regarding the workings of the program.

This funding will be available for 4 years.

**NEXT MEETING:**

June 9, 2021

**ADJOURNMENT:**

Daddario moved/Szafran seconded that the meeting be adjourned at 9:08 a.m. by unanimous consent.

Respectfully submitted by Barbara Lashua, Executive Director, SLCWDB