

PRIVATE INDUSTRY COUNCIL MINUTES  
May 27, 1998

A regular meeting of the Private Industry Council was called to order by Chairman Lynn Blevins at 6:40 PM, Wednesday, May 27, 1998 at Village Inn, Massena, New York.

Members Present: Lynn Blevins, Maureen Buck, Dick Callan, Sue Caswell, Dick DeLaPorte, Doug McDonald, Ron McDougall, Jim McFaddin, Peter Phelan, Nicole Scott

Members Absent: Jack Backus, Doug Beachard, Greg Davis, Dick Fishel, Steve Matzan, Joanne Novak, Linda Randi, Bob Snider

Others Present: Edmund Russell, Raymond Fountain, Steve House, John Manson, Connie Martin and Dave Williams of the Office of Economic Development; Tony LaGatta of NYSDOL.

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

Mr. McFaddin moved, seconded by Mr. McDonald that the minutes of the April 22, 1998 meeting be approved. Passed unanimously.

FINANCIAL REPORT

Mr. Fountain briefly reviewed the two monitoring reports from Mark Misterka which had been enclosed in the packet. OED procurement procedures were satisfactory to Mr. Misterka. The auditor did note a problem with OED payments to the County's fringe benefit system. Mr. Fountain explained that the problem arose because staff projected retirement payments at 4.1%, but the County's actual billing in December of 1997, retroactive to April, was at 1.9%, so that, in effect we had overpaid. At the time of Mr. Misterka's monitoring visit, staff had already made arrangements with the County that OED would not make further payments until the excess was absorbed. OED is now in compliance. Mr. McDougall moved, seconded by Ms. Buck that the financial report be received. Passed unanimously.

OLD BUSINESS

Approving the Program Year 1998 Budget:

Mr. Russell gave a brief explanation of the budget format. Mr. McFaddin questioned the increase in personnel costs in some of the program budgets. Mr. Fountain explained that some of the staff work in the Summer Youth Program, as well as their own program, and that those costs are allocated across program budgets. Mr. McDonald then moved, seconded by Ms. Caswell attached Resolution #98-05-06 approving the Program Year 1998 budget. Passed unanimously.

## NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Russell advised the council that Mr. Fishel had taken a new job with the Department of Labor in Binghamton, and had, therefore, resigned his position on the Council. He then distributed copies of Mr. Fishel's letter of resignation which contained some suggestions for the work of the By-Laws Committee and the Council as it makes the transition from PIC to Workforce Development Board. Mr. Russell advised the Council that staff would prepare a suitable gift for Mr. Fishel in recognition of his service to the Council.

## COMMITTEE REPORTS

### Financial Report Form Committee:

Mr. McFaddin reported that the committee had met one time and were contemplating changes to the format of the report to make it more "people friendly." The Committee will meet again in the near future and they hope to come up with a format which will indicate the number of people enrolled in the programs, the number who successfully complete programs, the number who drop out, and the level of funding per participant. Ms. Caswell added that the Committee also wanted to make sure that funds were fully expended and that the financial reports would allow Council members to track expenditures. Mr. Fountain felt it would be important for the Council to receive a line item report at least once a year – probably at the Annual Meeting.

### By-laws Review:

Mr. McDougall reported that the By-laws Committee had met at 5:00 p.m. and had moved through Articles VII through XII. Most of the time had been spent in discussion of Article X – Staff. The discussions will be incorporated into the written report of the Committee's work and then the group will discuss that section again at the next meeting. The Committee expects to have a report and recommendation ready for the full Council by July.

## CHAIRMAN'S COMMENTS

Mr. Blevins advised the Council that he had a conflict with the proposed meeting date for the fourth Wednesday in June. He asked if Council members would be willing to meet on Wednesday or Thursday of the third week in June (the 17<sup>th</sup> or 18<sup>th</sup>). After some discussion, the Council members agreed to move the June meeting to **TUESDAY, JUNE 16<sup>TH</sup>**. The Council members also agreed to put discussion of a permanent change of the current meeting date (4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday of the month) on the Agenda for the June Council meeting.

Mr. Blevins and the Council congratulated Mr. Russell on his installation as Chairman of the New York State Economic Development Council on May 21<sup>st</sup>. Mr. Russell also advised the Board that Rick Weigel, Regional Director of the NYS Department of Economic Development/Empire State Development Corp. had been named Developer of the Year by the NYSEDC.

Mr. Russell reported that in his new position as Chairman of the NYSEDC he had been invited to a luncheon with Governor Pataki in Montreal on Tuesday, May 26<sup>th</sup>. The topic of discussion with the Canadian businessmen and the New York State representatives present, was the three trade corridors in New York State: The Montreal, Plattsburgh, Albany corridor; the

Niagara-Western Frontier corridor; and the St. Lawrence Corridor. He indicated that the St. Lawrence corridor was poorly defined and that local officials will have the task of making the corridor and its needs (among them a 4-lane highway) known to the Governor and local officials. Mr. Blevins commented briefly on the address by Steve Munn at the OBPA's Industrial Development Dinner last week. Mr. Munn had strongly suggested that Northern New York and Southern Canada should join forces to strengthen their concerns about transportation issues for the area. Mr. McFaddin mentioned that the Eastern Border Coalition was also considering trade corridors, but their main thrust was the 401 in Canada

## STAFF REPORT

Welfare-to-Work Grant Application: Mr. Russell reported that there had been a second meeting of the One Stop Partners to discuss the application earlier that day. The emphasis of the grant will be to work with individuals who are working and still receiving public assistance. Many of these people will be deficient in math or reading skills, or both. In response to a question from Ms. Caswell, Mr. Manson indicated that administrative costs were built into the 70%/30% formula. He stated that there was a 15% administrative cap on federal funds, but no provision for administrative expenses in the match money.

Welfare-To-Work Competitive Grant: Mr. Fountain advised the Council that staff had received notice the day before that St. Lawrence County was not one of the areas selected for funding. The notice included an analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of our application. The next round of applications for funding is due in July. Mr. Fountain recommended that staff enhance the strengths and identify the weaknesses and re-submit the application.

Workforce Development Legislation: Mr. Fountain reported that Workforce Development Legislation is in danger of not passing this year, partly because the session for the Legislature is short because this is a campaign year. There are also a couple of issues in the legislation which may not be resolved: Senator Jeffords insists that employment and training and vocational education must be consolidated; and there is a move to exclude school-to-work from the legislation.

One Stop Application: Mr. Williams reported that he is working with Bill Short of the education community to put together applications for both an implementation grant and a demonstration grant. There is a lot of pressure to get these applications completed as the deadline for submission to the State is Friday, June 5<sup>th</sup>.

Liability: Mr. Russell reported that he had discussed the issue of liability of volunteer board members with the County Attorney. The County has adopted a policy which will indemnify and defend volunteer board members for their acts as members of the board. However, if the member is found guilty, the County will not pay fines or penalties assessed.

Miscellaneous: There was some discussion about the current employment situation in the County. River Road Coffee in Massena is closing and has given OED staff open access to the staff and space at the facility to work with them to find new employment. Homestead Dairy has announced lay-offs affecting 11 St. Lawrence County residents, but has denied OED staff access to the people, even refusing to give out a list of names. Corning has also announced 25 permanent lay-offs due to the Asian currency debacle.

There was a brief discussion about rail problems in the County and the status of the sale of ConRail to CSX Transportation.

ADJOURNMENT

On motion of Mr. McDougall the meeting adjourned at 8:00 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

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Sue E. Caswell,  
Secretary