

WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD
MINUTES OF MARCH 22, 2000 MEETING

A regular meeting of the Workforce Investment Board was called to order by Chairman Lynn Blevins at 6:06 PM, Wednesday, March 22, 2000 at the One-Stop Career Center, 101 Main Street, Canton, New York.

Members Present: Jack Backus, Genevieve Baxter, Lynn Blevins, Don Brining, Sue Caswell, Greg Davis, John Deal, Sherry Furgison, Donald Hooper, John Lancaster, Cynthia Lottie, James McFaddin, Joanne Novak, Walt Paul, Peter Phelan, Linda Randi, Walter Todd, Tim Weaver

Members Absent: Doug Beachard, John Bogosian, Richard Daddario, Joseph Kennedy, Robert LaClair, Jr., Ron McDougall.

Others Present: Jim Connor, Steve House, Raymond Fountain, John Manson, Natalie Haggart, David Williams and Gretchen Wood of the Office of Economic Development; Anthony LaGatta and Alan Beideck, Department of Labor.

MINUTES

Moved by Mr. McFaddin and seconded by Mr. Brining, the minutes of the February 23, 2000 meeting were accepted. Approved unanimously.

FINANCIAL AND PARTICIPANT REPORT

Mr. Fountain explained that expenditures are at normal levels and the Office is currently doing closeout planning. Ms. McFaddin moved, seconded by Mr. Brining. Accepted unanimously.

OLD BUSINESS

Resolution naming additional members to the St. Lawrence County Workforce Investment Board's Youth Council

Ms. Baxter noted that Dave Fenton, Youth Council Board Member, is now the Treasurer for the Village of Potsdam and no longer with the Potsdam Housing Authority. Mr. Connor indicated that this issue will be discussed at the next Youth Council meeting. Mr. McFaddin moved, seconded by Mr. Davis. The motion passed unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS

Resolution Modifying Program Budget for St. Lawrence County Office of Economic Development Employment and Training Unit

Mr. McFaddin moved, seconded by Ms. Baxter. The motion passed unanimously.

GUEST PRESENTATION

Alan Beideck—Labor Market Analyst, New York State Department of Labor

Mr. Beideck introduced the Board to the North Country Job Vacancy Survey which was completed in October of 1999. The survey was initiated by Jim Calnon who felt the need for more local data from the Department of Labor than previously required. The survey was based upon information obtained from the rural seven-county region of northern New York State (Clinton, Essex, Franklin, Hamilton, Jefferson, Lewis and St. Lawrence counties). Funding for this project was provided by a grant from the US Department of Labor's Employment and Training Administration and will continue over the next two years or longer, if successful.

Mr. Beideck began with a brief overview of the project stating that it was a collaborative effort among the New York State Department of Labor, the North Country Workforce Partnership, Inc. and the North Country's Workforce Investment System's partners. An 85% response rate was obtained by the Survey with 1,300 employers participating. Mr. Beideck briefly explained the different sections of the Survey beginning with Wages and Benefit information. In October, 1999, the average hourly wage was reported to be \$9.87 per hour for full-time and \$7.13 for part-time openings. Health benefits were offered by 55% of all job openings and pension benefits were at 45%. These benefits often were available only after employees had worked for three months or longer.

Mr. Beideck then gave the Board the data that was collected regarding Job Openings for October, 1999. The service industry dominated the Job Openings category for both full- and part-time jobs. Of the full-time openings, 63% required education, training or occupation-specific experience beyond high school. Jobs for experienced workers, technically trained workers and four-year college degree positions were reported by employers as difficult to fill.

Mr. Beideck provided Board members with copies of the Job Vacancy Survey as well as with a report specific to St. Lawrence County.

CHAIRMAN'S COMMENTS

Workforce Investment Board Governance structure and procedures

Chairman Blevins indicated that at the National Association of Workforce Development Boards Forum 2000 in Washington, D.C., that attendees were introduced to a WIB from the Texas-Oklahoma region. This WIB was presented based upon the success of its operation under the new system. The "Texanoma" WIB is divided into committees in which each Board member is a part along with a member of staff. The meeting schedule is composed of ten meetings only—five general and five committee meetings. Examples of committees range from Youth Council, Governance, Monitoring and Dislocated Worker. Chairman Blevins indicated that committees for the St. Lawrence County WIB can be formed based upon what the Board feels is in our region's interest. Chairman Blevins will bring documentation to the next meeting for the Board's consideration and review. Mr. McFaddin asked why the "Texanoma" WIB was used as a model at the Forum. Chairman Blevins indicated that they are one of the best functioning WIBs in the Country and Mr. Fountain added that early implementation States are being used by the Federal Government as examples.

Discussion on proposed issues relating to relocation of the One-Stop Career Center

Chairman Blevins began by inviting the Board members into a discussion regarding the possible relocation of the One-Stop Career Center. Chairman Blevins asked Mr. Backus to write the pros and cons of remaining at 101 Main Street on the board so that all members could see and compare. Some pros that were given were: the amount of funds already involved in the current infrastructure at 101 Main; the high visibility that the One-Stop has being located on Main Street; and the rent that is paid for the One-Stop is reasonable and that all utilities are included. Some of the cons listed were: availability of parking for employees and customers; and the accessibility of the building for handicapped individuals.

A discussion then ensued regarding the inadequacy of the current space at 101 Main and the issue of security that is ever increasing for public buildings. Mr. Paul noted that from his perspective as a Partner, the current location of the building is now recognizable and no significant level of customer dissatisfaction has been recorded regarding the building. Chairman Blevins noted that he did not feel that a three-story building is "customer friendly". Mr. Paul then indicated that BOCES staff, as well as some of the other Partner Agency's staff, do not work at the One-Stop on a full-time basis. Mr. Paul then distributed to the Board members a hand out outlining the points he felt needed to be addressed along with charts comparing BOCES output to the One-Stop's. Mr. Deal then indicated that he also had a hand out for the Board showing the Department of Labor's productivity from September, 1999, to February, 2000.

Finally, a brief discussion addressing the One-Stop "Center" and One-Stop "System" was considered. It was noted that even though the Office of Economic Development is also located in the 911 Building it is still a part of the "System". Ms. Caswell asked about the completion date for the Memorandums of Understanding. Mr. Fountain indicated that a target date of May 25 has been set, but noted that they have to be submitted prior to July 1, 2000. Mr. Fountain added that cost allocation is still the major issue.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

There were no committee reports.

STAFF REPORTS

Employer Focus Group

Tabled for next meeting.

Status of WIB Certification

Mr. Fountain indicated that the State Board will be meeting for the first time on March 27, 2000.

Policies for WIB Consideration

Mr. Fountain alerted the Board to the Policies hand out provided that is based upon suggestions from Rochelle Daniels, Esq., for their information and consideration.

Categories of Services Under WIA

Mr. Fountain explained that this hand out was for the Board's information as it breaks down each of the four services in detail.

Status of MOUs

Mr. Fountain posed some questions to the Board that need their consideration such as how many MOUs should the WIB have, who will sign the MOU, how long a period of time the MOU should be for and the System cost vs. Center cost issue.

Newton Falls Update

Mr. Fountain explained that everyone who expressed an interest in training is enrolled at this time. Mr. Fountain also advised the Board that Classroom Training is currently over budget and a formal request for funds is being done. Additional funding for the remainder of this fiscal year can be obtained by using Formula money. Mr. Fountain indicated that \$360,000 has been committed for Program Year 2000 for Classroom Training use.

MEMBERSHIP COMMENTS

None.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

None.

ADJOURNMENT

Chairman Blevins thanked Board members for attending the meeting. On motion of Ms. Caswell and seconded by Mr. Todd, the meeting adjourned at 7:29 PM. Motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Joanne M. Novak, Esq.