**ST. LAWRENCE COUNTY WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD**

**MEETING MINUTES**

**March 9, 2022**

**CALL TO ORDER:**

Chairman Sutton called to order the meeting of the St. Lawrence County Workforce Development Board at 8:31 a.m.

**Members Present:** Ruth Doyle, Ron McDougall, Rich Daddario, Dallas Sutton, Felicia Neahr, Dale Rice, Jack Backus, Ryan Schermerhorn, Ben Dixon, Shena Patrick, Zvi Szafran, Peter Reiter, Lynn Blevins, Ellie Sullivan-Stripp, Christine Sampson-Downs, Brian Bush

**Others Present:** Larry Fetcie – WIOA, Penny Taylor – WOIA, Barbara Lashua – Executive Director, Pam Lewis – Assistant to the Exec. Director, Anthony Hayden – NYS DOL, Konstantine – NYS DOL (will be Anthony’s replacement)

**Absent:** Dave Evans, Eowyn Hewey, Lynn Pietroski, Dave Ferris, LouAnne King, Marijean Remington

**MINUTES:**

Mr. McDougall moved and Mr. Blevins seconded a motion to accept the 1.22.22 WDB Mtg. minutes; approved unanimously.

Mr. McDougall moved and Mr. Backus seconded a motion to accept the 2.3.22 WDB Ex. Comm. Mtg. minutes; approved unanimously.

**CHAIRPERSON’S REPORT:**

Mr. Sutton introduced Brian Bush from Corning as the newest member of the WDB. Ms. Lashua gave a brief summary of his accomplishments. Mr. Bush expressed his appreciation for the opportunity to join the WDB.

Mr. Sutton discussed Executive Committee status and indicated that he will have an update before the next meeting, and that anyone interested should contact him (he provided cell # and email).

**PRESENTATIONS:**

None

**COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

None

**EXECUTIVE SESSION:**

Mr. Sutton requested that all WDB staff excuse themselves and requested a motion to enter Executive Session at 8:37 a.m., Mr. Blevins moved and Mr. Dixon Seconded. Discussion held concerning matters leading to the employment of an Executive Director. Motion requested to end Executive Session at 8:57 a.m., Mr. Mcdougall moved and Mr. Backus seconded; Approved unanimously

**NEW BUSINESS:**

Resolution: Authorizing Recruitment for an Executive Director of the Workforce Development Board

Moved/seconded by Daddario/Dixon; Approved unanimously

Establish Interview Committee for ED Position

Mr. Sutton requested that anyone who wished to be part of the committee to contact him by the end of the week.

Discussion re: DRC/EN Update – Ms. Lashua explained the Department of Labor’s directive for Workforce Development Areas to hire a DRC (Disability Resource Coordinator) through a 3 year grant ($100,000 per year). Ms. Lashua indicated that we continue to move forward with this endeavor and await the sign off from the county to proceed with hiring the DRC and registering as an EN with NYESS.

Resolution: Modifying the PY20 Budget for the NY SCION Initiative

Moved/seconded by Blevins/Neahr; Approved unanimously

Resolution: Modifying the PY20 Budget for Round 2 Employment Recovery National Dislocated Worker Grant (ER-NDWG)

Moved/seconded by McDougall/Neahr; Approved unanimously

Resolution: Approval to Enter into a MOU for the SLC Good Jobs Challenge – Pathways to Careers

Approved by Executive Committee 2/3/22

Ms. Lashua explained that the IDA has submitted a grant application for the Goods Jobs Challenge Initiative (5.2 million). If awarded, the money will be used to develop more programs tailored to the needs of North Country Employers.

Moved/seconded by Blevins/Sullivan-Stripp; Approved unanimously

Resolution: Modifying the Policy Regarding Authorized Signatures

Moved/seconded by Daddario/Backus; Approved unanimously

Resolution: To Hire Temporary Staff for the 2022 TANF and WIOA Funded Summer Youth Program

Moved/Seconded by Daddario/Blevins; Approved unanimously

Discussion re: Workforce Pipeline ARPA funding request for Childcare Bootcamp – Ms. Lashua explained that there is a tremendous need for childcare providers in SLC and that for every 9 children that need childcare, there is only 1 slot available. The Workforce Pipeline Readiness Committee (SLC IDA, WDB, SLL BOCES, NYPA, Clarkson, CITEC, SUNY Canton CREST, WDI and the One Stop Career Center) is moving forward in regard to holding a “Childcare Bootcamp” (modeled after program in Jefferson/Lewis County) to help fill this need, especially in the smaller communities.

**OLD BUSINESS:**

Review of Expiring/Renewed Board Seats

Ms. Lashua mentioned those individuals whose terms will expire in 2022.

Update: Staffing

Ms. Lashua explained that the Principal Account Clerk left for a promotional opportunity. The question regarding filling that position is in discussion. The position has been filled as both a Principal Account Clerk and Senior Account Clerk in the past. The main concern is the amount of administrative cost associated with the position. Ms. Lashua also explained that there is still and open ½ position that is shared with DSS, but that due to recent staffing changes we have experienced, this position has not been filled, but will be addressed shortly.

Update: MOU, Local Plan, Lease status, Summer Youth Employment Program, Rural Healthcare Grant

MOU – Ms. Lashua explained that the MOU will be put out for signature as soon as the County hires a Commissioner for the Department of Social Services.

Local Plan – Ms. Lashua explained that the Local Plan and Regional Plan are complete and posted on the website.

Leases – Ms. Lashua explained that the leases with the County and ACCES-VR are in good standing until June of 2025. The lease with OTDA expires at the end of June of this year and is in discussion. The lease with DOL is still being finalized. DOL has requested some additional paperwork. Once that information has been received, there would likely be a 6 month turnover before the lease is finalized and completed.

Summer Youth Employment Program – Ms. Lashua explained that last year’s SYEP was composed of a hybrid model where SLC was the employer of record for any participants who worked directly under county supervision (in a county department). The remaining participants were employed by a staffing agency. Ms. Lashua went on to say that the WIOA program is in the process of researching other possibilities for providing Workers Compensation coverage with no success at this time. Ms. Lashua did indicate that there has been discussion with Ruth Doyle concerning this issue. Ms. Doyle explained that she has been in meetings with the County’s Risk Manager and Attorney to develop a reasonable compromise that, going forward, will allow the program to continue and not have to revisit the workers comp. issue every year. Having the County act as the employer of record for low risk positions (clerical, dietary, etc) and the higher risk occupations work through a staffing agency was discussed. There was some mention of custodial positions, and concerns as to which specific job descriptions and assigned duties would constitute a low risk category. It was suggested that the Risk Manager would be making spot checks throughout the summer to assure safety on compliance. Ms. Lashua commented that Jefferson County back bills the WDB for the cost of Workers Comp.

Rural Healthcare Grant – Ms. Lashua explained that the Rural Healthcare Grant, which we share with 16 other counties, has been funding St. Lawrence County residents in various healthcare occupations. Approximately $20,000 has been allocated for this spring semester. This grant funding is at no cost to SLC or our WIOA funding.

Discussion re: Workforce Pipeline ARPA funding request for Childcare Bootcamp update

Ms. Lashua explained that an application has been made by the SLC IDA, along with various other workforce partners, to garner a portion of SLC’s ARPA funding. The request ($200,000 over 3 years) will focus on the development and training of licensed in-home daycare providers throughout the county. The funding would be used for classes, materials, supplies. Ms. Lashua explained that this “bootcamp” will be especially important for rural areas that have few daycare opportunities in their communities.

**OTHER BUSINESS:**

Mr. Dixon gave a brief update regarding items the SLC Chamber of Commerce is currently working on. Mr. Dixon explained that they are working to build the connection between employers and the local BOCES program. This connection involves business leaders going to the local BOCES and participating in student run tours of the facilities. The event held in February was very well received. The next tour will be taking place at the Seaway Tech facility on 3/22/22, and then at the Southwest Tech on 4/28/22.

**STAFF REPORTS:**

Fiscal Manager/Title I

Ms. Taylor submitted her report to the Board for their review. Ms. Taylor explained that resolutions for the DRC and Round 2 of the Employment Recovery money were being completed. She informed the Board that the funding steams are expected to be approximately 80 % spent out and that the Youth funding is expected to be 90% spent. We have also reached the 20% funding benchmark for Work Experience. The staff is working on summer start up activities and that the applications and slot crew requests are ready to be sent out to the schools and potential worksites. Ms. Taylor informed the Board that OTDA has been working on paying back rent but has 3 payments still outstanding. Ms. Taylor indicated that she continues to work with the Executive Director on the DOL Lease Agreement.

One-Stop Network Operator

Mr. Fetcie submitted his report for Board review. Mr Fetcie indicated that the One Stop Career Center is operating as it has been pre-COVID. Partner agencies have returned to the One Stop and are utilizing the space to meet with individuals. He gave a brief breakdown for partner staffing at the One Stop Career Center to include the Massena and Ogdensburg DOL locations. Mr. Fetcie informed the Board that a new virtual booth for the One Stop Career Center has been developed and maintained for use in NYSDOL virtual job fairs. He indicated that the first job fair where this booth was utilized was well received. Mr. Fetcie stated that with all of the initiatives going on, he is seeing a lot more collaborating and development between the partners.

Motion to approve the One-Stop Operator Report was moved by Mr. Dixon and seconded by Ms. Doyle; Approved unanimously.

Program Monitoring Update

Mr. Fetcie informed the Board that we received the final letter concerning the Program Monitoring which was completed in November 2021. There were no significant findings. Any findings that were mentioned, were addressed during the review period.

**NEXT MEETING:**

June 8, 2022 (location to be determined)

**ADJOURNMENT:**

Mr. Daddario moved/Mr. Blevins seconded that the meeting be adjourned at 9:39 a.m. by unanimous consent.