

# **Workforce Partnership of Greater Rhode Island**

## **Board of Directors Annual Meeting Minutes**

**June 9, 2009**

### **Board Members**

**Evaristo Amaral Paul Harden Fred Ricci**

**Michael Cassidy Wendy Kagan Nancy Roderick**

**Diane Cook Steven Kitchin Scott Seaback**

**Vanessa Cooley Peter Koch Robin Smith**

**Bob Cooper Dorothy Mattiello Phil Stone**

**Joseph DeSantis Courtney Murphy Pat Talin**

**Alexis Devine Lori Norris Andrew Tyska\***

**Joseph DiPina Jane Nugent\* Johan Uvin\***

**Allen Durand Joseph W. Oakes, Jr. Darrell Waldron\***

**Cynthia Farrell Susan O'Donnell Kimberly Weiss**

**Raymond Filippone Paul Ouellette Steven Wilson**

**Victoria Gailliard-Garrick Raymond Pingitore Kathleen Grygiel\***

**Betty Pleacher \* denotes absent**

### **Guests Present**

**Honorable Donald L. Carcieri Sandra Powell Dottie Miller**

**Sandy Lupovitz Kathleen Stoddard Elizabeth Gilheeny**

**Janet Raymond Jim Glover Lee Lewis**

**David Francis Maureen Mooney Connie Parks**

**Nancy Olson Thomas Fay Bienvenida Reyes**

**James Larisa, Jr. Janet Fians Jillian Salerno**

**Joan Andreozzi Joseph Healey Kim Heng  
Marie DeRoche Olga Paiva Barbara Quirk  
Gerry Arundal Jo-Anne Thibedeau Kathy Aguiar  
Ketty Gil Mark LaRiviere Patricia McCrea  
Paul Rosedale Rebecca Mahle Karen Bradbury  
Vincent Rossi Donna Treglia Helder Videira  
Janet Pratt Laura Hart Maria Ferrara  
Maureen Palumbo Mavis McGetrick Robert Garafano  
Arthur Jodoin Karen Waters Armand Tessaglia  
Cheryl DaCosta Kathie Shields Molly Pine  
Ronni Gannek Scott Greco Sue Biagioni  
Mary Ellen McQueeney-Lalley Elaina Goldstein**

**Staff Present**

**Christine Grieco Diane Vendetti Janice Lepizzera  
Carlos Ribeiro Gail DuPont Jen Cornwell  
Brian Gambardella Sharon Geoffrey Russ Irving  
Lisa Rose**

**With a quorum present, Chairman Steven Kitchin introduced himself and welcomed everyone to the Annual Meeting of the Workforce Partnership of Greater Rhode Island at 8:30 AM. He introduced the Board officers: Paul Ouellette, Vice-Chair; Patricia Talin, Secretary; and Christine Grieco, Executive Director. Also seated at the head table were the guest speakers: Governor Donald Carcieri and Sandra**

**Powell, Director of the Rhode Island Department of Labor and Training.**

**Chairman Kitchin introduced guest speaker, the Honorable Governor Donald L. Carcieri.**

### **Highlights of Governor Donald L. Carcieri's Speech**

**Governor Carcieri stated that he would like to speak about some of the highlights in the workforce of Rhode Island. In doing so his focus is on budgets and finances and how they are affecting what is going on in this state. He remembers the economic recession of 1982-1983 after coming out of the inflation of the late 1970's in which interest rates were so high that there were 17% mortgages. If this present cycle continues, we will pass the recession of 1982-1983 heading toward the Great Depression. But there are many excellent things going on in workforce development at this time. The number of Rhode Islanders receiving job training in the hospitality, marine trades, healthcare, IT and construction industries has tripled. The Marine Trades Association and Tech Collective have 200 existing workers with 50 new workers in marine trades and 500 youth anticipated to be included within 18 months. The governor focused on the large number of youth being served now through training and jobs.**

**There are four major goals for developing and strengthening the economy of this state. One is to grow, retain and attract workers. This**

**will maximize and unify the work being done by WPGRI and the Governor's Workforce Board. The second is for employers to attract and retain a highly skilled workforce of lifelong learners. Third is a skilled and agile adult workforce. Lastly, we need to prepare youth for the workforce so we can keep them as lifelong workers.**

**By focusing on the Stimulus Act this state is helping people who are out of work in any way possible. The governor commended Sandra Powell and her team for the huge effort and all the hard work that has been done. A large part of the money received from the Stimulus plan is being applied to building and improving the infrastructure. There were many projects ready to use the \$137 million available for Rhode Island. An example is the present re-paving project in Tiverton putting 35 people to work.**

**The Federal Stimulus program is a bridge to get to our destination. A large chunk of the money that came as direct cash into the states only covered half of the deficits and will only cover two years. The economy needs to turn and the revenues need to get back to normal. \$172 million is coming into the workforce and \$4 million is for youth. There is a focus on green technology. An example of the benefits of green technology is what will come from building a wind farm, all built in Quonset, providing jobs and 15% of the state's energy.**

**The governor credited Johan Uvin with ramping up the adult literacy program and bringing uniformity to the curriculum. We are presently**

exceeding all goals in this area of education and the results have been outstanding.

He focused again on the budget reforms needed to help turn this economic situation around. He believes that one is to revise the state employee retirement plan. Another is tax reform needed to make the state more competitive by drawing business and new workers to the state. We want businesses to come here and stay for the long term. Taxes are a top priority when businesses are deciding where to locate. We also need to reduce death taxes in order to retain our elders who are moving out of state after retirement. We need to be competitive about bringing workers and business to the state and also in keeping them here. If we grow jobs we will grow income and bring more prosperity to the state. Every interest in the state is now fighting over a pie which is shrinking. The focus has been on the state budget but we now need to focus on the town and city budgets because the money available for towns and cities from the state is shrinking. The cities and town are spending \$3.2 billion but the state has only \$2 billion. The only area left to make changes that will positively affect the budget is in the city and town sector.

Governor Carcieri then opened the floor for questions. In answering he reiterated about pension reform and other changes that he believes are needed at the state level. He also spoke about the need for supporting present industries in the state by changing and reducing their current business income tax and not just creating

**incentives to draw new businesses into the state. There was more discussion about the wind turbines, the analysis that is being done to locate the best sites and also the smaller project that is getting underway for Block Islanders. This smaller project will enable them to reduce their energy costs by the middle of 2010. Offshore New England is considered to be the “Saudi Arabia of wind”. Governor Carcieri has met with the Secretary of the Interior and believes that Rhode Island can be the state to take a proactive step and lead the way in developing this resource and technology.**

### **Governor’s Citation**

**Dottie Miller, retired Acting Executive Director of WPGRI was presented with the Governor’s Citation for her outstanding work and dedication to service within her varied positions through the years.**

**Chairman Kitchin introduced Sandra M. Powell, Director of the Department of Labor and Training.**

### **Highlights of Sandra Powell’s Speech**

**Director Powell started by acknowledging the work of the Workforce Partnership of Greater Rhode Island. She also wanted to acknowledge the work of her staff and especially Ray Filippone for all he has accomplished through the challenges of a diminished staff and shooting unemployment rates. The job that has been done could not have been accomplished without him. She also wanted to focus on the staff of all the netWORKri offices. She said that 43,000 Rhode**

**Islanders have walked through their doors seeking assistance and they have done all they could to serve those in need of their services. So many workers have been caught in the changing economy. Only one out of ten private sector jobs are in manufacturing, yet these jobs still make up the third largest job sector in this state. WPGRI has a unique role in developing the workforce of this state during these times. It brings people together from community, business, government and labor to provide help for people who need to adjust their workforce skills for changing markets. It has also been in a unique position of moving our workforce into the future which is critical to the success of Rhode Island's economy. She honors the WPGRI for what has been accomplished.**

**Chairman Kitchin thanked Director Powell. He then moved to the business portion of the meeting. He related to those present that the Workforce Partnership of Greater Rhode Island falls under the Workforce Investment Board and was mandated by the Workforce Investment Act. WPGRI represents 37 of the 39 cities and towns of Rhode Island and serves both youth and adults by providing workforce development programs. The Board met 8 times over the past year and the fiscal program year ends on June 30 making this the last meeting of the Program 08 year. He called the meeting to order at 9:30 AM and asked that all Board members review the minutes to be found in their packets from the May 12, 2009 WPGRI Board Meeting.**

**VOTE: Sue O'Donnell moved to approve the minutes. Lori Norris seconded. The motion was passed unanimously.**

**Chairman Kitchin then introduced Peter Koch from the Nominating Committee of the Board Development Committee.**

**Peter Koch presented the names of the nominees for the next two year term of office on the Board. He made a final call for any member interested in serving as an officer of the corporation for the next two years. Having no response, he nominated the following slate of officers: Chair, Steven Kitchin; Vice-Chair, Paul Ouellette; Treasurer, Jane Nugent; Secretary, Patricia Talin.**

**VOTE: Peter Koch presented the slate of officers to be accepted as presented. Bob Cooper moved to accept. Betty Pleacher seconded. The slate of officers was accepted unanimously.**

**Chairman Kitchin presented and welcomed the newest members of the Board: Victoria Gailliard-Garrick of Davies Career & Technical High School, Kathleen Grygiel of the Office of Rehabilitative Services, Wendy Kagan of Bank Newport, Courtney Murphy of Electric Boat, Lori Norris of RI Department of Labor and Training, Joseph W. Oakes, Jr. of VR Industries, Robin Ann Smith of Community College of Rhode Island, and Phil Stone of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce. An orientation for these new members and also any Board member desiring a review will be held this summer at a time and place to be**

**determined.**

**Chairman Kitchin presented the Consent Agenda from the June 2, 2009 Executive Committee meeting. The Board members had electronic copies for review available before today's meeting. He stated that the Board has the option of approving the agenda, in full or in part.**

**VOTE: Vanessa Cooley motioned to accept the Consent Agenda in full as presented. Evaristo Amaral seconded. Chairman Kitchin asked if there was any discussion of any item on the Consent Agenda. There was not. The motion passed unanimously.**

#### **COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

##### **Executive Committee:**

**Steven Kitchin started by introducing and thanking all the Committee Chairs for their work during this past program year. He then reported that the Executive Committee has met nine times in Program Year 08 to review committee work, personnel items, and prepare agendas for full Board meetings.**

##### **Strategic Development Committee:**

**Paul Harden reported that this has been a busy year for the committee which has a multi-faceted role. The committee reviews proposals that come before the Board, also reviews ISDI proposals, examines workforce development and customized training initiatives.**

**The OJT program has been popular with employers. It subsidizes wages of new employees for up to six months as they are being trained. The focus is placed on improving workers' skills.**

### **Board Development Committee**

**Paul Ouellette recognized the members of the committee. This past year the committee has recruited seven nominations for the Board and he thanked the nominees for their patience with the process. Board orientation will be organized by the committee and given this summer for new members and any current members who may wish to attend. He thanked Steven Kitchin for all the work he does in his position as Chair and all the additional work he has done.**

### **Quality Assurance Committee**

**Michael Cassidy thanked Russ Irving of the WPGRI staff for the statistical data he has provided for the committee. He also thanked Executive Director Christine Grieco for her support of the committee's work. This committee tracks the work of the netWORKri centers. Most importantly, it sees the numbers of people served by these netWORKri centers, which provide training, education and necessary assistance to those people looking for work.**

### **Youth Council**

**Cynthia Farrell reported that there are 19 members of the council and thanked all those from the council and the WPGRI staff who had worked so long and hard this past year. She especially acknowledged**

**Carlos Ribeiro for his dedication, expertise and extra hours of very hard work to serve the needs of youth in this state. The council has combined all funding for youth in Rhode Island. There are 12 youth centers serving 5 regions of the state and there is \$4million available for youth funding. In Program Year 09 the council is looking ahead to focus on youth outcomes. The plan is to align new initiatives with in-demand occupations. The ARRA passed in February or March of 2009 put a strain on the Youth Council and WPGRI staff to accomplish the impossible. This has been accomplished by amazing hard work and dedication.**

#### **AWARDS AND RECOGNITION**

**Executive Director Christine Grieco and DLT Director Sandra Powell handed out special awards with Chief of Labor and Training Operations Kim Weiss assisting by presenting the recipients.**

**Plaques were presented to the managers of the Pawtucket, West Warwick, Providence and Woonsocket netWORKri offices to recognize their entire staff for dedication and outstanding service to their clients during this past most challenging year.**

**Sandy Lupovitz of RIBI Security received an award for his contributions as an employer.**

**Barbara Quirk received an award for excellence in partnership.**

**The following netWORKri employees received personal awards for outstanding service during Program Year 2008:**

**Jo-Anne Thibedeau Kathy Aguiar Ketty Gil**

**Mark LaRiviere Paul Rosedale Rebecca Mahle**

**Janet Fians Joan Andreozzi Joseph Healey**

**Kim Heng Olga Paiva**

**With no other business to come before the Board, Chairman Kitchin called for a motion to adjourn.**

**VOTE: Bob Cooper motioned to adjourn. Pat Talin seconded. All approved and the motion passed at 10:00 AM.**

**Respectfully submitted,**

**Lisa Rose**

**Administrative Assistant**