

GOVERNOR'S WORKFORCE BOARD RHODE ISLAND
September 6, 2007 BOARD MEETING
MINUTES

Attendance

Board Members (*denotes absent)

Mario Bueno	Robert Nangle
Mia Caetano-Johnson*	George Nee
Armeather Gibbs*	Adelita Orefice
Saul Kaplan	Robert Paniccia
Paul MacDonald*	Lorna Ricci*
Joseph MarcAurele	Cathy Streker
William McGowan	Martin Trueb
Brandon Melton	Jack Warner*
Sharon Moylan	

Staff Present: M. Koback, S. Schaefer, N. Olson, M. Mooney

Guests: Tim Hebert, Kathie Shields, Jo-Ann Johnson, Johan Uvin, Bob Ricci, Paul Harden, Robert Kalaskowski

DLT Staff: Sandra Powell, John O'Hare, Lisa D'Agostino, Mavis McGetrick, Jean Severance, Lori Norris, Gail Theriault, Esq. Kathleen Partington, Maria Ferreira, Sharon Petrarca, David Tremblay, Laura Hart, Kim Weiss

Location: RI Department of Labor and Training, 1511 Pontiac Avenue, Cranston, RI

With a quorum present, Chair J. MarcAurele called the meeting to order at 3:10 p.m. He welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced new board member Cathy Streker, Executive Director of Human Resources, Textron, Inc.

A motion was entered to approve the June 21, 2007 Governor's Workforce Board meeting minutes.

VOTE: S. Kaplan moved to approve, seconded by G. Nee. All approved.

Chairman's Report

Chairman MarcAurele reported that the board's committees have been meeting over the past few months and that the work continues to progress. He called attention to the memo in the board packets announcing that Governor Carcieri will lead the National Governor's Association Committee on Education, Early Childhood and Workforce. Chair MarcAurele recognized this honor for RI, the GWBRI and the Governor. He reported that the board and staff will be working closely with the Governor in these areas.

Director Orefice noted that the Governor's leadership role on this committee will strengthen our relationship with the Department of Education and assist in our efforts with the Federal government and WIA reauthorization. Chairman MarcAurele noted that this committee appointment is a testament to the innovative work achieved by this board in the last couple of years.

Director's Report

M. Koback reported that the summer was busy after the annual meeting in June. He traveled to Kansas City for a Workforce Innovation conference with Director Orefice, and Chief of Staff Lisa D'Agostino. He noted there were over 3,800 attendees at this conference and that they were able to connect with some key partners in workforce development specifically the Department of Commerce and Microsoft. A plan to bring a skill certification program to the state was discussed with representatives of Microsoft. Discussions with the Department of Commerce led to the possibility of having a representative come to RI to work with the manufacturing partnership for business retention and layoff aversion issues.

M. Koback reported that he also attended the National Governor's Association of State Chairs and Directors conference in Minneapolis in August. There was broad national representation and discussion items including board governance issues, legislation and trends. M. Koback referred to the handout entitled: National Association of State Workforce Board Chairs- Member Survey-system Structures, Policies and Practices which is a compilation of survey findings across 26 state boards.

GWB staff is working on committee assignments, logistics for grant awards and preparation for the annual report for the Governor and legislature which is due on October 1st. This report will provide an opportunity to highlight many accomplishments over the past year.

M. Koback reported that Industry partnerships are moving along and that a day-long facilitated session on system-building is planned for September 21st. He also mentioned that the DLT is working to revamp the current Apprenticeship program in order to increase training opportunities. A facilitator may also be hired to assist with this effort.

The next GWBRI strategic planning session is scheduled for Thursday, October 4th at Save the Bay and will be facilitated by the Corporation for a Skilled Workforce (CSW). M. Koback invited and encouraged board members to attend. He noted that CSW has spent the summer validating and testing information that developed from the first strategic planning session last June.

Consent Agenda (Items 1-8)

Chair MarcAurele referred to the September 6, 2007 Meeting Consent Agenda. He noted that at the last Strategic Investment Committee meeting the budget was reviewed as well as the funding of the various areas the committee wanted to support. He mentioned the flexibility provided in the funding program since the committee is looking at projections and not the actual expenditures. Chairman MarcAurele wanted to provide the full board an opportunity for review and discussion of the Consent Agenda items. He noted that the budget has been approved by the Strategic Investment Committee.

George Nee raised a question about last year and current year funding for the Business Retention program. He noted that last year when funds were allocated for this program, there were questions about the criteria. He noted the increase in funding to \$1million in the proposed budget adding that the \$500,000 allocated last year was not spent. He is wondering if there is new thinking on this, indicating that he would like to see as much money as possible funding literacy and workforce expansion initiatives.

M. Koback indicated, as noted in the Consent Agenda, that the committee did allocate \$50,000 to Hope Global for Business Retention. He mentioned that this funding request came about in collaboration with the Economic Development Corporation (EDC) in identifying some of the

workforce issues that Hope Global is facing. The major focus involves looking for new markets for their product due to overseas competition. M. Koback noted that Hope Global has assembled a good strategy to redefine their business. The retention effort surrounding Hope Global is considered a pilot to determine how well it works and to ensure this is an effective solution. This effort is being linked to layoff aversion as opposed to solely offering training and involves working more collaboratively with the Rapid Response team at DLT. This also aligns with the US Department of Commerce efforts, previously mentioned, in assisting the manufacturing industry with its economic difficulties.

Chairman MarcAurele acknowledged that the committee is cautious about potentially risky funding. He also indicated that funding options are fluid, and that the Strategic Investment Committee can reallocate funding as necessary. He recognized the importance of the committee's awareness of the tremendous progress made in current initiatives, such as adult education, in order to provide the funding flexibility necessary.

Saul Kaplan mentioned that EDC would be happy to participate in further discussion on the business retention funding. He noted he would like to understand better the constraints around the funding. He also indicated he agrees with Chairman MarcAurele on the business retention philosophy of helping companies that have the potential to grow and be stronger to stay in RI. However, he restated that there needs to be a clearer definition of the parameters around the use of the funds.

Chairman MarcAurele suggested that the Strategic Investment Committee re-examine the categories of funding and return to the full board with a clearer definition of these categories. He noted that business retention and workforce development seem similar and further clarification may be needed.

Adelita Orefice suggested that we bring the plan and the work already done to the board. She also explained the lag in spending is partially due to the caution of being in new territory. She agreed that we do not want to invest in high risk efforts and noted that other states have made significant progress with business retention models. She added that we should take our time with this effort by finding the right companies and by doing it well. She noted that Hope Global fits the profile for this type of effort. She also noted there are many success stories around the re-inventing of manufacturing companies who often primarily need an influx of creativity and funding to make the needed transitions.

George Nee stated it might make sense to review this funding at a six month point. He indicated that the focus of HRIC's job development fund is to be able to intervene with the incumbent workforce by upgrading their skills, training and education. This, in the long run, assists with business retention because it enables the company to improve the workforce. He also indicated he is open to new concepts and ideas but pointed out that we run the risk of this process becoming politicized. He cautioned that a situation could arise when a failing company requests funds as a last ditch effort especially since demand for training generally exceeds supply. He also acknowledged that he does not agree that all training needs should be met. However, he stated that if the board does not have a clear way to spend \$1 million in the Business Retention area, that we should be able to reallocate this money to another funding category.

M. Koback stated that there is an internal team working on a Business Retention plan and that they have reviewed different models from around the country. He also indicated that discussions have developed around the topic of training people versus working with companies at the Strategic Investment Committee meetings. He reported that Hope Global is a company

that has been around for a long time, invests in its workforce and is looking to survive and change. Though this business retention effort is a different approach, a successful resolution could save 600-700 jobs.

Adelita Orefice directed board members to page 2 of the Meeting Consent Agenda which details the WIA Policy Issuances. She noted that given her role as the Governor's WIA Liaison she is responsible to ensure that all policies are implemented as mandated.

M. Koback indicated that plans are to have these WIA Policy issuances discussed in more detail at the Planning and Evaluation Committee meetings prior to the full board vote.

Chairman MarcAurele entered a motion to approve the Consent Agenda (Items 1-8).

VOTE: W. McGowan moved to approve, seconded by G. Nee. All approved.

Tech Collective Presentation

A presentation followed by the Tech-Collective's Information Technology Partnership. The presentation was given by Tim Hebert, CEO of Atrion and Chairman of the Board of Tech Collective. The purpose of the presentation was to highlight the accomplishments of the year one Information Technology partnership and to share insights.

T. Hebert spoke on the topics of partnership, collaboration, industry knowledge, education and strategy. A summary of this presentation demonstrates that Tech-Collective has an important role to help create and sustain relationships between technology, educators and businesses. Another goal is to promote the teaching of soft skills as an integral part of the information technology curriculum at the high school, college and professional development levels. In addition to this, the importance of training people with superior soft-skills in information technology was noted. Concluding, T. Hebert acknowledged the important role Tech Collective has as the "voice of technology employers in Rhode Island."

GWBRl Website Preview

Maria Ferreira, DLT Marketing and Public Relations provided an overview of the redesigned GWBRl website. Members commented that the website was very professional in design and very user friendly.

Old/New Business

W. McGowan mentioned the upcoming Planning & Evaluation Committee meeting on Friday, September 14th @ 10:00 a.m. He asked for committee members to make every effort to attend to ensure a quorum.

With no other business to be discussed, Chairman MarcAurele entertained a motion to adjourn the meeting.

VOTE: G. Nee moved to approve, seconded by M. Trueb. All approved.

The meeting adjourned at 4:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Maureen F. Mooney

SEPTEMBER 6, 2007 MEETING CONSENT AGENDA

(Detailed Information Follows)

Items 1- 8

Item 1: Approve New WIA Policy Issuances since June 21, 2007 Meeting

Eight policy issuances listed for PY '06 and PY '07 were issued pursuant to federal policy and allocation of funds by the GWBRI for youth services in PY 2007.

Item 2: FY '08 Budget

The Strategic Investments Committee at its 8-16-07 meeting approved the \$14,147,096 budget and corresponding funding priorities for FY '08.

Item 3: Comprehensive Workforce Training Grants

The Strategic Investment Committee approved a total of \$531,705 in training grant awards to 31 companies to train 750 incumbent workers.

Item 4: Youth Funding (WIA)

The Strategic Investments Committee approved a recommendation by the Youth Development Committee to award \$3,000,000 to augment federal WIA funding for youth activities conducted by the two local workforce boards beginning spring 2008.

Item 5: Youth Funding (Provider Capacity Building)

The Strategic Investment Committee approved a recommendation by the Youth Development Committee to award \$120,000 to the Workforce Development Division of RIDLT to conduct a series of training and capacity building sessions for all youth service providers.

Item 6: Business Retention

The Strategic Investment Committee approved a request to award \$50,000 to assist Hope Global redefine their market and product lines.

Item 7: Skills Training / ESL Training

The Strategic Investment Committee awarded \$250,000 to the RIDLT to leverage \$500,000 in federal funding and invest in the Department's issuance of an RFP that will combine skill training with ESL.

Item 8: Industry Partnerships

The Strategic Investment Committee approved allocating \$500,000 for Year II funding of the initial four Industry Partnerships: Information Technology (Tech-Collective), Healthcare (Hospital Association and Quality Partners) and Advanced Manufacturing (RI Manufacturing Extension Services)

ITEM 1 – WIA POLICY ISSUANCES

BACKGROUND: The ETA, USDOL requires that the WIA Statute and Regulations be implemented by the issuance of State Policy by the Governor. ETA, USDOL, from time to time, issues changes in policy impacting the administration of the Workforce Investment Programs in Rhode Island. These issuances are called Training and Employment Guidance Letters (TEGLs) and require that changes in State policy be implemented to conform to changes in federal policy. These policy issuances now also include policy issuances for the Job Development Fund Youth Initiative for PY 2007.

REFERENCES: All WIA Policy Issuances 1999-2007:

[Click here to go to Workforce Investment Notices](#)

CONSIDERATION: The policy issuances listed for PY '06 and PY '07 below were issued pursuant to federal policy and allocation of funds by the GWBRI for youth services in PY 2007.

WIN NOTICE NO.	DATE	SUBJECT
06-14	6/28/07	Local Plan Modification Guidance. This policy provides guidance to the Local Areas in the preparation of the first year modification to the 2 Year Local Plan. The modification includes budget summaries and participant service levels.
06-15	6/28/07	Definition of Certificate Under Common Measures. This policy refers to changes to requirements for WIA funded training programs.
07-01	7/20/07	Allocations for Adult and Youth Programs. This policy provides the WIA funding allocations for Program Year 2007.
07-02	7/20/07	Allocations for Dislocated Worker Programs. This policy provides the WIA funding allocations for Program Year 2007.
07-03	7/20/07	Adult and Dislocated Worker Allocations. This policy transmits the PY 2007/ FY 2008 split for Adult and Dislocated Worker funds.
07-04	7/30/07	Public Housing and WIA. This policy advises the Workforce Development System that WIA benefits received by residents of public housing cannot be counted as income in the calculation of rent.
05-06 (change 1)	8/16/07	Common Measures Policy and Related Performance. This policy provides clarification on the literacy/numeracy measure for WIA youth participants.
07-05	8/24/07	Registered Apprenticeships and Workforce Development. This policy provides information to support the use of Registered Apprenticeships by the Workforce Development System.

ITEM 2 – FY '08 BUDGET

Governor's
Workforce
Board
Rhode Island



STRATEGIC INVESTMENTS COMMITTEE

Today's Vision... Tomorrow's Opportunity.

"DEMAND-DRIVEN WORKFORCE AGENDA"

The proposed budget allocation for Fiscal Year '08 initiatives continues to build upon the successes of '07, and raises the bar to focus the Board's efforts and funding priorities on a "demand-driven" agenda.

The proposed categories and funding are primarily, though not exclusively, focused on key growth sectors that impact the economy of Rhode Island and surrounding region. It is important to note that the proposed funding levels are fluid and the Board can adjust levels and categories to respond to economic and workforce changes as well as realigned priorities.

Key components of the \$14,147,096 proposed budget include:

◆ **Workforce Training Grants: \$3,527,096 Total**

These grants would address three levels of incumbent and new worker training needs.

- Training Grants: \$2M – Limited to \$50K per company for broad based incumbent worker training / systems / operational needs consistent with a business plan. Company match is required. Rolling application period. Staff level approval.
- New Worker Training: \$527,096 – Funding to assist in the training of new employees. Company match is required.
- Expansion Grants: \$1M – Funding levels based on proposed company need and negotiated. Funds limited to the hiring and training of new hires for existing / new companies. Grants brokered / awarded in collaboration with the RIEDC. Staff level approval up to \$100K.

◆ **Partnership Grants: \$1,500,000 Total**

These grants would provide the Board opportunities to collaborate with key system stakeholders in various initiatives, e.g., Human Services, netWORKri, Industry Partnerships, etc. They might also be used as a "state match" often required in the application for federally funded initiatives. Grants awarded either through formal RFP process or direct solicitation. Awards are dependent upon need.

◆ **Youth Strategies: \$3,120,000 Total**

- \$3,000,000 would be allocated to the two local Workforce Boards by formula to augment federal WIA funds. GWB funding will provide both the flexibility and opportunity to expand WIA modeled services to greater numbers of youth over longer periods of time. This effort is consistent with the Board's all youth agenda and will require unified strategies. Grants will be awarded by competitive RFP process by the local Boards.
- \$120,000 would be allocated to the RI DLT to conduct a series of capacity building training seminars, workshops and planning meetings to develop the skills of all youth serving agencies/providers within the state.

◆ **Adult Education / Literacy: \$4,500,000 Total**

These funds address key components of the Adult Education system to further align education and workforce programs, professional development and content standards. Approved in June '07, the funds have been awarded to local / regional service providers through a competitive bid process conducted by the RIDE in conjunction with a host of partner agencies.

◆ **Business Retention: \$1,000,000 Total**

These funds would be part of a proactive approach to assist companies that may be facing worker shortages and/or skill deficiencies that could potentially result in layoffs, downsizing and/or closure. Utilizing a coordinated and collaborative approach among agencies and applicable Industry Partnerships, funds would be allocated to provide training that may be necessary to sustain the company's workforce, competitiveness and viability.

◆ **Capacity Building: \$500,000 Total**

These funds would provide the Board opportunities for Board development activities, strategic planning, the provision and receipt of technical assistance, refined and/or new labor market information models, new and/or improved technology, seed funding for new systems development, industry sector summits, etc.

ITEM 3 – COMPREHENSIVE WORKFORCE TRAINING GRANTS

2007 PROGRAM ROUND II

A Request for Proposals (RFP) was issued to provide funding to employers for workforce improvement programs designed to increase the skills of the incumbent workforce. The organizations listed below scored 80 or above and are being recommended for funding.

Company / Organization		Amount
1	A.B. Munroe Dairy	\$26,500.00
2	American Ecotech	\$31,700.00
3	Blackstone Academy Charter School Inc.	\$21,695.00
4	Carousel Industries of NA, Inc.	\$29,199.80
5	Chamber Education Foundation (DBA-RI Mentoring Partnership)	\$3,500.00
6	Darrow Everett	\$4,500.00
7	Dexter Credit Union	\$5,800.00
8	Donada, Inc.	\$5,337.50
9	EFD, Inc.	\$17,461.52
10	Elizabeth Buffum Chace Center	\$19,191.00
11	Epoxies, Etc.	\$9,417.00
12	Fielding Manufacturing Inc.	\$16,000.00
13	Freedom National Bank	\$2,170.00
14	Jade Engineered Plastics Inc.	\$19,140.00
15	Kahn, Litwin, Renza & Co., LTD.	\$13,227.10
16	Kent House, Inc.	\$5,967.07
17	Little Rhody Machine Repair, Inc.	\$2,590.00
18	Neighborhood Health Plan of RI	\$49,900.00
19	New England Boatworks, Inc.	\$4,605.00
20	NGC Inc. (DBA-The Town Dock)	\$12,300.00
21	North Star Marketing Inc.	\$4,092.50
22	Overhead Door Company of Providence Inc.	\$27,694.95
23	Packaging Concepts, LTD.	\$20,000.00
24	RGP Dental, Inc.	\$7,042.50
25	Robinson Green Beretta Corp. (RGB)	\$49,092.50
26	Saccoccio & Associates, Inc.	\$2,090.00
27	Tim Hortons (New England), Inc.	\$21,505.00
28	Transcription Options, Inc.	\$23,895.00
29	VIBCO	\$49,380.00
30	Vision Care at the Brown Center	\$22,610.00
31	Westerly Community Credit Union	\$4,102.50
TOTAL FUNDING		\$531,705.94

ITEMS 4, 5 – YOUTH FUNDING (WIA & CAPACITY BUILDING)

Funding Recommendations -Youth Services Delivery System

Youth Services Delivery System- Requests \$3,120,000 for PY'07/FY'08

Rhode Island's two Local Workforce Investment Boards (Providence/Cranston and Greater Rhode Island) seek \$3,000,000 in funding for PY '07 /FY'08 to enhance their efforts in delivering youth services by serving all youth, statewide, in an aim to unite the *Youth Vision* of the Governor's Workforce Board into the strategic planning process of the Workforce Delivery System.

Keeping with the *Youth Vision*, the Department of Labor and Training requests \$120,000 to support the youth provider statewide training plan, which addresses the training and development needs of youth serving agencies, youth workers, and Local Workforce Investment Board grant recipients. This pilot training program for PY 2007-2008 is designed to further develop youth workers skills and abilities, achieve their expected outcomes, align them with the state's strategic direction and result in a successful "all youth" service delivery system model that is, effective, and efficient for all youth. (1)

Approach to Service

This multifaceted plan fosters a collaborative approach among state agencies with a youth agenda, combining community-based organization's expertise to assess the current status of a youth's workforce development and training needs at a single point of entry into the system. Through this new Youth Workforce System, the youth is an active participant throughout the process, making choices about their employment and training possibilities along the way.

Capacity and Reach

By increasing the number of Youth Centers from one (1) to six (6), the state has increased access to services for youth from Westerly to Woonsocket. Currently, thirty (30) organizations are providing services to youth aged 14-21. As a result of the combined RFP process, the Local Workforce Boards in Program Year 2007-08 boast serving over 2,600 youth, with 42% of the youth served representing "at-risk" populations, such as: youth in foster care, youth offenders, disabled youth, pregnant and parenting teens and homeless and/or run away youth.

By actualizing the Youth Vision in serving all youth, this new RFP process has made the delivery of services to youth comprehensive and immediate. The Youth Workforce system can now serve kids from all backgrounds, matching-up their workforce training needs with available resources, while providing them choices along the way.

No longer will RI youth be shut out of much needed resources because their socio-economic story didn't qualify to meet with a particular eligibility requirement of the Workforce Investment Act (WIA). Now, those who qualify under the WIA can receive services along with those you are ineligible for WIA funding. This new philosophical shift in programming de-emphasizes the services from being WIA to being all youth focus, aligning the Shared Youth Vision into the service methodology. This benefit allows the youth to maintain a certain amount of dignity, which may have been lost under the old system's WIA stigma.

Need for Services

Despite making tremendous enrollment gains by expanding the youth centers across the state and combining the RFP process to serve 2,600 kids, first quarter enrollment figures estimate that there were 2.41 youth for each available opening statewide-that is, if the need of this year's request for enrollment was met, then we would have served 6,268 kids this year. These numbers reflect the growing need in services for RI's youth. Currently there are 21,309 youth aged 15-24 who are neither employed, in armed services or enrolled in school, out of a total of 126,570 in the state (2), resulting in 1 out of every 6 youth being disconnected from RI's Workforce Delivery System.

Increased Innovation and Collaboration

Working in concert with this funding stream, are two new exciting initiatives for the Youth Workforce Delivery System.

❖ Youth Web Portal

This internet based website will serve as a resource center for youth, enabling them to access services and resources at a touch of a button. In its infancy the portal will offer information to connect youth with existing resources. Over the course of the next year, the information will expand to assist the employment and education communities. Eventually, youth will be able to access the web portal from any Internet connected computer, request information and/or get connected to services directly based upon their stated needs (Please see the web portal document for more information). (3)

❖ Youth/ Business Connection

➤ Five Point Business Engagement Strategy

1. Establish DLT as a resource for Employers to meet their human capital needs and create a pipeline to their future workforce.
2. Create an outreach plan specific to partner agencies. Present the Department of Labor and Training as the conduit to connect youth with the business community so they begin to identify the Department in this capacity (Use this as an opportunity to highlight the Department's all youth vision).

3. Connect with the education community in each school district.
4. Outreach to and engagement of Youth.
5. Employ an overall public awareness campaign to target the community at large but also other key state agencies/partners that do not provide direct service to youth but have an investment in their development. Those agencies include, for example, the Education Partnership, the Rhode Island Economic Development Corporation and the Rhode Island Economic Policy Council. (4)

➤ Industry Partnership

Initial steps have been made between the GWB RI's Chief of Operations and Development and DLT's Chief of Youth Services, to encourage businesses to develop industry defined Competency Models for youth, as well as a Workforce Mentoring Program.¹

1. Workforce Development Plan for Youth Statewide Training Plan
2. American Community Survey
3. Web Portal
4. Rhode Island Department of Labor and Training Business Engagement for Youth Development

ITEM 6 – BUSINESS RETENTION

Company Name: Hope Global, a Division of *NFA
Address: 50 Martin St.
Cumberland, RI

History

Founded in 1883, Hope Global is a long –time RI manufacture with approximately 230 employees. Originally located on the Providence-Pawtucket line, approximately 10 years ago the company relocated to Cumberland. The company’s original products were various braided items such as shoelaces and parachute cord. Fifteen years ago the company began a transition to various industrial products to support the automotive industry for vehicle interiors and door moldings.

Current Status

As the US auto market continues to decline, Hope’s sales to these companies and other suppliers have dropped over 40%. Since 2005 the company has laid-off over 100 employees. The company anticipates further declines as the US automakers’ market share continues to decline

Proposed Solution

Hope has acknowledged the need to identify new product lines that build on their current manufacturing expertise and capabilities that reduces their current dependency on the automotive market. Examples of new product lines would be safety gear, military webbing, medical application etc.

Anticipated Benefits

Hope’s objective is to redefine itself for new markets to replace those lost in the domestic automotive market decline. The grant will be used to fund the following:

- Primary and Secondary Market Research
- Market Analysis
- Conferences with Potential Customers
- Project Management Costs
- Team Consultations

Staff Comments

Hope has acknowledged the need to identify new product lines that build on their current manufacturing expertise. Hope looks to a strategy that reduces its dependency on the automotive market. Potential new product lines for Hope Global include safety gear, military webbing, medical application etc. The GWBRI grant will co-fund a \$100,000 initiative to work with a nationally recognized market/research consulting firm to identify new markets for products that will have higher values and greater technical content.

Requested Assistance: \$50,000

Committee Approval: \$50,000

ITEM 7 – SKILLS / ESL TRAINING

Name of Company: Rhode Island Department of Labor and Training

Industry: Various high growth industry sectors as identified by the Governor's Workforce Board Industry Partnership Initiative

Grant Request: \$500,000

Staff Recommendation: \$500,000

Committee Approved: \$250,000

Background information:

This proposal seeks to leverage funds for the creation of innovative occupational skills training programs in Rhode Island's high growth industries, programs that will include combined or contextualized English as a Second Language (ESOL) as an integrated component.

According to the 2000 Census, 20% of RI residents speak a language other than English; of which, a significant portion speak English "less than very well". Speakers of other languages account for one of the largest demographic groups in RI. Skills' training coupled with English language training is critical to strengthening RI's workforce. Currently there are very few occupational skills training programs in RI or nationally that provide English language instruction *as part of* a skills training curriculum.

The Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) program, operated through DLT, is committed to funding \$550,000 of this new skills training/ESOL initiative for Trade-eligible customers. This proposal requests \$500,000 from the Governor's Workforce Board to make similar training opportunities available for non-Trade eligible limited English speaking netWORKri customers.

DLT has developed a Request for Proposals entitled, "Occupational Skills Training Integrating English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL)", which seeks qualifying service providers to submit training programs which will render a participant job-ready by focusing on occupational skills training. This RFP will call for alignment of the Governor's Workforce Board's Adult Education and Industry Partnership initiatives.

ITEM 8 – INDUSTRY PARTNERSHIPS

The funding for those Industry Partnerships initiated in Year-One is ending. Per the GWBRI's current agreement with each of the four administrative agencies, each may apply for a second round of funding.

Each partnership is currently undergoing an assessment of their work and accomplishments in year one in order to determine their eligibility for year two.

The Strategic Investments Committee approved the set-aside of an initial \$500,000 for the funding of year-two agreements.