

GOVERNOR'S WORKFORCE BOARD RHODE ISLAND
January 16, 2014

BOARD MEETING MINUTES

ATTENDANCE

BOARD MEMBERS (*DENOTES NOT PRESENT)

Mario Bueno*	Constance A. Howes	Manuela Raposo
Timothy Byrne	Paul MacDonald	Cathy Streker
Robin Coia	Cheryl Merchant*	Martin Trueb
Charles J. Fogarty(S)	Sharon Moylan (S)*	
Deborah Gist(S)*	Robert Nangle (S)	
Mike Grey	George Nee	
Juana Horton (S)*		

(S) denotes State Workforce Investment Board (SWIB) only

GWB Staff: Rick Brooks, Elizabeth Jardine, Sherri Carello, Amelia Roberts, Hillary Feeney, Dan Brown

DLT Staff: Sean Fontes, Diane Gagne, Sue Chomka, Nancy Olson, Sarah Griffen, Connie Parks, David Tremblay, Lisa D'Agostino

Guests: Malcolm Baxter, BIS; Cheryl Dacosta, Tech Collective; Dr. Philip Less, RIDE; Michael Hogan, RI House Policy; Robert Kalaskowski, Senate Policy Office; Jay Visnjic, Hampton Inn; Holly Ashton, IYRS; Jill Holloway, PDC; Irena Nedeljkovic, EPI; Anne Walsh, WSPC; Deana Pecchia, CCAP; Bob Ricci, WSPC

Location: RI Department of Labor and Training, Conference Room 73-1

Welcome and Call to Order

Chair Howes called the meeting to order at 8:03 a.m. and welcomed everyone to the Governor's Workforce Board meeting.

Meeting Minutes

Chair Howes asked if there was a motion to approve the minutes of the Governor's Workforce Board's meeting held on November 26, 2013

VOTE on motion to approve: C. Streker moved to approve, seconded by M. Trueb. All were in favor, motion passed unanimously.

Per Chair Howes' request, Sean Fontes, Executive Counsel, asked for declarations on any of the voting matters before the board for conflicts of interest. He explained that board members should avoid the appearance of a conflict of interest according to the RI State Code of Ethics and Governor's Workforce Board By-Laws. He stated that board members who disclose a conflict should both abstain from the vote and recuse themselves from any discussion. Referring to the consent agenda, Chair Howes asked for any disclosures.

Chair's Comments

Chair Howes discussed the year ahead, noting the recognition of workforce development as key issue for the state of Rhode Island. She highlighted the positive support from legislative

leadership and Governor Chafee's budget proposal which designated \$1,800,000 to support workforce development. Chair Howes announced the upcoming release of the RhodeMap RI plan, emphasizing the goal of consistently aligning the actions of the Governor's Workforce Board with the strategic and economic development plans for Rhode Island. She noted that the next Biennial Plan will be published in November 2014 and discussed the reallocation of FY14 unobligated/deobligated funds in response to employer needs for training and education. Chair Howes discussed the sector analysis of the Industry Partners as part of the 4ward Planning evaluation and the growth of industries in Rhode Island such as arts and culture. Chair Howes announced that the GWB Annual Meeting will be on May 15, 2014 at the Crowne Plaza in Warwick and the theme will be "Invest in the Future." She stated the meeting will highlight innovative youth centers, Incumbent Worker Training Programs, and Innovative Partnership recipients. Chair Howes asked for recommendations of topics that should be addressed at the Annual Meeting.

Committee Chair Reports

Youth Development Committee

Chair Howes asked Robin Coia to provide an update of the last two Youth Development Committee meetings. R. Coia provided an overview of summer youth programs discussed at the September meeting. She stated a total of 1,100 youth were served, which was an increase of 326 from the previous year. Close to 400 youth received some type of credential and all received work readiness training. R. Coia noted the highlight of the September meeting was the presentations from two of the summer youth employment participants and two employer representatives from Hampton Inn and CVS. She commended Jay Visnjic, General Manager of the Hampton Inn on his commitment to the summer youth employment program.

R. Coia provided an update of the December Youth Committee meeting, highlighting the possibility of a leadership academy for youth who have participated in the summer employment program to serve as ambassadors and mentors for younger program participants. She discussed the FY15 funding request approved by the Youth Development Committee for \$2,000,000 from the local WIBs to support the youth centers and the summer youth program. The request will be discussed at the February 6th Strategic Investments Committee meeting for recommendation to the full Board for approval. R. Coia noted, based on the number of youth served last year, the recent minimum wage increase will cost the program an additional \$33,000. She explained that in the past, the local WIBs have been fortunate to receive additional funding from DHS to serve more youth, which may not be available for FY15. R. Coia stated that a few minor adjustments will be made to the RFP, based on feedback from the recent interactive discussion between the Youth Committee members and youth service providers. R. Coia discussed the Longitudinal Data Analysis project, the partners involved in the project, and the focus of linking data from multiple databases to produce workforce data stories. Board members further discussed the recent minimum wage increase. T. Byre commented on the great work and dedication of the youth service providers.

Adult Education and Literacy Committee

Chair Howes asked Robert Nangle to provide an update on the Adult Education and Literacy Committee. R. Nangle gave an overview of the adult education cost-per student (federal and state funds) analysis that took place at the last meeting, noting that Vermont has the highest cost-per student of the New England states at \$2,646 and the lowest was Maine at \$959. He reported that Rhode Island is the second lowest of the New England states at \$1,083. R. Nangle noted that Rhode Island is very efficient in spending the funds available for adult education, highlighting that Rhode Island has the highest percentage in educational gains in New England

(48%). He stated that 121,000 of Rhode Island's 18+ population (831,000) do not have a high school diploma, which is a high percentage compared to other New England states. M. Trueb asked if the individuals without a high school diploma are employed or unemployed. Dr. Less indicated that the 121,000 could be either employed or unemployed. R. Nangle noted the Performance-Based Funding discussion and the dialogue around total adult education funding for Rhode Island, including federal and private funding.

Strategic Investments and Evaluation Committee

Chair Howes asked Mike Grey to provide an update on the Strategic Investments and Evaluation Committee. M. Grey noted the committee spent the last two meetings discussing how to wisely allocate the FY14 unobligated/deobligated funds, focusing on the Incumbent Worker Training Program and what type of structural changes would increase demand and make the program more successful. He discussed resource alignment in reference to the DLT funding request to upgrade the technology infrastructure of the netWORKri centers and the development of a renewal plan to continually maintain the upgrades.

Rick Brooks referred to the FY14-FY15 GWB Worksheet, highlighting the external contracts and FY15 total program availability of \$10,442,519. He discussed the unallocated funds (\$467,080) and projected deobligations (\$1,646,281) for a total projected carry-in of \$2,113,361 available for the Board to reallocate for the remainder of the fiscal year. C. Streker asked how often the Governor's Workforce Board invests in the technology upgrades for the netWORKri centers and what the impact of delaying the investment would entail. S. Chomka stated that the Governor's Workforce Board invested a little less than \$1,000,000 in 2008 to upgrade the software and hardware, and increase the internet bandwidth. She noted that this year, other funding streams will be utilized and a capital plan will be developed to look at cost allocating more effectively from year to year. C. Fogarty added that netWORKri centers serves over 40,000 people and are a tremendous resource for job seekers. He noted that the investment will be well utilized by those who are looking for a job or those who are looking to improve their skills. M. Grey noted that the Strategic Investments and Evaluation Committee also voted on a no-cost extension of the RI Commerce Corporation Export Assistance Program contract through June 30, 2014.

Consent Agenda – Human Resource Investment Council (HRIC)

Chair Howes asked for a motion to approve the recommendation from the Strategic Investments and Evaluation Committee to allocate \$700,000 of FY14 unobligated/deobligated funds to support the Incumbent Worker Training Program and to implement the following changes to the Incumbent Worker Training Grant Program criteria:

1. Eliminate the current company size restrictions and allow any size company to apply for the maximum award.
2. Maintain the minimum award at \$5,000 and, if needed, reevaluate the minimum and maximum award limits (including Express Grants) after the first round of RFPs.
3. Issue two RFPs annually with starting dates of April 1, 2014 and October 1, 2014.
4. Permit companies to receive grants in consecutive cycles, provided there are sufficient funds, with preference given to those who have not received awards in the previous cycle.
5. Expand the bonus incentive funding to reward internships for youth and unemployed adults.
6. Eliminate the requirement that trainees must be employed with a company for at least six months (Express Grants).

VOTE: M. Grey moved to approve, seconded by G. Nee. All were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

Chair Howes asked for a motion to approve the following allocations of FY14 unobligated/deobligated funds:

1. \$356,000 to fund technology upgrades at the netWORKri centers, subject to the development of a plan to continually maintain the technology infrastructure of the one-stop centers.
2. Allocation of an additional \$500,000 for Summer Youth Employment for FY15.
3. \$550,000 to support the Innovative Partnership Grants, subject to further discussion before issuing the new RFP.

VOTE: M. Trueb moved to approve, seconded by C. Streker. All were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

Consent Agenda – State Workforce Investment Board

Chair Howes asked for a motion to approve the recommendation of a no-cost extension of the RI Commerce Corporation Export Assistance Program contract through June 30, 2014. G. Nee abstained from the vote.

VOTE: P. MacDonald moved to approve, seconded by R. Coia. All were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

Executive Director's Report

Chair Howes asked Rick Brooks to provide an update on programs, planning and outreach activities. R. Brooks referred to the Express Grant spreadsheet, noting that over the course of 10 months of activity in calendar year 2013, 96 grants were awarded, totaling over \$300,000. Referring to the Work Immersion spreadsheet, R. Brooks stated a total of 28 college students are actively involved in the program. He noted that the unemployed adults' piece of the program just launched. R. Brooks referred to the Innovative Partnership handout, discussing the graduation ceremonies and overall success of the program. He noted that the Innovative Partnership grants emphasize the alignment of employer partnerships, work readiness training, and work experiences, which are targeted to unemployed and underemployed adults leading to jobs and career pathways. R. Brooks announced that the non-trade apprenticeship contracts have now been implemented and are underway. He noted, based on the approved allocations, the \$700,000 will be released for another round of Incumbent Worker Training Grants and will be announced in the newspaper on Friday, January 17th, with applications due on February 18th.

R. Brooks provided an update on the independent evaluation of the Industry Partners in preparation for a new RFP this spring. He noted that the GWB is working with the Office of Higher Education and CCRI to develop a grant proposal for the TAACCCT III grant, which are the same funds that have supported the CCRI PACE program and New England Tech's SAMI program. R. Brooks indicated that the GWB is also working closely with RISLA to promote internships to businesses and have launched a six month campaign last week that involves a series of workshop seminars around the state co-sponsored by chambers of commerce and Industry Partners.

Workforce On-Ramps Presentation

Chair Howes asked David Tremblay to provide an update on the Workforce On-Ramps initiative. D. Tremblay gave an overview of the program, discussing the funding source, agency partners,

and state system change goals. Sarah Griffen presented the pilot goals, noting that the program aims to serve 1,000 participants with 500 of those participants placed in work experiences. She reviewed the pilot operations in relation to the Governor's Workforce Board, highlighting the collaboration across agencies and community organizations to coordinate referrals and encourage the adoption of the pilot tools. Hillary Feeney discussed the pilot tools and career maps, explaining how they will be used by service providers and program participants.

Summer Youth Program Presentation

R. Coia introduced Jay Visnjic, General Manager of Hampton Inn and Suites in Warwick. J. Visnjic gave an overview of the Hampton Inn summer youth employment program, indicating that a total of 19 summer youth were hired. He stated that the management team at Hampton Inn took on the role as mentors for the youth and felt that the program made their jobs more meaningful. Deana Pecchia (CCAP) explained the process of preparing youth for summer employment and paid internships. She noted that the summer youth program needs more ambassadors like Jay Visnjic and read a very positive Trip Advisor review of Sean Nolan, one of the summer youth participants at Hampton Inn.

Adjournment

With no further business, Chair Howes asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting.

VOTE: C. Streker moved to approve, seconded by M. Grey. All were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 9:30 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Amelia-Anne Roberts