



GOVERNOR'S WORKFORCE BOARD RHODE ISLAND

BOARD MEETING MINUTES

March 19, 2015

Coventry Regional Career and Technical Center
Knotty Oak Room, 40 Reservoir Road, Coventry

8:00 – 9:30 am

ATTENDANCE

BOARD MEMBERS (*DENOTES NOT PRESENT)

Mario Bueno	Mike Grey	George Nee
Timothy Byrne	Constance A. Howes, Chair	Stefan Pryor, Vice Chair
Channavy Chhay	Scott Jensen	Jim Purcell
Robin Coia	Steve Kitchin	Janet Raymond
Monica Dzialo	Paul MacDonald*	Bahjat Shariff
Deborah Gist*	Cheryl Merchant*	Martin Trueb
John Gregory		

GWB Staff: Rick Brooks, Amelia Roberts, Sherri Carello, Robert Kalaskowski, Dan Brown

DLT Staff: Sean Fontes, Nancy Olson, Carlos Ribeiro, Sue Chomka

Guests: Suzanna Alba, Rhode Island College; Malcolm Baxter, Katuska Perez, Senate Policy Office; Ruth Gobeille, Polaris MEP; Kathleen Kane, Alexandria D'Angelo, St. Antoine Residence; Tammy Martin, Homefront Healthcare; Jacqueline Torres, Career Ladder CMT student, Stephen Courteau, St. Antoine Residence presenter; Kat Keenan, Sally Ribeiro, Foster Forward; Pam Brown, Ocean State Job Lot; Paul Raposo, Foster Forward participant; Steve Osborn, RIDE

Call to Order

Chair Howes called the meeting to order at 8:06 a.m. and welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Welcoming Remarks

Lori Ferguson, Director of the Coventry Regional Career and Technical Center, welcomed everyone and provided a brief overview of the center, programs, and enrolled student population. She announced the newest program added to the Center is the Air Force Jr. ROTC and invited Board members and guests to take a tour of the facility at the end of the 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 February 19, 2015.

VOTE: John Gregory moved to approve, seconded by Channavy Chhay. All were in favor, the motion passed unanimously. Steve Kitchin abstained from the vote.

Chair's Comments

Chair Howes introduced new members to the Board, Nina Pande, Suzy Alba, and Susan Rittscher, and recognized previous Board members who are no longer on the Board: Robert Nangle, Sharon Moylan, Juana Horton, and Jim Purcell. She asked for a motion to express appreciation and thanks for their service.

VOTE: Robin Coia moved to approve, seconded by George Nee. All were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

Chair Howes announced the Annual Meeting will be held Thursday, May 21, 2015 at the RI Convention Center. She discussed the meeting agenda, stating the keynote speaker will be Fred Dedrick, Executive Director of the National Fund of Workforce Solution, who is a recognized leader in developing industry partnership strategies for workforce and economic development.

Executive Director's Report

Chair Howes asked Rick Brooks to provide an update on GWB programs, policy, planning, and partnerships. R. Brooks noted the GWB has been coordinating with Career and Technical schools to expand the Work Immersion Program to include subsidized internships for CTE students. He stated the GWB is moving forward with seeking approval from the Department of Administration to be able to offer all of the Incumbent Worker Training Grants to businesses on a rolling basis and accept proposals at anytime to meet the training needs of businesses. R. Brooks indicated the Innovative Partnership RFP for FY16 will be released soon and there are currently 150 contracts active between the GWB programs.

In regards to policy and planning efforts, R. Brooks stated the GWB met with the Biennial Plan Advisory Group to discuss tracking performance measures to demonstrate progress of the action steps of the FY16-17 Biennial Employment and Training Plan. He noted, the new Workforce Innovation and Opportunities Act will be in effect July 1, 2015 and the staff is working with the USDOL to develop an implementation plan and identifies other opportunities under the new law. The GWB was recently notified that the state has received a small grant from the National Skills Coalition's State Workforce Education and Alignment Project for funding and technical assistance to support improved workforce and education data tracking and analysis to better inform policy makers.

R. Brooks announced the RFP for the Comprehensive System Improvement Plan was published by the Division of Purchasing and proposals will be submitted by April 3, 2015. He stated the GWB is working closely with the Department of Labor and Training to support the development of Governor Raimondo's new initiative, Real Jobs RI, a demand-driven sector strategy modeled after EARN Maryland, aimed to engage businesses to drive the workforce development system by identifying the needs of businesses and aligning funds and training resources to meet the real-time training needs to fill vacancies in high-wage, high-growth sectors.

In terms of partnerships, representatives from the GWB and DLT visited a program called The Workplace, a non-profit out of Bridgeport, CT that has gained national recognition for an initiative, Platforms to Employment, targeting long-term unemployed providing support such as financial and mental health counseling and subsidies to businesses to return long-term unemployed back to the workforce. R. Brooks discussed additional new connections, including meetings with the Green Infrastructure Coalition, Capital Good Fund, and the Providence Center who are looking to raise awareness of substance abuse issues that effect workers and businesses. He announced the GWB is in the process of filling a vacant Coordinator of Employment and Training Programs position and R. Kalaskowski, the GWB Chief of Program Development, has been reassigned to the Real Jobs RI initiative.

Governor's Economic Opportunities Plan: Ocean State WAVE

Chair Howes asked Stefan Pryor to provide an overview and discuss the components of Governor Raimondo's Economic Opportunities Plan, The Ocean State WAVE. Referring to the informational pamphlet, S. Pryor described the components of the plan that will ultimately help jumpstart the economy: Workforce Development, Advanced industries and innovation, Visitor attraction, and Enterprise expansion and recruitment. He spoke about the workforce initiatives to restructure workforce training to be more employer driven, build partnerships in key sectors, and establishing programs that will help people gain the skills they need to compete. S. Pryor discussed in detail the strategies aimed to attract new business and support existing enterprises through innovative initiatives and programs, offering competitive sector grants to maximize Rhode Island's size and grow key sectors, and implement an Anchor Tax Credit that will incentivize large employers to do business in Rhode Island. He further explained how launching a tourism and business marketing campaign to restore Rhode Island's image will put the state back on the

map for investment and growth and further illustrated the proactive approaches to bring jobs to Rhode Island and grow business and attract investment. M. Trueb noted the need to bring constituencies together that would normally not get along to move forward in developing a strong economic infrastructure and work together for the common goal of addressing the needs of Rhode Islanders. J. Gregory addressed the concern with the public perception against progress and encouraged the Board to be the champions for this effort and bring a sense of urgency to the issue. The Board further discussed the value of marketing and outreach campaigns to convey a positive message which encourages excitement about the initiatives.

Committee Chair Reports

Strategic Investments and Evaluation Committee

Chair Howes asked Mike Grey to provide an update on the Strategic Investments and Evaluation Committee. M. Grey discussed the Incumbent Worker Training Grant process of changing the structure of the program from an annual RFP to a rolling grant process to address the needs businesses. He noted the committee discussed the changes to the Innovative Partnership RFP and recommendations on how the changes can be more effective. M. Grey indicated the program focus of the meeting was Express Grants and reviewed the targets, outcomes and progress of the program.

Career Pathways Advisory Committee

Chair Howes asked Monica Dzialo to provide an update on the Career Pathways Advisory Committee. M. Dzialo noted at the last meeting, the committee was broken out into working groups according to the priority areas to discuss and brainstorm objectives to bring a holistic approach to create a dynamic Career Pathways System in Rhode Island. She noted a couple of videos were presented to show examples of other state Career Pathways Systems and some of the group members participated in a discussion around developing the RFP for a web-based career pathways system. M. Dzialo encouraged Board members to attend the next meeting scheduled for April 20, 2015.

Employer Committee

Chair Howes asked Martin Trueb to provide an update on the Employer Committee. M. Trueb noted the next Employer Advisory meeting is scheduled for March 23, 2015 and will focus on youth and opportunities for employers. He noted a panel of representatives from businesses and youth centers will be discussing how businesses can get involved in youth employment opportunities and will be addressing misconceptions employers may have around providing work experiences for youth. M. Trueb invited the Board to attend the meeting on March 23rd at 8 am at the DLT.

Youth Development Committee

Chair Howes asked Robin Coia to provide an update on the Youth Development Committee. R. Coia noted the Youth RFP has been released and proposals have been received and are currently being reviewed. She stated the RFP has been updated and asks vendors to be a little more creative in order to serve as many youth as possible as a result of the increase the minimum wage. R. Coia discussed other opportunities that will be available to youth this year and noted the committee further discussed better ways of tracking JDF youth, the NCRC and employer outreach, and the opportunity to inform small businesses of youth initiatives at the upcoming Employer Advisory Group. Chair Howes noted the employer demand is key in successfully implementing the NCRC as a credible tool. R. Brooks noted the GWB is currently conducting direct outreach to employers and next month Board members will hear more about the NCRC.

Executive Committee

Chair Howes provided an overview of the previous Executive Committee meeting including committee assignments and WIOA implementation. She also discussed the new role of the committee moving forward to review and vet state plans such as the Comprehensive System Improvement Plan.

Innovative Partnership Evaluation

Due to time constraints, the Innovative Partnership Evaluation presentation and discussion was tabled. Chair Howes urged the Board members to review the evaluation, noting that it speaks to policy issues in regards to being demand-driven while addressing the needs of certain populations.

Innovative Partnership Presentations

Saint Antoine's Residence TEAMHealth

Kathleen Kane, Program Director of Saint Antoine's Residence Health Care Training Collaborative provided an overview of the program including the type of training, career ladder, career building skills, and case management component of the program. She further discussed the placement and outreach efforts and asked program participants Jacqueline Torres and Stephen Courteau to describe their experience participating in the program. G. Nee asked how the participants heard about the program. J. Torres noted her family members have participated and recommended the program to her.

Foster Forward

Kat Keenan, Deputy Director of Foster Forward presented a short video and provided an overview of the program including the training curriculum, program structure, and employer partnerships. Program participant, Paul Raposo and employer partner, Pam Brown from Ocean State Job Lot, described their involvement in the program, highlighting their positive experiences working with Foster Forward.

Adjournment

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

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

The meeting adjourned at 9:34 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Amelia-Anne Roberts