

# **Workforce Partnership of Greater Rhode Island**

## **Executive Committee Meeting Minutes**

**September 2, 2008**

**Present: Steven Kitchin, Paul Ouellette, Pat Talin, Paul Harden, and Cynthia Farrell.**

**Staff: Nick Ucci, Jen Cornwell, Janice Lepizzera, and Gail DuPont.**

**Guest: Mavis McGetrick**

**With a quorum present, Chair Steven Kitchin called the meeting to order at approximately 8:05 A.M. He asked the committee to review the minutes of the previous meeting on June 3, 2008. Spelling corrections were noted and will be amended.**

**VOTE: A motion to accept the minutes as amended was made by Pat Talin. Paul Harden seconded. The motion was approved unanimously.**

### **Chairman's Report**

**Steve Kitchin said he would like all the committee chairs to consider their strategic goals for the coming program year and ensure that their committee work is aligned with the goals of the Board.**

**Steve announced that the position of Executive Director has been officially posted. Nick Ucci stated that he is not clear when the**

**selection process will be completed. Steve reminded everyone that the Executive Committee acts as the Board's Personnel Committee and that they can have input on the selection of the Executive Director.**

**Paul Harden expressed concern that the DLT One-Stop Centers staffing shortages could impact our programs negatively. Nick said he is working with DLT to address this issue and he has met with Kathy Partington regarding this matter. Steve said he would like to know if any strategy has been prepared to deal with the funding issues and the personnel deficit for serving Rhode Islanders at the One-Stop Centers.**

**Steve stated that a priority for this year would be to support training opportunities for the disabled population. He feels that there is an opportunity to leverage resources of multiple state and public service organizations to coordinate the delivery of training programs. An effort is underway with Nick, Steve Bunero (ORD), and Elaina Goldstein (Rhodes to Independence) to find a better way to coordinate programs to meet everyone's goals and have a more effective model to better serve clients who would benefit from an OJT program that would transition them to employment.**

**Steven announced that Joe Crowley has retired from the Warwick Area Career and Technical Center and has submitted his letter of resignation from the Board.**

**VOTE: Steve asked for a motion to accept Joseph Crowley's resignation with regret from the Board. Pat Talin moved. Paul Ouellette seconded. The motion passed unanimously.**

### **Executive Director's Report**

**Nick introduced Jen Cornwell who has been employed as WPGRI Projects Manager. Nick has spoken to Steve and Paul regarding his concern for the staffing shortages at WPGRI. He said WPGRI has a staff of ten (10) employees, six (6) state staff and four (4) corporate staff; this represents a 58% staff decrease since 1999, when there were 24 employees. Nick reminded everyone that Karen and Arthur will be retiring at the end of the month and he doesn't know when these positions will be filled, noting that Arthur is the WPGRI's only state fiscal manager and Karen the only monitor. Nick has spoken several times to John O'Hare regarding five critical staffing position shortages, but has not received word on when they will be filled. Paul Harden said he understands the concerns of DLT, but also stated that we need to get the job done. Steve said he was told and promised that these positions would be posted imminently and GRI will get the staff they need.**

**Nick said that WPGRI participated in the Workforce Development Day at the State House this year and felt it was well organized and that there was good exposure.**

**Nick commented that unobligated money is still a problem, but that a record number of training programs are on the ETPL. He said that the Board will be serving a record number of youth this program year, and that plans are on track to get all youth programs offered through one comprehensive RFP by 2010. Nick asked for approval to transfer \$40,000 in WIA Youth Administrative funds and \$50,000 in JDF Youth Administrative funds to their respective program budgets.**

**VOTE: Cynthia Farrell moved to recommend to the Board to transfer \$40,000 WIA administrative funds into program funds and \$50,000 JDF administrative funds into program funds for PY08. Paul Ouellette seconded. The motion passed unanimously.**

**Nick referred to Janice to discuss the 2006 Draft Audit. Janice addressed the financial statement findings. Condition 1 claimed an oversight to properly maintain internal control over transactions and accounting records, and bank reconciliations and reconciliation of billings to account records had not been prepared timely. She noted the organizations response: management is aware of its separation of duties responsibilities and notes that, due to limited staffing, the organization has been unable to provide the appropriate level of financial review. Management will oversee and review with the Finance Manager monthly reconciliations. The Finance Manager will move from quarterly invoicing to monthly invoicing. Condition 2 maintains that the Single Audit Act requires all non-federal entities**

that expend federal funds in amounts equal to or greater than \$500,000 during a single fiscal year to have either a single audit or a program-specific audit for the fiscal year in which the expenditures have occurred. Janice noted the organization's response: Management is aware that the A133 Audit has not been filed for the H1B Training Grant, as our organization's audits were not completed in a timely fashion. Management has worked to bring the organization in compliance by issuing a request for proposals for audit services to conduct two years of financial audits. Janice explained that these findings are related to insufficient staff. Paul Harden suggested a temporary employee be hired. Pat Talin suggested bringing in someone who is already familiar with GRI maybe someone who has retired and would like to return on a temporary basis. Janice said Audits for 2006 – 2007 are three-fourths completed.

## **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

### **Board Development**

Paul Ouellette reported on the Workforce Innovations Conference held in New Orleans in July. He said the conference seemed to focus on business. The main point seemed to be the lack of soft skills and complaints that students are not prepared for the workforce. He added that because pools of money are dwindling, collaboration becomes more important. Paul said there is also a need to develop the aging workforce. Nick stated that the

roundtable which he was a part of was not well prepared for the 150 people that attended.

Paul informed the committee that there are several board vacancies. He has made contact with a few potential candidates. Paul suggested that, as Kim Weiss has assumed responsibility over Veterans programs, it would enable the board to eliminate a business position and lower the number of board members. He said this proposition requires board approval.

### **Strategic Development**

Paul Harden noted that Industry Skill Development Initiative (ISDI) funds have been awarded to four partnerships, two of which will be directed by the WPGRI. Paul Harden said the two proposals to be funded by WPGRI are Tech Collective and My Turn. He will ask that these partners give a presentation to the committee shortly. Paul asked Jen Cornwell to speak about the recent meeting with all the partners and LWIBS. Jen exclaimed that everyone is excited about the industry presence at the One-Stop Centers. Kathy Partington addressed the group in an attempt to make this collaboration as successful as possible. Jen discussed the Video Production part of the initiative which will be funded by training dollars from the LWIBs. She said this process is still in the planning stages but would include something dynamic for both youth and adults, something that can be aired on-line, shown at career fairs, or used by industries on their websites. Paul Harden said the goal is to put dollars on the street to

**train new workers.**

**Steve Kitchin recused himself from the meeting. Vice-Chair Paul Ouellette presided over the meeting.**

### **Youth Council**

**Cynthia Farrell informed the committee that proposals for three Youth Centers have been approved by the Youth Council to serve the Woonsocket, Pawtucket, and South County areas. Cynthia stated that a concern was raised regarding the amount of dollars awarded to Comprehensive Community Action (CCAP). Cynthia said it was agreed by the Youth Council that more monitoring of CCAP is needed. Nick reported CCAP has proven to be a role model, with excellent results, and no problems to this point, but noted that the concerns were valid. Cynthia said she would like to see more competition. Cynthia motioned to accept the Youth Council recommendations for Family Resources Community Action be funded for \$420,000 to serve Woonsocket, Comprehensive Community Action funding request for \$394,857.17 to serve Pawtucket/Northern Rhode Island and South County Community Action to be funded for \$320,614 to serve South County Area.**

**VOTE: Cynthia Farrell motioned to recommend to the Board that they accept the Youth Council recommendations to fund the three youth centers as presented. Pat Talin seconded. The motion passed unanimously.**

**Cynthia Farrell said WIA Stand-Alone Proposals recommended by the Youth Council were for Comprehensive Community Action funding for Out-of-School 16-18 years old in the amount of \$234,200.38, and for Older Youth ages 19-21 in the amount of \$292,385.04.**

**VOTE: Cynthia Farrell motion to recommend to the Board to accept the Youth Council recommendations to fund two WIA proposals as presented. Pat Talin seconded. The motion passed unanimously.**

**Steve Kitchin rejoined the meeting.**

### **Quality Assurance**

**Nick gave this report in the absence of Chair Mike Cassidy. Nick asked everyone to refer to the WIA Performance Report tables in their packets. He maintained the quarterly reports showed a passing grade indicator in all adult and dislocated worker measures. He noted that some Youth program measures were failing, primarily due to deobligated contracts. Nick said that he sent a letter to the WPGRI staff and NetworkRI staff thanking them for their continued hard work.**

### **OLD BUSINESS**

**Nick asked everyone to take a few minutes later to look at the media articles included in the packets.**

## **NEW BUSINESS**

**Steve Kitchin asked everyone to review the Agenda for the Board Meeting on September 9, 2008 and inform him of any changes by September 4th.**

**Being for further business to come before the committee, Steve Kitchin motioned to adjourn at approximately 10:10 A.M. Pat Talin seconded. The motion was passed unanimously. The next meeting is scheduled for October 7, 2008.**

**Respectfully submitted,  
Gail DuPont**