

**Governor's Workforce Board RI
Strategic Investments Committee Meeting
September 1, 2010**

Meeting Minutes

Committee Members present: Joseph MarcAurele, Chair, William McGowan, Brandon Melton, George Nee
Committee Members absent: Martin Trueb
GWB Staff present: Lisa D'Agostino, Nancy Olson, Maureen Mooney, Dan Brown
DLT Staff present: David Tremblay, Sue Chomka, Chris Grieco, Jen Buck
Others Present: Paul Harden, RIEDC; Linda Katz and Judy Jones, Poverty Institute; James Glover, Workforce Solutions of Providence/Cranston; Jill Holloway, Adult Education Professional Development Center

Call to Order

Chair MarcAurele called the meeting to order at 8:05 a.m. He welcomed everyone and provided an overview of the agenda.

Minutes of 6/7/10

Chair MarcAurele asked for a review of the meeting minutes of 6/7/10 for the Governor's Workforce Board (GWB) Strategic Investments Committee. He asked for a motion to approve the meeting minutes as presented.

VOTE: G. Nee moved to approve. B. Melton seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous, the motion passed.

Budget Update

Chair MarcAurele reported the Executive Committee met on August 16th and reviewed the budget and current obligations. GWB staff was asked to continue to de-obligate funds not being utilized and to report back to the Strategic Investments Committee with an update. He asked Nancy Olson to provide the budget update.

N. Olson reviewed the budget categories: Workforce Training grants, Workforce Expansion grants, Leveraged grants, Industry Partnership grants, Industry Skill Development Initiative, Youth Strategies, Business Retention and Adult Education/Literacy. The comprehensive budget update was made available in the board committee packets and is on file.

Adult Education

A discussion followed surrounding changes in staff support at the RI Department of Education (RIDE) for adult education programs. Several committee members voiced concern about the oversight of adult education funding with these changes. Concerns were expressed about a lack of momentum in adult education programming that had been in full force during Johan Uvin's time as State Adult Education Director.

N. Olson added that the funding for adult education for FY11 is \$3.5M from the GWB and \$1.5M for contextualized training funded by DLT for a total investment of \$5M.

The committee heard comments from Linda Katz of the Poverty Institute and Jill Holloway of the Adult Education Professional Development Center regarding their concerns about adult education program support and funding.

Lisa D'Agostino reported that a meeting had been scheduled with RIDE, DLT and GWB to discuss alignment efforts which included Johan Uvin. She indicated this meeting was cancelled due to Race to the Top priorities and emphasized the importance of rescheduling this meeting.

William McGowan noted the lack of information provided to this committee on the funding allocation to providers from the recent RFP, noting the committee specifically asked for details on this. Jill Holloway reported that in July, RIDE issued a press release listing the names of the agencies and amount of funding. It was noted that this information was not widely distributed.

Based on the discussion, George Nee suggested moving up the currently scheduled October 7th Adult Education Committee meeting to September. Committee members agreed and M. Mooney will work on rescheduling this meeting. (An Adult Education meeting is scheduled for September 24, 2010 at 8:00 a.m.)

Other discussion or action items relating to the budget update

Paul Harden will check on George Nee's inquiry if BetaSpring has received any funding from the RI Economic Development Corporation (RIEDC).

Lisa D'Agostino suggested that any funding available for youth services should be awarded in the fall in order to begin the RFP process during the month of January. She indicated that summer youth programs begin their work as early as April.

David Tremblay of the State Workforce Investment Office (SWIO) explained the waiver request being submitted to the U.S. Department of Labor (USDOL) which involves a possible strategy for using rapid response funds for layoff aversion activity. Lisa D'Agostino mentioned the recent reconfiguration of the Business Services Unit, which provides information to the business community on services and programs available for workforce development. She noted that any development with the waiver request would be discussed with employers by the Business Service representatives in the field.

There was a brief discussion regarding the Green Technology Industry Partnership and its progress. N. Olson noted that this partnership is in it's first year and that they have completed their skills gap study, added members to the partnership and worked to raise youth awareness in the Green industry. She stated that they will be presenting an update to the board this fall.

Job Development Fund Reserve

Chair MarcAurele asked Lisa D'Agostino to provide further information on the Job Development Fund (JDF) reserve. L. D'Agostino indicated that the JDF reserve request in the amount of \$150,000 is recommended by GWB staff and the DLT fiscal office in the event anticipated receipts are not received. She noted that the reserve fund would provide flexibility with the budget and that if circumstances change, this funding could become available for other purposes. She explained that in the past, the JDF fund had a large balance so this action was not necessary.

Chair MarcAurele asked if there was a motion to approve the Job Development Fund Reserve as presented.

VOTE: W. McGowan moved to approve. G. Nee seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous, the motion passed.

Funding Requests

Chair MarcAurele noted the funding requests on the agenda and asked if there was a motion to approve three of the funding requests: Comprehensive Workforce Training, Industry Partnerships, and Youth Centers. Based on the discussion and on the will of the committee, Chair MarcAurele indicated that the request to fund Adult Education is tabled.

He noted that future approval of adult education funds is contingent upon the results of conversations with Commissioner Gist and subsequent Adult Education meetings.

Chair MarcAurele asked for a motion to approve the three funding requests mentioned above.

VOTE: W. McGowan moved to approve. G. Nee seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous, the motion passed.

N. Olson asked committee members about their preference for allocating the funding (based on the rating scores of their proposals). She explained that if the maximum amount of funding requested by the companies was provided, 11 companies could be funded. She indicated that if a maximum of \$25,000 was awarded then 16 companies could be funded. It was decided that GWB staff should negotiate the funding allocation with each company on a case by case basis, until the funding allocation is achieved. N. Olson noted that a list of the companies being funded would be available to the board at the September meeting.

Other Business

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

VOTE: G. Nee moved to approve. B. Melton seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous, the motion passed.

The meeting adjourned at 9:18 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Maureen Mooney