

**GOVERNOR'S WORKFORCE BOARD RI  
PLANNING AND EVALUATION COMMITTEE MEETING  
JANUARY 8, 2008**

**MEETING MINUTES**

Members Present: Mario Bueno, Paul MacDonald, William McGowan,  
Members Absent: Mia Caetano Johnson, Adelita Orefice  
GWB Staff Present: J. Michael Koback, Nancy Olson, Maureen Mooney  
Guests: Robert Ricci, John O'Hare, Christine Grieco, Lori Norris, Kathy  
Partington, Kim Weiss, Patricia McCrea, Carlos Ribeiro, Dottie Miller,  
Connie Parks, Sandra Powell  
Location: RI Department of Labor & Training, Conference room 73-1

**CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman McGowan called the meeting to order at 10:15 AM.

**MEETING MINUTES**

A motion was entered to approve the 9-14-07 meeting minutes of the Planning and Evaluation Committee.

**VOTE:** P. MacDonald moved to approve, seconded by Mario Bueno. All approved.

**CHAIR'S REMARKS**

Chairman McGowan noted the full agenda for the meeting. He emphasized that job creation should be our number one priority due to the current issues the state is facing. With that said, he turned the meeting over to Director Koback to update the committee on the strategic plan.

**STRATEGIC PLANNING**

M. Koback reported that there is continued progress with the strategic planning process. He indicated that a planning steering committee has been formed and will meet on the 18<sup>th</sup> of January to further review and refine the current strategic plan compiled by the Corporation for a Skilled Workforce (CSW). This committee of 17-18 individuals will discuss what is realistic and doable within the plan and will determine the next steps in the process. The committee will also discuss who may be the writers and planners from each of the agencies who will then meet to determine their specific strategies and contributions. Sandra Powell has also agreed to assist with this effort.

In addition, CSW is working on establishing focus groups and will be initiating the resource mapping task. Jane Nugent from United Way will be assisting with financing the resource mapping project.

**YOUTH PROGRAM UPDATE**

Lori Norris, DLT's Chief of Youth Services, presented an update for members on the youth workforce system by providing specifics on outcomes for quarters 1 and 2. She asked committee members to consider and identify any additional data they may want to receive as a result of the presentation. A copy of the presentation was made available in the committee meeting packets.

Key points of the presentation included a recap of the deliverables:

- ✧ 2,700 youth are expected to be served in the program year.
- ✧ 42% of youth fall into the at-risk categories (includes youth in the juvenile justice system, foster care, those with disabilities etc.)
- ✧ A breakdown of youth served by: age, race, gender, education and risk factors. She noted that the majority of youth served were from 14-18 years of age. She also noted that the average hourly wage was \$8.03.
- ✧ A discussion about the RFP process and the types of jobs available to youth. The RFP presented a vocational evaluation segment in an attempt to place youth into work areas of interest as well as lining up youth with occupations in demand.

Chair McGowan mentioned he would like to see a continuum of employment opportunities offered on a part-time basis after the summer employment period ends. L. Norris commented that future contracts could require the development of permanent jobs for youth and that this option can be considered as part of the RFP process.

L. Norris acknowledged the recent allocation of funding from the GWB in the amount of \$3,120,000 and noted that \$120,000 of this funding was designated for statewide training plans. She noted that not only was this funding initiative intended to produce a higher number of providers in the youth system but would also serve to increase the leveraging of resources.

M. Koback reported that under the guidelines and policies being reviewed and formalized for the incumbent worker training grants, the need for employers to link activities with youth initiatives was being considered. Since the GWB is supporting workforce training for employers by providing a 50% funding match, he noted the importance of encouraging employers to “give back” by providing internships and other employment opportunities for youth. He noted this is imperative to train the state’s future workforce.

Sandra Powell cited recent studies from Northeastern University on the impact of early job placements on youth, specifically those in school. She indicated that studies show that long term earnings for individuals who start working at a very young age are significantly higher than those who started working between the ages of 19-21. The attachment to the workforce, the value of work, and other related intangible benefits seem to increase when youth begin working at a younger age. R. Ricci, Administrator of Workforce Solutions of Providence/Cranston, noted that older workers and the immigrant population are competing with youth for the same jobs and that it is a very competitive job market. M. Koback reported that a study conducted by Northeastern University’s Center for Labor Market Studies indicated that this past summer showed historic unemployment results for youth. B McGowan reiterated that Rhode Island is addressing this situation through investing in its future by supporting the current youth initiatives.

L. Norris summarized the results of the RFP released in December. She reported that 73 applications were received from 53 separate agencies, which is a 14% increase in applications. She also noted that last year only 8 applications for youth programs were submitted and that the program at that time was funded solely by WIA. She reported that 19 of the applications from the recent RFP were new to the workforce investment boards and that the outreach to providers is achieving results. She concluded by acknowledging the successful collaboration between the

two workforce investment boards in establishing a higher level of capacity building with youth programs.

### **RESTRUCTURING ONE-STOPS SYSTEM**

Sandra Powell provided an overview of the restructuring process for the One Stops System. As part of the initial plan, the committee recommended that the Wakefield and Warren offices close due to low attendance and the lack of availability of public transportation. In June 2007, DLT staff met with the Governor to get his approval on the closings. Notices of the closings were provided to local officials as well as the community and on December 1<sup>st</sup> 2007 these offices closed. Currently the property in Warren is on the market for sale.

Discussions with the town council in Bristol have occurred to consider providing services on an ad hoc basis should space be found within the community. In the Wakefield area, there is interest from the Department of Human Services (DHS) to move into the vacated location. The possibility exists for DLT to rotate staff to that location to provide services. A fulltime presence was established on Aquidneck Island and services have increased in Middletown to five days.

Even with the staff reductions due to layoffs and retirements, the netWORKri one stop career centers still served 35,000 people. S. Powell referred to the upcoming presentation which discusses ways to continue to provide services to RI with businesses and the workforce as staffing gets smaller or levels off.

S. Powell mentioned that the Employer Services unit is currently being reviewed to broaden their services in order to create more opportunities for workers in the One-Stop Career centers. This includes further outreach in the community and providing information on initiatives that GWB is funding.

### **LOCAL WORKFORCE INVESTMENT AREA PROPOSAL (SERVICE STRATEGY MODEL)**

Dottie Miller provided an overview of the Industry Skill Development Initiative concept paper and explained how this initiative would expand upon the work of the GWBRI and its Industry Partnerships to improve the workforce system in RI. She discussed building capacity, creating sustainability and adding efficiency to the adult training system by leveraging state and federal funds to coordinate new and enhance existing workforce development efforts. She also discussed the goal of implementing new technologies throughout Rhode Island's One-Stop Career Center System. The goal is to better connect jobseekers and businesses to workforce training programs and employment resources by virtual access points. She emphasized that implementing the goals of the Industry Skill Development Initiative will assist in aligning meaningful and timely training resources and programs with the short and long-term labor market needs of RI's high-growth and high-wage industries. She explained how this model defines the LWIBs as project fiscal administrators and the Industry Partnerships as program managers. She concluded by noting the importance of the collaboration between the Industry Partnerships and Youth Workforce system.

Kathy Partington provided an overview of the Governor's original plan for the redesign of the one stop system that he identified as the primary deliverer of workforce development programs for the state. She noted the key concepts of the 2007 -2009 state plan which outlines the strategic actions involved in connecting the redesign of the netWORKri service delivery system to industry partnerships. She emphasized the positive results of connecting and aligning with the Industry Partnerships in improving the skill base of RI's workforce.

Dottie Miller discussed the leveraging of dollars across federal and state resources and the funding requested for Year 1, 2 and 3 as indicated in the handout: "Industry Skill Development Initiative". She asked for the committee's support in this initiative.

John O'Hare provided more detail on the funding process and indicated that the funds must be allocated to the Department of Labor & Training's State Workforce Investment Office (SWIO) by contract. He would allocate the funds to the two locals based on the proposed budget. J. O'Hare also noted that the funding request is an "up to amount" and that other funding resources could be accessed to leverage funding. He assured the committee that the SWIO would monitor and provide oversight for these funds and that he would report back to the committee as the initiative progressed. It was also noted that the technology piece of the initiative could begin now if a recommendation were made by this committee and funding approved by the Strategic Investments Committee.

Chair McGowan commended the committee and staff for their hard work and noted the positive outcomes which will benefit the people who need it the most.

A discussion followed on the categories of funding for the year 1, 2, and 3 requests. It was explained that year 1 funds will be used by July for the purpose of upgrading technology. Year 2 and 3 funding would be utilized to serve the RI workforce with critical programs which are a direct outcome of the strategic plan.

A motion was entered to recommend funding up to \$1,000,000 for the development of the Industry Skill Development Initiative.

**VOTE:** P. MacDonald moved to approve, seconded by Mario Bueno. All approved

J. O'Hare reviewed the WIA Policy Issuance entitled: *Workforce Investment Notice: 04-10, Change 1, Serving Military Spouses as Dislocated Workers under the WIA Dislocated Worker Formula Grant*. This issuance will become part of the WIA consent agenda to be voted on during the January 17<sup>th</sup> GWBRI board meeting.

M. Koback updated the committee on the recently released RFP for restructuring Apprenticeships and mentioned that proposals are due on January 25, 2008. He also mentioned the upcoming National Collaborative on Workforce for Youth to be held on January 15, 2008. The key topic is Ten Knowledge, Skills and Abilities Competencies (KSAs) designed to guide youth workforce professionals so that all youth are served effectively. He noted more detail is available on the GWBRI website.

Chairman McGowan entertained a motion to adjourn the meeting.

**VOTE:** P. McDonald moved to approve, seconded by M. Bueno. All approved.

The meeting adjourned at 12:05 pm..

Respectfully submitted,  
Maureen Mooney