

# **WORKFORCE PARTNERSHIP OF GREATER RHODE ISLAND**

## **Strategic Development Committee Meeting Minutes**

**January 18, 2008**

**Members present: Paul Harden, Everett Amaral, Cynthia Farrell, Fred Pendlebury,**

**Bob Cooper, Fred Ricci**

**Members absent: John Iaderosa, Susan O'Donnell, Betty Pleacher, Nancy Roderick, Christine Grieco**

**Staff present: Dottie Miller, Nick Ucci, Janice Lepizzera, Marsha McDowell**

**With a quorum present, Chairman Paul Harden called the meeting to order at 8:35 AM.**

### **Committee Meeting Minutes**

**A motion was entered to approve the minutes of the December 14, 2007 meeting.**

**VOTE: Fred Pendlebury moved to approve, seconded by Cynthia Farrell. All approved.**

### **Committee Membership Update**

**Chair Harden welcomed new members Bob Cooper and Cynthia**

**Farrell to the committee. He stated that the additional new members Nancy Roderick, Christine Grieco and Susan O'Donnell were not able to attend the meeting. He added that he was pleased to have them on board.**

## **Adult Training Program Update**

### **Industry Skill Development Update:**

**Dottie Miller gave an update on the Industry Skill Development Initiative. She stated that the committee had endorsed the concept paper for this initiative at the December 14th meeting. Dottie explained that the initiative had broadened into an Adult Workforce Development System model to include One Stop Center technology and infrastructure upgrades and industry sector presence in the centers. She stated that a meeting was scheduled for January 23rd to present the initiative to the Industry Partnership groups that the Governor's Workforce Board-RI (GWBRI) has identified and funded. She explained that she would also inform attendees at the meeting that the Local Workforce Investment Boards (LWIBs) would be issuing a Request For Proposals (RFP) that would identify the services and activities involved in the Initiative, such as Industry Partnership involvement in the One Stops; their training identification, development, and procurement system; and how they would develop internships and summer jobs for youth as outlined in the Industry "Greenhouses" model.**

**Dottie explained that staff from the WPGRI and Workforce Solutions of Providence/Cranston (WSPC) planned to draft the RFP and present it to the Strategic Development Committee in February for their approval and endorsement. She added that the proposals recommended for funding as a result of the RFP process would be presented to the committee in April for recommendation to the WPGRI and GWBRI Boards in May. She explained that the planned start date for that phase of the Initiative would be July 1 and that she expected a maximum of four Industry Partnership groups could be funded. Chair Paul Harden added that the eight Industry Sectors identified by the GWBRI were health care, construction, hospitality & tourism, information technology, biotechnology, finance & insurance, advanced manufacturing and marine trades.**

#### **ITA Cap:**

**Chair Harden discussed a proposal to raise the Individual Training Account (ITA) cap from \$3,500 to \$4,000. Nick Ucci stated that he had met with the local One-Stop managers to discuss the limited referrals to ITAs and determined that the \$3,500 appeared to be a barrier for most clients, as they were not able to pay the additional cost of \$500 or more for training. Dottie Miller added that WSPC was experiencing the same problem. Chair Paul Harden stated that this issue would lead to more conversations on whether there should be a sliding cap related to the occupational training a client selected, adding that high-wage, high-growth industries could require more intense and costlier training. Dottie Miller urged the members to consider raising**

**the cap to \$4,000 at this time and that in future meetings the committee deliberate about the Board's ITA cap policy for the 2008 program year.**

**A motion was entered to endorse the raising of the ITA cap from \$3,500 to \$4,000.**

**VOTE: Paul Harden moved to approve, seconded by Bob Cooper. All approved.**

**Nick Ucci reported that the WPGRI continued to work with WSPC and the State Workforce Investment Office to add vendors to the list of Eligible Training Providers. He added that the Community College of Rhode Island would be adding close to 50 certificate programs to the list in the near future.**

#### **WIA Rescission Update:**

**Nick Ucci provided a WIA Rescission Update. He explained that at this time, it was estimated that the Federal Government would be taking approximately \$8,500 of Adult funding and \$8,500 of Dislocated Worker PY06 funding. He noted that these numbers could change as more information was received. He added that he expected a \$250 million rescission nationwide for PY07 as well as across the board cuts for the next program year. However, he stated that the exact dollar amounts were not yet known. He explained that the USDOL was expected to issue its guidelines in mid-February, at which point**

**the SWIO would inform WPGRI and WSPC how much the funding would be reduced.**

#### **In-Demand Occupations:**

**Chairman Harden began a discussion on In-Demand Occupations. Nick Ucci explained that the current WIA Plan states that funded training should lead to opportunities in the top 50 In-Demand Occupations for the State of Rhode Island, as identified by the RIDLT-LMI unit. He explained that the list excludes many occupations that provide numerous job opportunities to Rhode Islanders, particularly in “niche” occupations that may be small in number, but play a vital role in the state or local economy and are in-demand locally. Nick Ucci stated that the two LWIBs wished to expand this list so that they could plan more responsive strategies that meet the training needs of the local business community. He explained that this In-Demand Occupations policy would apply a three-tiered criteria structure including LMI’s Top 50 Annual Growth Occupations, occupations with above-average rates of growth, and occupations with known demand that are identified by the LWIBs. Nick Ucci stated that the inclusion of this information will make the WIA Plan more relevant.**

#### **H1B Update:**

**Dottie Miller stated that the USDOL had indicated that the modification for a six-month extension was accepted by their review staff and that she expected to get the official documents shortly. She**

**announced that she had scheduled a meeting with the partners and had asked them to bring their training requests to the table for discussion. She stated that there was approximately \$200,000 that would need to be expended by June 30, 2008.**

**With no other business to be discussed, the meeting adjourned at 10:10 AM.**

**Respectfully submitted,**

**Marsha McDowell**