

RHODE ISLAND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION
MEETING OF THE COMMUNITY COLLEGE OF RHODE ISLAND
21ST CENTURY WORKFORCE COMMISSION

PUBLIC SESSION

FEBRUARY 12, 2010

The seventh and final meeting on the 21st Century Workforce Commission (the Commission) was held on Friday, February 12, 2010 in Public Session in the office of the Rhode Island Economic Development Corporation, 315 Iron Horse Way, Suite 101, Providence, Rhode Island pursuant to notice of the meeting to all Members and public notice of meeting, a copy of which is attached hereto, as required by applicable Rhode Island Law.

The following Members were present and participated throughout the meeting as indicated: Armeather Gibbs, Chair; William McGowan; Diane St. Laurent; Sandra Powell; Leslie Taito and Robert Shea.

Those absent include J. Michael Saul; Rep. Joseph Almeida; Paul Harrington; and Eileen Farley. Sen. Daniel Connors, Rep. Gordon Fox, and Christine Smith were absent but sent their designees Marie Ganim, Beth Cotter, and Kristen Coogan respectively.

Others present were Mr. Julian Alssid and Ms. Maureen Bozell of Workforce Strategy Center. Paul Harden of EDC, & Keith Stokes, Executive Director of the RI Economic Development Corporation was also in attendance. Ms. Gibbs presided over the meeting.

Welcome

Ms. Gibbs called the meeting to order at 9:08 am. She welcomed and thanked everyone for taking the time to attend the final meeting of the CCRI Commission. Ms. Gibbs then introduced Mr. Keith Stokes, newly appointed Executive Director of the RI Economic Development Corporation (RIEDC), and asked him to say a few words regarding his support for what the Commission has been doing.

Mr. Stokes informed the group that workforce training and development is something he highly values and the RIEDC will continue to support the commission's work as they move forward. Mr. Stokes thanked the group for their leadership and expressed his enthusiasm about working together in the future.

Approval of Minutes

The minutes from the December 18, 2009 meeting were approved upon a motion duly made by Mr. William McGowan and seconded by Ms. Leslie Taito.

Brief Commission of Discussions Held to Date

Ms. Gibbs invited Mr. Julian Alssid to provide background information to the Commission regarding the final set of recommendations. Mr. Alssid started by stating the recommendations, revised from previous feedback given by the Commission, now highlight the issues that were expressed regarding funding with the addition of a 4th recommendation. The Workforce Strategy Center(WSC) also met with several senior teams, such as the RIEDC Leadership team, to further refine the recommendations.

The recommendations hone in on what is realistic and feasible now and in the next couple of years, taking into account the state of the economy. Ms. Maureen Bozell added that the WSC had difficulty finding data with respect to remediation. The Rhode Island Department of Education (RIDE) and the Rhode Island Higher Education are currently addressing the topic of where students are coming from and what can be done at the high school level to improve student performance. Mr. McGowan informed the group that there is a lot of conversation going on with RIDE and the Governor's Workforce Board about this topic, and he is comfortable enough and agreed that efforts do not need to be duplicated.

Ms. Bozell explained that the Commission wanted a set of recommendations that were both feasible and bold. This final assemblage presented to the Commission targets both those elements and can be turned over quickly to people who can move things ahead and help the recommendations become operational.

Ms. Leslie Taito reminded the group that much time was spent discussing the need to evaluate why the failure rate at CCRI is so large, and determine the root causes if possible. The Commission should reinforce the suggestion that CCRI continue to look into this. Ms. McGowan agreed with Ms. Taito

Vote on Final Recommendations

The final sets of recommendations were approved upon a motion duly made by Ms. Taito and seconded by Ms. Sandra Powell. All were in favor.

Next Steps, Report Release Schedule

In the final steps to complete the report, the Workforce Strategy Center will take into account the revisions and comments given by the Commission. Ms. Gibbs announced her hopes to have a sizable event in March, with the help of the RIEDC, to promote the report and ensure the appropriate people are in attendance, in order to connect the dots and generate a larger effort.

Mr. Alssid expressed his hope that these recommendations become a useful tool and what a pleasure it was to work with a group who was so engaged. Ms. Gibbs then thanked Ms. Bozell and Mr. Alssid for all their hard work in this effort, along with EDC staff, especially Paul Harden, and all the funding support they received along the way.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 10:06 a.m.

Kristen A. Coogan
Secretary