

**Governor's Workforce Board RI**  
**Rhode Island Employment Security Advisory Council (ESAC)**  
**November 3, 2009**

**Meeting Minutes**

Committee Members present: Roland Benjamin, Paul MacDonald, William McGowan, Sandra Powell, Nancy Roderick

Committee Members absent: The Honorable Arthur J. Corvese, The Honorable Paul W. Fogarty, J. Michael Saul

Others Present: Lisa D'Agostino, Michael Cronan, Phil D'Ambra, Raymond Filippone, Carol Gibson, Robert Langlais, Rosemarie Lemoine, Donna Murray, Lori Norris, Janet Raymond, David Tremblay, Laura Hart, Jason Bliss-Wohlens, Paul Harden, Rachel Flum, Robert Bromley, Maureen Mooney

**Call to Order**

Chair McGowan called the meeting to order at 8:40 a.m. and welcomed everyone to the meeting.

**Minutes of ESAC meeting**

Chair McGowan asked for a review of the meeting minutes of the 10/20/09 ESAC. He asked for a motion to approve the meeting minutes.

**Vote:** P. MacDonald motioned to approve the minutes of the 10/20/09 ESAC meeting as presented. S. Powell seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous; the motion passed.

**Unemployment Insurance (UI) Modernization**

Ray Filippone, Assistant Director of Income Support for the RIDLT, reviewed key information presented at the October 20<sup>th</sup> ESAC meeting regarding UI Modernization Incentive Payments. He indicated that Rhode Island has the alternative base period in its law and is therefore eligible for the first 1/3 of funds of its allotment which is \$7.8 million. He noted that RI has not yet applied for this portion and that the deadline to apply is August 22, 2011.

R. Filippone reiterated that in order to qualify for the 2<sup>nd</sup> distribution of funds that State law must include 2 of 4 provisions:

1. Allow workers seeking part-time work to collect UI benefits if they were working part-time when they became unemployed.
2. Provide for a minimum dependents' allowance of \$15 per dependent.
3. Allow individuals who leave work for compelling family reasons to collect UI benefits.
4. Provide individuals in approved training with up to 26 weeks of additional UI benefits.

R. Filippone reported that the deadline to apply for the 2/3 allocation totaling \$15.6 million is August 22, 2011. He indicated that legislation needs to be passed in 2011 or earlier.

There was a general discussion and further information provided about each of the criteria including estimated cost, legislative action introduced and resulting implications if enacted. R. Filippone commented that the committee is charged with selecting a minimum of 2 of the 4 criteria. Chair McGowan asked if there was any consensus on the criteria and if committee members felt comfortable in making a recommendation. After further questions and discussion, it was suggested that committee members take additional time to consider the criteria presented. Chair McGowan indicated he would ask for a recommendation at the November 24<sup>th</sup> ESAC meeting.

Copies of legislation introduced in the general assembly in 2009 were handed out to committee members and included **2009 –H 5383** and **2009 – S 0807** which relate to labor and labor relations – Employment Security Benefits. P. MacDonald inquired if there was a companion bill in the Senate. It was determined there was not. J. Raymond suggested inviting members of the congressional delegation to a future meeting to inform them of the decision process of the committee. Director Powell and Michael Cronan, from the Governor’s office, indicated outreach efforts were made to Senator Fogarty, Representative Corvese and others in the legislature to keep them informed and to ask for their support for the recommendations of the committee.

### **Recap of Title XII Loans and Interest Payments**

Robert Langlais, Assistant Director of Labor Market Information for the RI Department of Labor & Training (RIDLT), provided an overview of Federal UI Title XII loans and interest assessment. He reported that the first interest payment for RI will be due on September 30, 2011 and that the interest due is estimated at \$9-\$10 million. He outlined requirements relating to interest payments, provided information on repayment options which included an example of an interest charge assessment. R. Langlais noted that the ESAC is charged with making decisions on interest payments and that legislation needs to be introduced in the 2010 General Assembly session to support committee decisions. The hand-out and PowerPoint presentation are available in the meeting binder.

### **Other Business**

There was a discussion regarding the current meeting time of the committee, suggesting that it may be difficult for the council members from the legislature to attend due to their work commitments. It was noted by other council members that it was preferable to their schedules to meet first thing in the morning or after 3:00 p.m. The Honorable Arthur J. Corvese and Paul W. Fogarty will be contacted about the meeting schedule.

Chair McGowan mentioned that Roland Benjamin, ESAC committee member, would be providing a 20 minute presentation at the next meeting on November 24, 2009. Chair McGowan indicated that agenda items will include further discussion and a recommendation regarding UI Modernization criteria. It was noted that the UI Modernization Dependent Allowance (DA) cap provision should also be considered.

Director Powell mentioned that discussion of a specific timeline for committee actions should be considered and discussed at the next meeting, noting that the rebalance of the UI system is crucial given the difficult economic times.

**Adjournment**

Chair McGowan asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting.

**VOTE:** S. Powell moved to approve. N. Roderick seconded the motion.  
The vote was unanimous, the motion passed.

The meeting adjourned at 10:00 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Maureen Mooney