

**GOVERNOR'S WORKFORCE BOARD RI
EMPLOYER COMMITTEE MEETING
MARCH 8, 2013**

MINUTES

Committee Members Present: Martin Trueb, Chair, Mike Grey, Brandon Melton, Sharon Moylan, Robert Nangle

Committee Members Not Present: Connie Howes, Juana Horton, Cathy Streker

GWB Staff Present: Rick Brooks, Maureen Mooney

DLT Staff Present: Connie Parks, Sue Chomka

Location: RI DLT, Conference room 73-2

Call to Order

Chair Trueb called the meeting to order at 8:07 a.m. and welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Meeting Minutes 1-24-13

Chair Trueb asked for a review of the minutes of the 1-24-13 meeting. He asked if there was a motion to approve the meeting minutes.

Vote: B. Melton motioned to approve the minutes of the 1-24-13 meeting. R. Nangle seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous; the motion passed.

Employer Advisory Group Meeting

Chair Trueb commented on the February 14th Employer Advisory Group meeting. He noted the excellent attendance stating that all but one of the 22 employers was in attendance. He indicated that the employer who could not attend, had unexpected travel plans to Washington, D.C. Chair Trueb asked committee members to review the current Employer Advisory Group (EAG) membership listing.

S. Moylan mentioned she has been in contact with Adriana Dawson of the Small Business Development Center (SBDC). She asked about continued outreach to the SBDC noting it might be helpful in identifying additional recommendations for private sector employers. Chair Trueb suggested a membership of 30 as the maximum for the EAG. B. Melton suggested that additional members should include more of a minority representation. Chair Trueb asked about the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce and it was suggested that Juana Horton be contacted for additional referrals.

Rick Brooks mentioned a listing of employers that the GWB is utilizing for a mailing about the Express Grants. He indicated this list contains contact information for 14,000 small businesses (Small business being defined as between 3-50 employees). He suggested this employer listing could possibly be used as a resource for the Employer Committee.

Chair Trueb asked for feedback on the key workforce development issues derived from both the December employer organizational meetings and the February Employer Advisory Group meeting. A discussion followed on the benefits and limitations of employer-based internship

programs which were widely discussed at the EAG meeting. M. Grey talked about internship programs affiliated with the school systems and the requirements of the school districts. R. Nangle spoke about the statutory issues regarding age limitations for minors in the manufacturing industry (RI labor laws prohibit minors under the age of 18 from working in the manufacturing industry). He noted that this restriction holds manufacturing employers back from utilizing interns. R. Nangle stated that the RI Manufacturer's Association (RIMA) is an advocate for change about the statutory requirements and legislative issues surround this. He also commented about career and technical education at the secondary level in RI and the hindrance of having multiple school sites. He suggested that a more optimal solution is to integrate these schools into one major career and technical center. This would provide a better opportunity for both employers and students to share resources and services and to achieve economies of scale.

Chair Trueb stated that in order to build the credibility of the Employer Committee, it should demonstrate some of its early success. He asked committee members to determine 3 key issues derived from the EAG meeting. A discussion followed and it was suggested that Commissioner Gist be invited to attend the EAG meeting in June. This would provide an opportunity for the Commissioner to speak about ways the business community and schools can work together more effectively. It would also provide an opportunity to receive feedback from the employers and for them to learn about RI's current education plans and strategies.

The 3 key issues were identified as:

1. Skills Gap
2. Workforce readiness credential
3. Career and technical training

Rick Brooks spoke about the importance of shared responsibility of the public and private sectors in workforce development efforts. Chair Trueb spoke about the importance of partnerships - in particular engaging small business. R. Nangle emphasized the importance of business and labor working together with workforce development initiatives. He mentioned this is a key component of the work of RIMA with its advocacy approach for the manufacturing industry and supporting the consolidation of resources.

M. Trueb asked that the Employer Committee meeting minutes be drafted and distributed to the committee for comments. Once approved, he asked that the minutes and the notes from the February 14th EAG meeting be sent both to the Employer Advisory Group and to the board. He asked that Commissioner Gist be invited to the June 13th EAG meeting and stated that he and Rick Brooks would meet with her prior to the meeting.

Adjournment

With no further business, Chair Trueb asked for a motion to adjourn.

VOTE: B. Melton moved to approve, seconded by M. Grey. All approved.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:57 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Maureen Mooney