

ST. LAWRENCE COUNTY

WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD

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**ST. LAWRENCE COUNTY
WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD
MINUTES OF MARCH 14, 2007 MEETING**

CALL TO ORDER: Chairman Paul Catanzarite called the meeting to order at 6:36 PM at the GranView Restaurant, Ogdensburg.

Present: Jack Backus, Doug Beachard, Sue Caswell, Paul Catanzarite, Tracy Charleson, Rich Daddario, Bruce Green, Don Hooper, Linda Manchester, Lisa McCarty, Ron McDougall, Steve Novacich, Richard Orton, Walt Paul, Dale Rice

Absent: Don Brining, Joe Kennedy, Mike Noble, Daphne Pickert, Ryan Schermerhorn, Mark Webster

Others Present: Raymond H. Fountain, Jim Connor, Natalie Haggart, Steve House, Jai Fiacco, and Patrick Kelly of the Office of Economic Development; Jerry Manor of SeaComm Federal Credit Union, and Derry Loucks of WPDM. Also Vernon Burns, Tony Zappia.

CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT:

➤ Resolution "Recognizing SeaComm Federal Credit Union and WPDM for their Support of the Local Workforce" Moved by Mr. McDougall, second by Mr. Orton. Introduction of Mr. Manor and Mr. Loucks by Jai Fiacco. Chairman Catanzarite notes Ms. Fiacco's contribution to this partnership. Resolution passed unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENT: Chairman Catanzarite identified Tony Zappia and Vernon Burns. Mr. Zappia asked that the June 14, 2006 minutes be corrected, to which the Chairman replied he did not feel this was possible as the minutes had already been accepted. Mr. Zappia wishes these (March 14, 2007) minutes reflect that his attendance at the June 14th meeting and at this evening's meeting is not as a Department of Labor representative/employee, but as a private citizen. He noted that Jim Lyon was also misrepresented on those minutes as being from the DOL but he is from Local 420. Mr. Zappia wants the Board to understand the importance the Massena and Ogdensburg DOL Offices are to the area. He noted this is a very large county and there will be a number of people looking for work who cannot make it to Canton, especially in winter, with no four-lane highway and no mass transportation system. People in Massena and Ogdensburg will have a long drive. Mr. Zappia cited the State DOL website where there are a number of one stop (full service) and affiliate sites (much smaller than St. Lawrence County) throughout the State. There are numerous counties that have 2 or 3 full service affiliate sites; counties which are much smaller than St Lawrence County. Mr. Zappia asked the WIB to keep this in mind and added that maybe, with some hard work, this can be done here.

MINUTES: Moved by Mr. Paul and seconded by Ms Caswell, the minutes of the December 13, 2006 meeting were approved unanimously.

CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT (continued)

➤ Membership: Chairman Catanzarite reports that Mr. Brining is retiring and Mr. Weaver has resigned. He also introduces Lisa McCarty from Kelly Services in Potsdam. He notes that we will need to recruit new Business Sector members.

- **NAWB:** The Chairman reports that he, Steve House, Natalie Haggart and Ray Fountain attended the 2007 National Association of Workforce Boards Forum in Washington DC and was genuinely impressed by what he saw. It was extremely well run. He encouraged WIB members to attend the Forum next year (February 23, through 26, 2008) Other WIBs face the same issues as ours – funding cuts, etc. There is no indication that funding levels are going to increase.
- Next WIB meeting has been moved to June 20th.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

- Executive Committee: Met January 26 and March 9. Discussion included earnings change performance measure Board self-assessment, and functional alignment.
- Youth Committee: Mr. Green reported on Youth Committee. The Youth Council met at the Youth Academy and met again on Thursday, March 1. The Summer Youth budget issue was tabled until the April 19th meeting.
- Marketing and Board Development: Doug Beachard reported that the Committee met on February 16. He reviewed the items purchased with the marketing funds. He noted that a PowerPoint presentation is available for staff and board member presentation, and described the various organizations to which the WIB has made/ will be making a presentation. Mr. Beachard supposes that the presentations program will “take off” after more people give them. Board members need to get out and give presentations. He pointed out the target audiences. Mr. Hooper noted that the Lions’ Club presentation was very well received.
- Ad Hoc – One-Stop: Chairman Catanzarite noted the Committee Chair Noble was unable to attend the meeting. Mr. House noted they did not meet due to Mr. Noble’s illness. Ms. Manchester noted that a previous meeting addressed the MOU. Mr. House noted they have yet to reschedule a meeting.

CONSENT AGENDA: None

OLD BUSINESS: None

NEW BUSINESS:

- Resolution “Modifying WIA Budget (SYETO TANF) ” Moved by Mr. Beachard, seconded by Mr. Daddario. Mr. Fountain noted that this is a “draft” budget. Some of the items addressed included the inclusion/exclusion of auxiliary-type activities and the length of the program. He notes that the Youth Council has to address these and other issues, and the budget may possibly be amended in the next couple of months. Mr. Novacich notes he reviewed figures with Pam Dority and it appears that the budget reflects approximately \$168G in staff wages and fringe for a 6-week youth program. He notes his concern that a large part of this budget appears to be in wages and administrative costs. Mr. Fountain noted that Federal Standards establish that 10% to 15% of the allocation can be used toward administration (wages, overhead, rent, building). Mr. Novacich provided a Youth Council budget, provided to him by the Youth Council. Mr. Connor explained that the budget Mr. Novacich had was tabled by the Youth Council. Mr. Hooper was advised this represented 135 youth. Mr. Fountain noted that the staffing levels were proportionate with those of previous years. He adds that with WIA funds

declining, staff levels have declined through attrition or layoff of lower-seniority staff. This leaves the higher paid staff. The Chairman is advised that the budget before them is TANF, not WIA. Mr. Novacich indicates that possibly less money could go toward Admin and more could go toward participant wages. Mr. Catanzarite notes they are not WIA funds and this approval does not prevent a modification of this resolution. Mr. Novacich notes that the Executive Director needs to have a handle on this. The WIA program is in place until June 30. If the program is not being planned right now, there is no program. WIA should be a broad discussion. Mr. Novacich states they are allocating these funds and involved in this discussion. In the TANF program, other than the Admin costs, the wages may be a 5, 6 or 7-week program. Work has been done on this program since January (worksite agreements, applications, etc.) 600 to 700 youth will be interviewed. Mr. Daddario asks Mr. Novacich if he has any proposed amendments to this resolution that he'd like the Board to consider for review. Mr. Novacich states he is not prepared to amend, but would like to see options beyond what this budget allows. Mr. Catanzarite notes staff wages don't increase as much as participant wages. No one has made a recommendation from the Youth Committee. It should be discussed. Mr. McDougall asks if the admin is top heavy. Mr. Fountain notes they take the 10 or 15%. Mr. Daddario asks if they can move money. Mr. Novacich asks about time frames. Will the budget decision be a fait accompli? Will it be accelerating as the date approaches? Mr. Fountain noted he wished the numbers were available so we could predict this better. Staff are discussing draft numbers internally and aren't prepared to provide solid numbers. This has to go in front of the County and the County could not act upon it until May. We need to move this forward. Mr. Green asks if the WIB meeting could be moved to May. Mr. Orton motioned to end debate, seconded by Mr. McDougall, with unanimous vote. The resolution is approved with 14 yes votes and with Mr. Novacich voting against the resolution.

➤ Question of moving up the date of the next WIB meeting: Mr. Green asked to move the June meeting to May. Mr. Daddario notes he has a problem with asking to review something he doesn't have in hand. If this budget can be accomplished at the May meeting, he's in favor of moving the meeting. Chairman Catanzarite notes it's important that the discussion takes place before the final budget is taken to the legislators. Mr. Hooper notes that if this is done, how much lead time is needed to get staff in place. Mr. Fountain notes this budget doesn't have a lot of temporary staff in it. Most of the temporary staff would not be within the OED office. He is not looking to hire a lot of temporary staff. Ms. Caswell asks Mr. Connor how much time he needs. Mr. Connor notes that eligibility typically starts in April. Mr. Connor noted that in years past, we've received TANF funds but have not known the WIA figures until June. It's unusual that we have received the TANF funds amount so early. Mr. Connor noted that he felt like he was between a rock and a hard place and that he didn't want to say too much so as to get himself into trouble. Mr. Paul asked when the funds would be expended. Mr. Fountain replies usually April 1. Mr. Paul notes that this is a timing problem and pieces need to come together in a timely manner. Chairman Catanzarite noted he could call a meeting to discuss this budget when the allocations are available, and added that it was obvious that the Youth Council itself does not agree on a budget at this time.

STAFF REPORT: Mr. Fountain reports on the following:

➤ Fiscal Position: The advertisement for the CFO/Fiscal Manager position has begun.

- Functional Alignment Monitoring Report: Implementation has been slow and there has been much to consider. Todd Doherty will monitor Functional Alignment.
- WIA Performance: The 2nd Quarter performance report shows that the previously-failed measure is now at 200%, but the Dislocated Worker earnings gain is at 84%. Performance will need to be monitored. Functional alignment has increased enrollment into the system. These are numbers of all the partner agencies in addition to WIA numbers.
- WIB Self-Assessment: Chairman Catarnzarite received 11 responses to date. Distributed the WIB Benchmarking for Success.
- OED Benchmarks: The benchmarking system was explained and benchmarking reports distributed at this meeting.
- Farmland Board Presentation: Bill Van Loo is asking that attendees complete and return the feedback questionnaire on the presentation he made at the last meeting in December.
- Newton Falls Project The project continues to move along. The facility has been purchased. IDA was working on the permit review and a notice of approval was received on Monday. Met today with the principles referral of employees and status of the bond project. The State has to approve issuing the \$10m bonds.
- Handout: Page 8 Draft estimates of WIA funding provided by the State. No final figures available. Staff costs have increased due to contractual obligations. Still in the early stages of hashing through numbers. The TANF budget comes through the Department of Social Services. Mr. Backus says it appears we are locked into things we cannot control. Mr. Fountain notes that staff wages and fringe are what they are. Mr. Paul notes all the money to provide training, support, one stop operations services are funded federally or by state dollars. At the present time the County contributes nothing to the workforce training system. In response to his question, Mr. Daddario was advised that the County could indeed contribute to the workforce training system if they so wished.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: None

ADJOURNMENT: Mr. Daddario motioned to adjourn; seconded by Mr. Orton the meeting at 7:54PM.

Ron McDougall, Secretary