

**WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD
MINUTES OF JULY 27, 2005 MEETING**

Chairman Donald Hooper called a meeting of the Workforce Investment Board to order at 6:15 PM, Wednesday, July 27, 2005 at the Downtown Steak & Seafood Company, Massena.

Members Present: Jack Backus, Doug Beachard, Donald Brining, Sue Caswell, Rich Daddario, Bruce Green, Donald Hooper, Ron McDougall, Mike Noble, Walt Paul, Steve Novacich

Members Absent: Lynn Blevins, Paul Catanzarite Ken Garwood, Joseph Kennedy, Linda Manchester, Joanne Novak, Ryan Schermerhorn, John Tubbs, Tim Weaver

Others Present: Raymond H. Fountain, Jr., Natalie Haggart, and Steve House of the Office of Economic Development; Todd Doherty of the NYSDOL; Richard Merchant and Anita Merrill of NAHEC; Richard Orton of USW Local 450-A; and Dave Forsythe, private businessperson and guest of Mr. Green.

MINUTES: Moved by Mr. Noble and seconded by Mr. Paul, the minutes of the May 18, 2005 meeting were approved unanimously.

CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT: Chairman Hooper welcomed members, staff and introduced guests (Mr. Orton, Mr. Forsythe, Mr. Merchant, and Ms Merrill) of the meeting. Chairman Hooper reported that the Secretary position is vacant. He cited the bylaws, which indicated nominations could be taken from the floor. Mr. McDougall nominated Mr. Daddario for Secretary, seconded by Mr. Beachard. By unanimous vote, Mr. Daddario was elected WIB Secretary, the term of which expires September 2006. Chairman Hooper also referred the members to the attendance information at the WIB Education Training sessions, noting that the training tapes are still available and members would find them beneficial.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Marketing & Quality Assurance Committee: No report.

Youth Committee: Mr. Green introduced David Forsythe, noting Mr. Forsythe has expressed interest in serving on the WIB. Mr. Green then reported on the Youth Council officer elections: Pam Dority (Chair); Bruce Green (ViceChair). Mr. Green also reported that Mr. Faucher had resigned from the Council.

Services Committee: No report.

Executive Committee: Chairman Hooper reported that the Executive Committee met twice since the May 18th meeting, mainly to discuss and propose amendments to the WIB bylaws.

CONSENT AGENDA: None

OLD BUSINESS:

Resolution "Modifying WIA Budget:" Moved by Mr. Beachard and seconded by Mr. Brining. Mr. House reported that the WIB recently applied for and received a \$75,000 grant from the

NYSDOL for a “Disability Program Navigator” program whereby a staff person (E&T Counselor) would assist an individual with disabilities through the WIA system, advising the individual of services available and acting as a “resident expert”. Mr. House also noted this position retains one of the 3 E&T Counselor positions slated for layoff. This resolution incorporates the budget adjustments necessary to implement this program. There was an ensuing discussion about the employee benefit rate. Ms. Caswell noted they appeared a bit high. Mr. Daddario noted his staff employee benefit rate was approximately 37%. Mr. House noted that the grant award was for 1.5 positions, and wage and benefits were based on that, even though only one position was being utilized at this time. Mr. Brining explained the County’s benefits plan, and noted the gross cost of health insurance this year is \$12.3 Million. Mr. Fountain went on to explain the various retirement packages or “tiers.” When asked if this grant funding was for one year, Mr. Fountain noted it was. Mr. Novacich added that the Clinton/Hamilton/Essex/Franklin Counties WIB received funding already for a second year, and expects that St. Lawrence County will have the same opportunity. There being no further questions or comments, the resolution passed unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS:

Presentation of Amended Bylaws: Chairman Hooper noted that presently the WIB Bylaws call for four (4) standing committees. However, the Executive Committee members, using the information obtained from its Strategic Plan, from the State of the Workforce Report, and from local business input received at the Workforce Summit, have met and discussed how to structure its committees to best serve St. Lawrence County job-seekers and businesses. The proposed bylaws call for 3 Standing Committees (Executive, Youth and Marketing & Board Development) and for a task force/ad-hoc committee structure which the Chairman could create to address specific issues. Other items slated for amendment included: minor housekeeping items (standardization of “Chairperson” throughout the bylaws and allowing staff the option of utilizing email or regular 1st class mail to forward meeting information to members.) Mr. Fountain reported on his recent WIB Director meeting, whereby he noted that there appears to be a movement by local WIBs to cut back on the number of regular meetings. He noted that the movement appears to be from 12 (or 8 or 6) meetings each year to four (4) meetings each year. St. Lawrence County is in the minority at 6 meetings per year. He added that local WIBs appear to have the same issues with their committees (and their committee members’ time constraints), and these WIBs found a workable plan with scheduling fewer meetings and increasing committee input. Mr. Daddario noted that this WIB could change its annual meeting number to 4, but could still have six if needed. Mr. Green questioned if the WIB would have enough business for 6 meetings. Mr. Fountain stated that very little of the WIB’s business is time-sensitive and the Chair could call a special meeting at any time. Mr. Fountain noted that the Executive Committee can approve resolutions in the interim, with action being taken by the full board at their next meeting. Proposed amendments to the bylaws can be considered up until the Board votes on the amendments. Mr. Fountain recommended amending the bylaws for 4 meetings each year. Chairman Hooper added that having four (4) meetings allows the thrust of the work to be done by task force.

Presentation: North County Workforce Development Center: Chairman Hooper introduced Richard Merchant, Executive Director of the Northern Area Health Education Center (NAHEC) and his assistant, Anita Merrill. Mr. Merchant presented information via PowerPoint on the

issues surrounding the healthcare industry in this area. He provided information on the various programs in place to assist youth interested in health care careers.

STAFF REPORT: Mr. House provided background information on two customers who had contacted their E&T Counselors with follow up information and thanking them for their assistance. Mr. Fountain reported that Ainsworth Lumber Co continues its due diligence process on the Chatham Forest Products project. Mr. Fountain also noted that the NYS Supreme Court recently found in favor of Chatham. The finding also limited future lawsuits only to those approved by a Supreme Court Justice. Mr. Fountain reported that the St. Lawrence County Industrial Development Agency recently spoke out against the dismantling of the Newton Falls Rail, citing the rail's importance as an economic development tool. Mr. Fountain also noted that there are 2 studies (Engineering and Financial Projection/Marketing) underway regarding Newton Falls Paper. The engineering study will review the equipment and schematics of the plant. The financial/marketing study will address issues on the "sellability" of the plant.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: None

ADJOURNMENT: There being no further business and on motion of Mr. Daddario, the meeting adjourned at 7:30 PM.

/s/
Rich Daddario, Secretary