

**ST. LAWRENCE COUNTY WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD  
MINUTES OF JUNE 9, 2010 MEETING**

**CALL TO ORDER:** Chairman Sue Caswell called to order the regular meeting of the St. Lawrence County Workforce Investment Board at 8:05 AM at the Best Western University Inn, Canton.

Members Present: Jack Backus, Sue Caswell, Kathy Daniels, Lisa McCarty, Bruce Green, Don Hooper, Ron McDougall, Richard Orton, Daphne Pickert, Dale Rice, Mark Webster, Lisa McKeel, Dallas Sutton

Others Present: Ray Fountain, Kim Gilbert, Steve House, Natalie Sweatland, Dee Burlingame, Todd Doherty, Jim Connor, Chris Rediehs, Michael Crowe, Esq., Suzan Denny

**CHAIRMAN'S COMMENTS:** The Chairman welcomed the membership and everyone introduced themselves. She welcomed Mr. Crowe and new member, Dallas Sutton to the meeting.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** None

**MINUTES:** Webster/Orton move to accept the March 31, 2010 meeting minutes. Approved unanimously.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

Executive: The WIB Executive Committee met on May 12<sup>th</sup> and they discussed the WIA funding issues and the administrative options that they are dealing with right now for the WIB and the One-Stop. The Department of Social Services Commissioner, Chris Rediehs attended the meeting to provide his input on these issues. The Executive Committee authorized three resolutions which will be addressed under the consent agenda.

Youth: Youth Council Chair Dee Burlingame updated the Youth Council on WIA Youth Programs as follows  
Welding Classes: 15 youth received BOCES Certificates of Completion on April 16, 2010; 13 received welding certifications, 2 did not; 5 were employed; 1 transferred to the CNA program; 2 are in GED; 6 are looking for employment; and 1 moved to Burke NY looking for employment. Youth ITA's: 2 Healthcare Clerical at BOCES, 1 quit and is working at Price Chopper; 1 continues to do well; Class ends 6/14/10; Asbestos removal training, 2 applied for funding for asbestos removal training, 1 not eligible, 1 did not follow through with eligibility; CNA: No current classes or updates, but out of the last class 8 enrolled, 2 quit, 4 completed the class of which 2 are working in the field, 2 are being retested ; NYSARC: 4 youth completed and hired, 2 as Van Attendants, 2 as Janitorial, 1 Direct Care Aide on medical hold, 1 new started May 7<sup>th</sup> , recruitment continues; Catholic Charities: 5 currently active; Literacy Volunteers: 2 presently active, 1 referral pending; College Internship Program: received 6 applications to date. There are some changes to the program from what we did last year. Last year it was funded by Stimulus monies and, therefore, the youth didn't have to meet common measures; this year youth will need to meet common measures so a certificate will have to be received after one more year of college, so the pool has really been reduced. We are doing recruiting through public service announcements.

We're hopeful that the jobs and expansion bill that is currently in the Senate will pass and we will get some funding. If the NYS budget passes, we may get TANF funding. Given that funds are so low, the internship program is the only thing that will be running this summer.

The Youth Council had elections at its last meeting on June 3<sup>rd</sup>. Pam Dority is the new Chairman and Dee Burlingame will be the new Vice-Chair of the Youth Council. Ms. Caswell commended Ms. Burlingame on the "terrific job" she did during her tenure as Chairman of the Youth Council.

Marketing and Board Development: Mr. Rice reported that there are a couple of ads running right now. One is the Elevate America (Microsoft's e-learning courses) ad running in *North Country This Week* and on *North Country Now* and has been running since April and will end this month. Another is the One-Stop ad which will end this month as well. Mr. Rice commented that the committee is in need of new members from the business sector. There will be a meeting in the near future.

One-Stop: Mr. House reported that at the last partner meeting the partners voiced concern about the role the One-Stop Committee played as far as the partnership; they thought there was too much influence from the WIB. The concerns have been resolved.

## CONSENT AGENDA:

Resolution: "Reaffirming a Partnership with SUNY Canton for the US ETA's 'We Believe in You' Grant Application and Authorizing its Chairman to Execute any and all Necessary Documents": Mr. House reported that this \$3,000,000 grant, that was submitted in May, was a joint partnership effort between SUNY Canton and the One-Stop System. The grant would be \$700,000 for three years and would target individuals who needed assistance in training for healthcare positions. The awards will be made at the end of June. Orton/Pickert move. Passes with 12 "aye" votes and 1 abstention from Mr. Rice.

Resolution: "Requesting Funding from St. Lawrence County": Mr. Fountain explained that there have been discussions for some time on how we should move forward with the funding levels that we have now. At the last WIB Executive Committee meeting, one topic that was discussed was if we could ask the County for Tribal Compact funds; a resolution was forwarded to the County. Mr. House, Mr. Rediehs and Mr. Fountain met yesterday and discussed, among other things, putting together a plan with a specific amount of funds needed, how those funds would be expended and what the target groups would be; this plan will be submitted to the County by Monday. The amount received last year for the County's share of the Tribal Compact funds was about \$1.2-\$1.3 million and this year the percentage goes up, so the amount received this year should be fairly consistent with last year since the casino continues to do well. Hooper/Backus move. Passes unanimously.

Resolution: "Recommendations to the Board of Legislators": The WIB Executive Committee's discussion centered on what we can do to extend the resources of the Workforce Investment Act programs. The Committee asked Mr. Rediehs to come and tell them about Social Services. They had submitted a plan to the County several months ago knowing that dollars available for workforce programs were shrinking that we needed to partner with a department that has more staffing resources. We need to make changes and Mr. Rediehs felt that DSS could help with that aspect.

Mr. Fountain passed the floor over to Mr. Rediehs who explained how we could work together. He went on to say that one of the opportunities coming up with these changes could be the separation to be consistent with federal regulations to have a WIB Executive Director who is not an employee of the County. There are other WIA functions that we would want to continue and the Department of Social Services seems to be the only viable option that has been identified and they would be happy to work together with us. DSS has a great deal to do with employment as well as with people who are receiving temporary assistance. He's hopeful that we can coordinate our efforts and these clients could benefit from this partnership. Mr. Rediehs encourages the WIB to ask the County for as much funding as they need. He went on to say that he was delighted to see so much participation from private business in the WIB.

Mr. Fountain went on to say that this part of the discussion is the One-Stop System. The next part of the discussion is the actual staffing to the WIB that is consistent with the federal legislation. The part of the legislation that we call "firewall" says the WIB cannot run core, intensive or training services. DSS will run core, intensive and training. The MOU that DSS has with the County will have to be revised establishing DSS as the fiscal agent, not OED. The County is drawing up resolutions based on the resolution from the WIB Executive Committee. Ms. Pickert asked if there were other models like this out there. Mr. Fountain explained that Oswego County runs their program like this and it has worked. We need to evolve as the funding wanes and the direction in which the federal government is moving and colleges are going to be a bigger part of the administration of workforce programs in the future.

Mr. Orton asked if jobs would be retained. Mr. Fountain explained that due to diminishing recourses, staff is already being reduced. In fact, the two WIA staff stationed at Massena are being moved back to take the place of two staff who are losing their jobs due to the ending of the discretionary grant funding.

The next step will be to talk about WIB staff. Moved by McDougall/Pickert. Passes unanimously.

**OLD BUSINESS:** None

**NEW BUSINESS:**

Resolution: "Budget Modification for the SYETO for Students with Disabilities for the 2010 Program": Ms. Burlingame reported that in the event that there is a summer program, BOCES requested a budget change since their costs have increased; the price per student has risen to \$1,433 per student. Moved by Green/Webster. Passes with 12 "aye" votes and 1 abstention from Ms. McKeel.

Resolution: "Appointing Youth Council Member": At the May 6, 2010 meeting the Youth Council approved Yolanda Merritt's appointment to the Youth Council. She works for Job Corps. Moved by Orton/McDougall. Passes unanimously.

Resolution: "PY10 Budget": Ms. Gilbert presented two budgets. One included approximately \$350,000 for a summer youth program at \$1,966,033 and the other without at \$1,616,033. Both budgets include approximately a 38%-39% training ratio for the funding. The approximately \$350,000 would come from federal money, should the federal government pass the pending Job Stimulus Bill. Mr. Fountain recommended that the WIB pass the \$1,616,033 budget knowing that if we do get the funding for summer program, the WIB Executive Committee will be asked to meet quickly to authorize the \$1,966,033 budget. The approved budget will be presented at the next BOL Finance Committee. We have a fund of carryover money called Employability Readiness and some staff are being transferred to be paid out of that fund. The DPN position is funded until August 31<sup>st</sup>. The current approved staffing is 22 people under WIA System. Right now 8 of those positions are vacant. As of October 1<sup>st</sup>, there may be more layoffs if no outside funding comes in.

Mr. Fountain explained how the formula money was figured out at the State level. He hopes that as the unemployment rate goes down and the economy improves, the formula money will increase. Moved by McDougall/Orton the \$1,616,033 budget passes unanimously.

NAWB Dues: Ms. Gilbert reported that the NAWB dues have increased to \$1,000. Mr. Fountain explained the advantages to being a member. Moved by McDougall/Pickert to renew the WIB's membership. Passes unanimously.

Alcoa Discretionary Funds Denial: Ms. Gilbert reported that on April 21<sup>st</sup> she had submitted to the State a request for discretionary dislocated worker funds for provision of services to the dislocated workers at the Alcoa plants. We asked for one counselor position, part of a senior clerk for OSOS data entry, and 10% of a senior coordinator which we consider to be the minimum staffing needed to serve these workers. It was a little over \$100,000 for staffing and a little over \$100,000 for additional training services. She received an e-mail on May 28<sup>th</sup> stating it was not approved; they had further questions. She went on to read part of the letter "please note: Due to limited State level funding DOL will no longer fund personnel salaries or fringe benefits or any operational costs related to discretionary, dislocated worker grants. This new directive will be reflected in a revised Technical Advisory yet to be issued; however, the policy is in effect as of now." Without the staffing there is not much sense in going forward with this.

Mr. Fountain has talked with our State association about a couple of issues. The first being we are being denied using an unpublished directive; we don't even know what it says. The second thing is about the staff and costs. In the urban areas where they have huge funding levels, it's easy to appropriate staff and money to cover that. In the rural areas, even if they get the money, they can't deliver needed services without additional staff. Another reason the State had for declining the request was citing an article in the *Watertown Daily Times* that the Union was pushing to restart the plant. Mr. Fountain wondered when State policy began being set by articles in the newspaper. The Board agreed with Mr. Fountain that State policy should not be set by such irrational means. Mr. Orton ridiculed the notion that the State would punish a community for trying to revitalize a

major employer, a local industrial plant. He added that he appreciated all the work staff had put in trying to get the discretionary funding.

Preliminary Economic Impact Study Done on Child Care in the County: Ms. Burlingame reported that part of the reorganization of the St. Lawrence Child Care Council, Inc. is they are becoming nationally credentialed which is a two-year process. As part of this they will be doing information gathering, studies, outreach, etc. The first study they wanted to do was an economic impact study on child care in the county. The study showed that \$7.9 million is the estimated income generated by Registered/Licensed Child Care. At least 700 individuals provide child care in the county with 2583 known slots. Over \$4.00 is leveraged for every \$1.00 of County investment.

Membership: Ms. Caswell reported that Ms. Burlingame requested to be on the WIB. Unfortunately, there needs to be at least one more business person in order to put on a person from a non-profit organization. If anyone knows of anyone who would like to be a member, let us know.

Ms. Caswell appointed Dallas Sutton to the Marketing and Board Development Committee to replace Eric Matott.

#### **STAFF REPORT:**

Financial Management Report Letter: Mr. Fountain referred to the letter in the packet regarding a financial review. Staff was able to provide everything they were looking for. One carryover item from the last review was adding a narrative to define the expense items used in allocating cost for employment and training activities in the Cost Allocation Plan; the narrative has been added. There were no findings in this review.

WIA Common Measures Summary Report: Shows that we are in compliance in all areas except for Average Earnings for Dislocated Workers which is very hard in SLC to obtain because there simply aren't that many higher paying jobs to replace those from which these worker have been laid off.

Customer Satisfaction Surveys: Completed surveys were passed around to the members to review.

NYPA Agreement: Agreement among NYPA, SLRVRA, and IDA was signed last week for funding (\$16 million direct funding) and 20 mw of power for release to business development. SLRVRA will be having their first meeting Tuesday night.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION:** None

**ADJOURNMENT:** Moved by Pickert/McDougall the meeting adjourned at 9:14 AM by unanimous consent.