**ST. LAWRENCE COUNTY WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD**

**MEETING SUMMARY**

**September 26, 2018**

**CALL TO ORDER:** Mr. Blevins called to order the regular meeting of the St. Lawrence County Workforce Development Board at the Human Services Center in Canton at 8:02 a.m.

Members Present: Jack Backus, Lynn Blevins, Sue Caswell, Rich Daddario, Pam Dority, Dave Evans, Don Hooper, LouAnne King, Ron McDougall, Daphne Pickert, Pete Reiter, Dale Rice, John Roome, Ellie Sullivan-Stripp, Dallas Sutton, Leo Villeneuve.

Others Present: Tom Plastino – WDB, Jennifer Free – WDB, Penny Taylor – WIOA, Anthony Hayden – NYS DOL, Chris Rediehs – SLC DSS, Lori Elliott – SLC DSS, Michelle Nason – SLC DSS.

Absent: Seth Belt, Chris Cooper, Ruth Doyle, Peggy Fockler, Ryan Schermerhorn, Thomas Sullivan, Zvi Szafran and Eric Tessmer.

**MINUTES:** Ms. Pickert moved and Mr. Backus seconded a motion to accept the June 13, 2018 record of action/meeting summary minutes and the June 27, 2018 Nominating Committee meeting summary minutes; approved unanimously.

**COMMITTEE MINUTES**

The Nominating Committee met on June 27, 2018. At the end of the meeting, the group unanimously approved the following nominations for 2018-20 Officers for the Workforce Development Board:

Chair – Dallas Sutton

Vice Chair – Lynn Blevins

Treasurer – Rich Daddario

Secretary – Rich McDougall

**OLD BUSINESS:**

**Authorizing the St. Lawrence County Treasurer to Modify the PY18 WIOA Budget to Transfer Formula Funds from Dislocated Worker to Adult:** Mrs. Taylor stated that she would like to move most of the first installment of $55,000 from DW to Adult. We will get another installment in the future. At the end of last year we got the NEG grant totaling $36,000 for DW plus we were able to move some DW over to TAA so it left us a lot of money for PY 17 for DW and that’s why she is suggesting to roll over most of the first installment to Adult. It was noted that we have 100% transferability between Adult and Dislocated Worker, but DW receives priority.

Resolution Authorizing the St. Lawrence County Treasurer to Modify the PY18 WIOA Budget to Transfer Formula Funds from Dislocated Worker to Adult: Moved/seconded by Hooper/Pickert; approved unanimously; 16 ayes/0 nays/0 abstentions.

**Adopting a Revised Policy on Confidentiality and Protection of Personally Identifiable Information**: Mrs. Taylor reported that they came up with a new Technical Advisory in July. We did have an existing policy in place, but there weren’t many specifics within the policy. This revised policy is a more uniform policy that the State requested for all the local areas to adopt. Mr. Plastino stated that he feels that this policy is a key item at this time.

Resolution Adopting a Revised Policy on Confidentiality and Protection of Personally Identifiable Information: Moved/seconded by Sutton/Caswell; approved unanimously; 16 ayes/0 nays/0 abstentions.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

**Adopting Revised Bylaws:** Mr. Plastino stated that the members received the bylaws a couple weeks earlier than the meeting because within the bylaws it requires that notification of any bylaw changes need to be sent out within 14 days of the meeting in order for them to be considered. The bylaws were sent out 16 days in advance of the meeting.

Mr. Plastino has been corresponding with Mr. Cooper, relying on his legal expertise, regarding the bylaws. Mr. Cooper could not make the meeting this morning. There are two substantive changes to the bylawsare as follows:

1. The bylaws needed to be brought into alignment with the Non-profit Revitalization Act passed in December of 2013 especially with regard to committees of the board and committees of the corporation that are authorized to act on behalf of the board. The new legislation essentially tried to tighten up how boards over the years have operated. They’ve said that the only types of committees that can be assigned the responsibility to act on behalf of the board are committees that only are comprised of board members. A board of directors cannot assign to a committee individuals including Leo, Dave and Pam and also have Lori on the panel because Lori isn’t a board member. Committees that are comprised of more than just board members are classified as committees of the corporation. We don’t have very many of those committees at this time, but may in the future.
2. Reconstitute the way that the Executive Committee is populated. The old bylaws state that the Executive Committee is comprised of the four officers and three other board members who are essentially nominated by the chair and then approved by the board. The nominating committee in talking about this thought it might be appropriate to talk about increasing the number of members on this committee over and above the officers. Mr. Cooper also suggested that we go through the bylaws where we don’t use the term member when the member means director; anyone that is a member of the WDB is a director. This isn’t something that is actually pressing at this time so we may do that at our next meeting.

Resolution Adopting Revised Bylaws: Moved/seconded by Pickert/Hooper; approved unanimously; 16 ayes/0 nays/0 abstentions.

Mr. Blevins wanted to deviate from the agenda at this time to speak more about workforce development. It came to his attention that in the dairy industry in particular that a large share of workers on farms are immigrants or documented and they are a big part of our workforce. He had concerns about how we track them. Payroll was one suggestion as to how they are tracked in the system.

Ms. King stated that approximately across the state 30% of workers are other than US born. She said their biggest issue is being aware of what types of programs are out there for these workers. They hired two individuals recently, one of them being a 17 year old male who didn’t have a high school diploma and he thinks he can’t anywhere other than a farm because he doesn’t carry that high school diploma or any additional experience.

Ms. King also feels that these workers dislocate themselves, stating that some immigrants don’t carry any soft skills to be able to hold down employment. Immigrants tend to not take advantage of any programs because they have their own work ethic. She reported that they start their workers out at $12.00/hr., but that some start them at minimum wage and give them benefits, such as health insurance, retirement insurance, paid time off and housing.

Mr. Plastino indicated he sent an email to 7-8 other Executive Directors asking them if they have tried to come up with a system to track foreign born employees. It was agreed that if the immigrants left tomorrow, we would have a huge issue in St. Lawrence County and farms would suffer tremendously.

Mr. Fetcie stated that approximately two years ago SUNY Canton Crest Center wanted to run an agribusiness but there was zero interest in that.

Mr. Daddario feels there are three different issues here. One is recruitment, the second is displacement if anything happens and the third is the immigrant situation which he doesn’t feel much can be done about. The displacement issue is something we could look at doing something in the event that something happens in the farming industry. Recruitment is something we all can do.

Mr. Blevins stated our mission is to make that workforce work for everyone. There should be an incentive to that that percentage and reverse it with people that are citizens. Employment isn’t a difficult thing right now if you really want to work you could probably find a job right now. We need to work on putting people to work and benefiting the employer who has to train that person to work. This is the one area we miss as a society. They need to be trained specifically for that job.

Mr. Daddario stated that sometimes that is difficult, especially with the immigrants. They are sometimes hesitant to put their name on paperwork, etc. He said the farmers would have to tell the businesses what limitations the businesses would have and what positive effect the board would have. If there was a crisis as far as displacing people we could help in that standpoint. He states anything they could do to promote that kind of training he would be in favor of.

Discussion occurred regarding possibly getting some farm owners together and address their issues and see if a conclusion could be made on how to assist these employers, similar to what was done with the truck drivers. They all were in agreement that this would be a good idea.

Mr. Plastino gave an overview on what was discussed in the meetings with the trucking companies. DOL, BOCES, SUNY Canton, Mr. Fetcie and Mr. Plastino were in attendance. The attention was on companies who either lease out their trucks to people or have companies that have trucking internally, like Casella, focusing primarily on articulated vehicles. Discussion occurred regarding their problems with getting help, the difficulties in getting people trained, certifications, the expense, etc. The idea was to come up with two or three step process to address their needs. Mr. Fetcie noted that many of the trucking companies felt that young people don’t see truck driving as a career. He indicated in recruitment they try and emphasize that it’s more than just a job.

**Electing 2018-20 Officers:** The Nominating Committee proposed the following slate of officers for 2018-2020:

Chair – Dallas Sutton

Vice Chair – Lynn Blevins

Treasurer – Rich Daddario

Secretary – Rich McDougall

Resolution Electing 2018-20 Officers: Moved/seconded by Backus/Caswell; approved unanimously; 16 ayes/0 nays/0 abstentions.

Mr. Backus extended his thanks to the previous officers in their positions. Mr. Sutton assumed the role of Chair immediately. Mr. Daddario also wanted to extend his thanks to Mr. Backus for stepping in as Chair when we needed him to and his role in the last term of office.

**Approving Membership of the Executive Committee:** Mr. Sutton recommended to the Board that it approve adding the following five additional members of the WDB to join the officers on the Executive Committee:

Jack Backus

Sue Caswell

Chris Cooper

Don Hooper

LouAnne King

Mr. Sutton noted that the committee would benefit with the wide range of experience that each of these members carry. Mr. Daddario added that if anyone else would like to be a member on this committee at any time to please let the Chair know their interest as some currently may want to “retire” at some point.

Resolution Approving Membership of the Executive Committee: Moved/seconded by Pickert/Blevins; approved unanimously; 16 ayes/0 nays/0 abstentions.

**Authorizing the Application for 501 (c) (3) Status**: Mr. Plastino and Mr. Hooper’s goal is to be working on this by the December board meeting. Mr. Plastino stated that Chris Cooper will also be helping out with obtaining application. There are some potential grant applications that are coming up that could not be applied for by the County who is the organization that we work through that not for profit organizations are eligible but governmental entities are not. Acquiring this status is pressing as one of the grants needs to have a pre—application submitted by November before our next meeting. Mr. Plastino noted that this is a potential application that we may not file due to eligibility issues he isn’t clear on yet, but if we do we need to be ready to do so.

Resolution Authorizing the Application for 501 (C) (3) Status: Moved/seconded by King/Pickert; approved unanimously; 16 ayes/0 nays/0 abstentions.

**Recommending the Appointment of a WDB Member to the St. Lawrence County Board of Legislators:** Mr. Plastino noted that Felicia Dumas, Executive Director of SLC CDP, has been very active in the partners’ meetings and would be an asset to have on the WDB. CDP is a private, not for profit business; therefore, she would be A recruit to the business side of the Board membership.

Resolution Recommending the Appointment of a WDB Member to the St. Lawrence County Board of Legislators: Moved/seconded by Blevins/McDougall; approved unanimously; 16 ayes/0 nays/0 abstentions.

**OTHER BUSINESS**

WIA/WIOA Transition Update:

Mr. Plastino reported that we still do not have in place Part II of the MOU. What is a focus at this point is implementing WIOA revised performance metrics. Last Friday we had to send in via email a reply to DOL on what performance metrics will be for PY18, which began July 1, 2018 and PY19 which will begin on July 1, 2019. They are all slightly different metrics than were involved in WIA, although not dramatically different. The State has been unable to inform us with information of somewhat where they developed the initial numbers. Talking with other directors, Mr. Plastino basically took the overall number they came up with and decreased it by 50%. It was noted that the State would accept any number that we sent in to them.

Federal and State Funding

There is what the Feds are calling a mini-bus bill for funding which include 3-4 federal agencies which include the entire Department of Labor, not just the WIOA portion of it that passed the Senate after conference on 9/18/18. This is supposed to be up for vote in the House this week. The important part of this is that the amount appropriated for WIOA is almost the same as last year. The administration’s original proposal opted to reduce the amount by $80 million, and as far as right now $2.8 million is in there.

**STAFF REPORTS**

Fiscal

Mrs. Taylor reported there was a Financial Management Review done in August. There were no preliminary findings. She noted that in seven total reviews, we have only had one finding. She also included the quarterly reports in the meeting materials for the members to review. It was noted that there are three different ways of looking at those reports. There is a report for revenue/expenses from July 1, 2018 through June 30, 2018, a report for revenue/expenses for April 1, 2018 through August 31, 2018 by funding year and the last report shows a chart graph indicating training/supportive service expenses, including the number of participants that incurred costs and a breakdown of expenses.

Mr. Plastino added that the finding that was given previously was in respect to the One Stop System Network Operator which is the position that Mr. Fetcie is filling. We had negotiated a contract for the One Stop System Network Operator, and he thought it was signed and it wasn’t. Corrective action was taken to get the contract signed within a few days of the finding.

Mrs. Taylor stated that there is one more review that needs to be done which is the NEG Dislocated Worker grant that we received. This review should be the last one until next spring.

One-Stop Network Operator

Mr. Fetcie reported that the emphasis continues to be collaboration between partners, not just on individual customers but on different projects. There was a report distributed which highlighted partner activities such as the 2018 Summer Youth Employment Program, the CDL program and the mining operations. We continue to have our regular partner meetings every month, constantly focusing on collaboration efforts.

In July, a representative from NYS DOL visited for training purposes. The emphasis on that training was that you were part of the system; you have partners that you are supposed to be referring to for specific services and utilizing services of the partners. We are all learning each other strengths, some are that we just have the funding, some are that they actually provide the training and some are for referral purposes.

Mr. Daddario inquired as to whether or not any of the partners would pay for a required drug test of an employee. Ms. Dority stated that if they were working with an individual with a disability and a drug test was required for employment that ACCES-VR would cover the drug test cost. Ms. Elliott stated that DSS may to depending on the situation. Mrs. Taylor stated that they have paid for things such as fingerprinting, but she has never experienced a situation where we have paid for a drug test in the past. She is unsure if we could. She stated that she can look into that, but there may have to be some changes with some of our policies and procedures.

Partner Report

Lori Elliott, Senior Employment and Training Program Coordinator for the TANF employment unit and Michelle Nason, Senior Counselor for DSS were present for today’s presentation. Ms. Elliott reported that they work with individuals who are receiving temporary assistance benefits in St. Lawrence County. The Welfare Reform Act of 1996 was created to decrease poverty. Caseloads were high at that time so the new Act was known as the personal responsibility and work opportunity reconciliation act was put into effect to focus more on workforce development which encourages employment among the poor. In 2006 there was a reauthorization for this act which forced the states to increase work requirements for TANF recipients.

She stated that their unit utilizes the resources and services offered by partner agencies. They have referred individuals to ACCES-VR for many years, as well as BOCES. They work with NYS DOL for job search and job readiness training and additional services they can provide. WIOA is also a close partner with their unit, Cornell Cooperative Extension, Veterans, St. Lawrence County CDP, Office for the Aging and Seaway Valley Prevention Council is also utilized by the TANF employment unit.

Ms. Elliott reported that the TANF employment unit has mandated work activities that they have to put in place for their clients. Work experience is a non-profit agency where they teach individuals job readiness skills to individuals who receive TANF. Hours are calculated by the TANF case type. She referenced placements at the Salvation Army, Riverledge and Maplewood. They have also placed individuals in employment at the Neighborhood Centers, Head Start and Office for the Aging nutrition sites. We work with SWATA and North Country Freedom Homes site was just opened. She noted some of the agencies will hire if there is an opening.

Job readiness training is also something that the TANF employment unit does. Workshops are geared towards resume development, filling out job applications up to job retention. These workshops are provided in-house by OTDA. BOCES has also done some of these workshops for the unit in the past. Cornell Cooperative Extension and Seaway Valley Perinatal Council have also conducted workshops.

Job skills training directly related to employment is a program known as the Training Employment Assistance Program (TEAP) program that they utilize. It is similar to the OJT program that they used to have. It is also utilized for employment that benefits both the participant and the hiring agencies.

Vocational and Educational programs with BOCES are some referrals that the unit gives and possibly fund. It could be a C.N.A. program funded through an outside agency such as St. Regis or United Helpers. They have also done some Employment and Training security through SUNY Canton, as well as some asbestos training there and also with some private companies.

The unit also does job search through the OTDA program. We refer to NYS DOL for job fairs and their job orders.

We refer people for treatment plans for substance abuse and mental disorders if necessary, monitoring their attendance and progress once they are enrolled in treatment. With these referrals we work with St. Lawrence County Chemical Dependency, St. Lawrence County Mental Health, the state wellness centers and with Mosaic.

There are many ways the mandates are enforced as required by the State and Federal government. There is a conciliation process which gives them a chance to explain their side on what happened although it may lead to a sanction. Applicants may be denied and diverted by a mandated upfront job readiness training program, counseling specific to expectations and employment plans that are put into place with an individual.

They also do recruitments with individuals when there is an overpayment of support services. They have recouped over $3,000 in overpayments since January of this year. Individuals are held accountable and those that do not need the system are weeded out.

The TANF employment unit prepares individuals for employment. Program success is currently measured by work participation and engagement rate. Getting individuals into paid employment is not a key measure of success at this time. St. Lawrence County does have the highest participation rate of medium sized counties in New York for our safety net non-mo.

In a recent state report for job entries to employment St. Lawrence County placed 19th out of the 58 counties.

The future outlook for the TANF employment unit is a couple different things. We have a waiver from our food stamp program for many years. The waiver depends on the employment rate. As the employment rate keeps decreasing a lot of the surrounding counties are jumping on board with this program. It’s a very scary program looking at it up front. There are approximately 800 people that are receiving benefits that would qualify. We are hoping that that number get down to about 200 so it is more manageable. If we do not get the waiver we will have to have this program in place by January 1, 2018. We would have to start working with that population also at that point if we do not get the waiver. Another outlook is that we are looking at a new reauthorization for the TANF program. It’s going to be more employment based. IT’s going to be called the Jobs and Opportunity with Benefits and Services for Success Act of 2018; it’ll be called JOBS for short. There will be a vital need for involvement with our partner agencies to focus more on the employment placement part. Work measures will be redesigned to support engagement of participants in work activities to prepare them for employment.

Mr. Daddario inquired as to who conducts the training for asbestos that Ms. Elliott previously spoke about. She stated that it is usually one of the companies that perform this 40 hour training. Mr. Fetcie stated that Cornerstone in Rochester usually comes up a few times a year, but noted that Title I funds do not cover with this company because they are not on the Eligible Training Provider List per Monroe County. He stated there is also a school called QES in Chittenango, NY which we can fund but this requires the individual to stay the week down in Syracuse to acquire the training.

Mr. Daddario pointed out he conducts this training as well, and he may come in at a lower rate. He asked from a placement standpoint if there are limitations to what your people that go through that system can do on a job site. Ms. Elliott indicated there were no limitations.

Mr. Plastino inquired as to the size of clientele for the TANF Employment Unit. Ms. Elliott indicated they have approximately 800 clients with 5 counselors and are interviewing for the WIOA split position today.

Executive Director

Mr. Plastino reported that he received an email from NYS DOL regarding opioid disaster recovery Dislocated Worker Grant. The feds have already conducted a competitive round of this and NY was not selected for any of this grant money. This allows the Federal DOL to redirect some DW money into trying to address some of the aspects of the opioid crisis. There is a phone all this afternoon regarding more information on this. The NYS DOL is proposing to put in an application for NYS next week by October 15, 2018. The c9ounty would probably have to be the approver of this. Once he understands whether or not it’s worth our while to participate in this or if we are expected to do it the key thing that has to be included in any proposal is at least one community org working with individuals who are or have been directly impacted by opioid use; i.e. business or industry organizations, community health providers, justice or law enforcement organizations, faith and community based orgs and educational.

Mr. Plastino states he will have to contact BOCES, ACCES-VR and anyone else he can think of to see if anyone is interested in doing this because our participation may end up being simply a sign off as opposed to a recipient. We had talked about this before at staff level the problem was this is focused on DW’s and this isn’t something that we have a lot of right now which is why we have transferred DW funds into Adult.

Eligible participants volunteered that they have been impacted by opioid crisis may receive career training and supportive services to reintegrate back into the workforce. All eligible participants those that volunteer they have been impacted by opioid crisis and those who do not may receive career training and supportive services to enter into fields aimed at boosting the number of qualified professionals in fields that can have an impact on the crisis. Mr. Plastino stated that these would be jobs such as an opioid intake counselor at a hospital or in chemical dependency or Seaway Valley Prevention Council.

Mr. Daddario reported he just went to a healthcare seminar last week and he learned there are 2 or 3 rather unique treatments for opioid dependency. They are rather innovative and a lot easier than just going to facilities. He offered to send Mr. Plastino some information he received and stated that there were a few companies that made sense because stated it can be done interactively without having to go to a treatment facility and also done much cheaper.

Mr. Plastino indicated he is going to contact Seaway Valley Prevention Council, Step by Step, and any other agencies that may be able to help him. He welcomes any information the members and staff could give to him as well. He states that the sooner we get the application in, the quicker we have a chance of getting the funding.

**NEXT MEETING**:

The next meeting of the Workforce Development Board is scheduled for December 12, 2018.

**ADJOURNMENT:** Moved by Ms. Caswell and seconded by Mr. McDougall; the meeting adjourned at 9:30 a.m. by unanimous consent.