

Workforce Investment Board of Columbia & Greene Counties

Minutes for April 27, 2010 5:30 p.m.

Columbia Greene Community College

WELCOME

Anthony Zibella welcomed new member, Mark Fingar (Fingar Insurance) and guests, Nancy Bell (DOL-DEWS), Jim Ross (DOL) and Suzanne Pollard (Empire State Development).

Chair Tony Zibella called the meeting to order:

Present: Betty Betts, John Betts, Russ Coloton, John Craft, Fran DelGaudio, Terri Drobner, Pam Dusharm, Mike Fingar, Kary Jablonka, Mike Kutski, David LaFleur, David Lester, Ann Luby, Cindy MacKay, Rebecca Main, Tracy McNally, Mary Prazma, Deb Tuttle, Terry McGee Ward, Tracy Racicot, Sally Sharkey, Lynn Strunk, M. A. Wiltse and Anthony Zibella.

Excused: Frank Alguire, Ken Flood, Diane Franzman, Patrick Gabriel, Susan Hollister, Kate Konopka, Karen Schoonmaker, David Scott, Tina Sharpe, Mike Veeder and Joe Wolodkevich.

Consultant: Katy Drake

Guests: Nancy Bell (DOL-DEWS), Jim Ross (DOL) and Suzanne Pollard (Empire State Development)

With 24 members in attendance, a quorum is present.

STATUS OF VACANCIES

- One vacancy for Greene County business
- One vacancy in Housing in recruitment
- An organized labor representative for Greene

WIB PRESENTATION

The meeting began with a presentation from Jim Ross, Labor Market Analyst from the Department of Labor. Mr. Ross provided labor market information specific to Columbia and Greene Counties and a demonstration of an internet tool businesses and organizations can access to review detailed labor market information for specific areas. Please contact Katy Drake for a copy of the presentation material.

ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES

A motion was made by Lynn Strunk, seconded by Ann Luby and carried by the Board to accept the Board Meeting Minutes for January 13, 2010. All Board meeting minutes are posted on the website, www.columbiagreeworks.org.

CORRESPONDENCE

Katy Drake noted, in the secretary's absence, that the following correspondence is available for member review:

Letters sent:

- Response sent to Nancy Bell, DOL on March 24, 2010 regarding PY09 Program Monitoring
- Letters sent to Chief Local Elected Officials regarding reappointments for PY10.
- Letter sent to Senator Seward regarding the NYS DOL, Mario Musolino letter.

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Letters Received:

- Copy of the letter from Mario Musolino, NYS DOL, to Sandy Mathes regarding the Greene IDA's request for funds to purchase technology and related equipment.(January 19, 2010)
- Copy of the letter from Mario Musolino, NYS DOL, to Senator Seward regarding funds to develop an Education and Training Center in Greene County (March 16, 2010)
- Letter of sponsorship from the Columbia County Chamber

COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Committee reports were distributed prior to the meeting and reviewed by Committee Chairs and/or committee members. Committee reports are attached to the minutes for reference.

Tracy Racicot added an update to the Youth Council report on the issue of GED test administration. Tracy advised the Board that due to the lack of funding, Questar III will require that 90% of the people taking the GED through Questar III must be in an approved program in order to take the test. For students under the age of twenty one, a state approved program is required. A specific score on the pre-test will be required to register to take the GED. The State Education Department is seeking to raise awareness on the issue of the lack of funding for GED test administration throughout the state.

ONE STOP DIRECTOR'S REPORT

The One-Stop Operator's report was provided to all members. MA Wiltse reviewed the Participation Report, Skill and Development Training Services from 1-1-10 to 3-31-10, Unemployment Rates, Local Activities Local Report and Marketing Efforts.

The number of new UI claimants has dropped since this time last year, but is still drastically higher than in 2008. Workshop attendance was noted as up significantly, specifically due to the required bi-monthly meetings with the unemployed designated most likely to be able to find a new job. The intense effort with those most likely to find employment has doubled the number of people who attend workshops.

The Columbia Greene Spring Job Fair will be held on April 28th from 10:00 – 2:00 at the College. Over forty businesses are expected plus organizations and education entities. Letters of invitation were sent to 800 individuals who have been receiving unemployment benefits for more than 26 weeks.

Information was distributed on the Elevate America Program. NYSDOL in cooperation with Microsoft will distribute free vouchers for select e-learning courses and certification exams. Vouchers must be distributed and activated by June 24, 2010. Contact the Workforce Office for additional information or to request vouchers.

NEW BUSINESS

Nominating Committee

At the July Board meeting, Karen Diffley Schoonmaker, representing Greene County, will ascend to the position of Chair. Elections will be held for the Vice Chair and Secretary positions. The Chair position rotates between Columbia County and Greene with a Vice Chair for this term being required for Columbia. The Vice-Chair serves a two years term, then ascends to Chair for an additional two year term. The Secretary can be elected from general Board membership. Chairman Tony Zibella appointed Cindy McKay as Chairman of the nominating committee. Betty Rosato Betts (Greene) and Pam Dusharm (Columbia) were also appointed to the committee. Columbia County Business representatives interested in the position of Chair should contact the nominating committee. Members from the Board interested in the Secretary position should also contact the nominating committee.

GOOD AND WELFARE

The four regional WIBs and the Center for Economic Growth are hosting a breakfast on June 17th at 8:00 at the Desmond for a presentation and panel discussion of the impact of Global Foundries on the region. All Board members are invited to this event at no charge. Invitations will follow from CEG.

In the absence of Economic Development representatives at the meeting, members shared quick updates regarding their businesses.

John Betts made a motion to adjourn. Lynn Strunk seconded the motion with all in favor. The meeting adjourned at approximately 7:25.

Please Mark Your Calendar

| Upcoming Special Events | Date, Time, Location | Information: |
|--|---|--|
| <i>Breakfast meeting hosted by the 4 regional WIBs and CEG to discuss the impact of Global Foundries on the region.</i> | June 17, 2010 8:00 a.m. at the Desmond, Albany. | Invitations to follow |
| <i>WIB Full Board Meetings</i> | July 13, 2010 8:30 a.m. | Contact Katy Drake at Drake@mhccable.com or 965-1421 |
| <i>Meetings are held in The Professional Academic Building at the College unless otherwise noted</i> | | |

Notes Respectfully submitted by Katy Drake/WIB Consultant

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Business Services Committee

April 15, 2010 8:30 am

Maureen Boutin provided an overview **for On the Job Training (OJT)**. Due to limited available funds only two OJT contracts, Intelligent Technology Solutions and Local Oceans, were issued to date for PY09. The strict criteria for the Transition Grant was reviewed. Currently three companies are receiving Transition Grant funds to support workers in sales clerk, maintenance helper and cook positions.

Enrollment for the **Employee Enhancement Program** year to date was presented. Four companies have sent a total of 28 workers in PY09.

Participation in the **HR Roundtable** remains strong. The next meeting is scheduled for April 21, 2010. This will be a general meeting with no specific presentation topic yet assigned.

The **Spring Job Fair** is scheduled for April 28th at Columbia Greene College. The committee was reminded that no fall job fair was held due to lack of businesses hiring. To date, a total of 31 businesses, 7 agencies and 6 education entities have registered for the fair. Health care and disability agencies are the bulk of the business representation. The positive response for this spring's job fair was noted as a good indication of a change for the better in the economy.

Work continues on the regional **Work Readiness Credential**. The Center for Economic Growth (CEG) is the consultant working on the project. CEG is currently coordinating the standards and measures for evaluation between the regional programs. Marketing to local businesses is expected to start soon.

An update was provided on the **Technical Career Awareness Program (TCAP)**. While the TCAP ads were created in year one, ads have yet to run for this program in year two of the grant. CEG also serves as the consultant on this project. Meetings are in process with local schools and programs.

Under the 13 N Grant, Columbia Greene has received **\$22,500 for ITAs** in the areas of manufacturing, green jobs and health care. The method in which this money has been applied to local ITAs has freed up funding for additional OJT contracts and additional ITAs. The length of the ITAs funded by this money was noted as a concern as a long term (year – two year) ITAs may impact future year funding unless the entire bill can be paid up front. Local training requests were discussed. It was noted that there have not been a lot of requests for training from businesses at this time.

A **WIB Member Regional breakfast** meeting hosted by the four WIBs and CEG is being planned for a presentation on the impact of Global Foundries on the region. A tentative date of June 17th has been identified and invitations will follow once the date is set.

The committee was informed of **Elevate America—E-learning & certification exams**. Thousands of free vouchers for e-learning opportunities are available through Microsoft and NYSDOL. Vouchers must be distributed and activated prior to June 24, 2010. Users have 12 months to use the voucher from the date of activation. Exam vouchers are only valid until June 24, 2010. Elevate America classes and options were discussed. Maureen distributed a full class list in the April 12th business email. Each course requires a separate voucher, but there is no limit to the number of vouchers any one person can get. Maureen Boutin is the contact for businesses that want to help their employees sign up. It is recommended that people sign up in the near future. Maureen will be sending a follow up business email clarifying the process and time frames.

Information on the **Federal Hire Act** was distributed. Tax credits are available to encourage businesses to begin hiring again. It applies to hiring people who have been laid off for at least 60 days and who start work between February 3, 2010 and January 1, 2011. The act offers a 6.2% payroll tax cut

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(share of social security taxes) on wages paid between March 18, 2010 and December 31, 2010. More information is available at www.labor.ny.gov. It was clarified that in regards to this program "laid off" is considered unemployed. Additional benefits for keeping employees working for the year were noted.

It was announced that the State DOL will be providing funds for a **state run OJT**. This program will be operated by the DOL business service team. Five million dollars may be available statewide with details to be worked out as the state gears up to implement the program. This money is designated for workforce investment and the details are being addressed in Technical Advisories.

The **Policy to address UI Exhaustees** and the letter sent were presented to the committee. MA Wiltse reviewed how the One Stop Centers are handling the people who have now exhausted their UI benefits. The letter that UI Exhaustees will receive was reviewed by the committee. People are encouraged to visit the One Stops, with a list of supports available outlined in the letter. SMART 2010-the resume matching program, www.myBenefits.ny.gov and Elevate America are supports encouraged in the letter. A direct hot line number is available at the One Stops so people can speak directly to a UI representative regarding their benefits. WIO staff cannot provide information or direction on UI claims. Local people on extended benefits (approximately 800 people) received a letter regarding the job fair. Mandatory requirements with UI were discussed by the committee. Strong employment candidates are required to come in every two weeks. Everyone on UI has to register at the WIO and meet at least once with WIO staff.

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Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) Committee

February 4, 2010 Audit

Auditors: Frank Alguire (Executive Committee Representative), John Craft (Chair), Katy Drake and MA Wiltse

Staff Associates: Rebecca, Ben Thomas

Policy # 712: TAA General Program Information

Observations: Policy had been updated on 4-17-09. Staff, Ben Thomas, was interviewed by Frank Alguire regarding the Trade Adjustment Act Policy. Mr. Thomas demonstrated a solid understanding of the policy and supporting details. No recommendations.

Policy-401: Career Resource Room

Observation: Policy was updated last on January 22, 2007. Katy Drake interviewed Rebecca on the policy and practices for the Career Resource Room. While Rebecca had only started in December 2009, she was extremely knowledgeable on the policy. She overviewed the sign- in system (swipe cards), outlined the supports and resources available and discussed job search services. Information was provided on the "Get Connected" workshop. Job posting set up was reviewed. Rebecca had no suggestions at the time of the interview to enhance the Resource, but would feel comfortable making suggestions to the WIO Director. A review of the Resource Room noted the following resources:

- Job Opportunities
- Employee Rights
- Grant Opportunities
- Healthcare Coverage Info
- Information on car programs
- Debt Information
- Interview Preparation Booklets
- Training Opportunities
- Minimum Wage Info
- In Demand Occupation Info
- GED & GED Preparation Information
- Civil Service Exam Info
- Starting your Own Business Info
- Career Ladder Information
- Unemployment Info
- Information on Working Papers
- Work Pays NY Poster & potential benefits
- E-learning opportunities
- Interview Skill Workshops
- Resume Workshops
- Information for Individuals with Disabilities
- and much much more.

Policy 404: Job Matching & Referral

Observations: John Craft explored the job matching and referral policy with a staff member.

Findings: The "education" section on a SMART system résumé did not show up. It is recommended that this be further explored to determine if this is a data entry issue or concern with the program.

Findings: There is not a system in place currently to provide feedback on the success/failure of the system..

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Executive Committee

April 21, 2010

Board vacancies were reviewed. Katy Drake will follow up on recommendations made for the Greene County business vacancy and the Greene County organized labor representative. Chair Tony Zibella will be speaking with Chairman, Roy Brown regarding representation on the Board.

A breakfast hosted by CEG and the 4 regional WIBs is being scheduled for June 17th at the Desmond to provide an overview of Global Foundries and the impact on the region. Board members were encouraged to attend if interested and available. A save the date notice, meeting agenda and formal invitation will follow shortly from the Center for Economic Growth.

The Executive Committee discussed the appointment of a **nominating committee** as the President and Secretaries term are up at July meeting. The Vice Chair, Karen Schoonmaker, ascends to the role of Chair at the July 13th meeting. Representation from each county was discussed when addressing the nominating committee for PY10. Katy will contact members prior to the meeting to gauge their interest and availability to serve on the nominating committee.

MA Wiltse provided a **One Stop Operators update**. The numbers for new UI claimants were reviewed noting the decrease since last year at this time, although the number of new claimants is still way up from 2008.

The committee was updated on the recent request the Greene County IDA made to NYS DOL for funding to run a One Stop Center, Resource Room in Coxsackie. The response from Chair Tony Zibella to Senator Seward regarding funding another One Stop Center was presented to the committee.

Federal NEG money was discussed. Columbia Greene does not appear to be at the threshold yet to apply for National Emergency Grant funds.

Funding for the Summer Youth Employment Program has not yet been established in the State budget. Columbia Greene is moving ahead slowly in hopes the funding will be available. It was requested that the WIO track how many kids would not be able to be served if funds do not become available for reporting to DOL.

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Youth Council

April 1, 2010

The **Program Evaluations** for the Catskill GED Program and the Greenville In School Youth Program were distributed for review. Alan Frisbee and his intern, Sally Sharkey, Patrick Gabriel and Katy Drake visited the Catskill GED Program on February 2nd, 2010. Alan Frisbee and Katy Drake visited the Greenville Program on February 3rd, 2010. Both programs appear to be running very well. Enrollment is up to 16 in Greenville, with students in 9th -12th being served through the Hometown Graphics Program. The Catskill GED program has run exceptional well, despite two teacher leaves.

Tracy Racicot updated the program on **GED test administration**. Questar III is the testing site for Columbia and Greene Counties. As of the start of 2010, the State is no longer funding GED test administration. This is a serious concern that is being worked on regionally. Questar III is exploring supplementing with earned income programs to support test administration. Options were discussed as no money is available. Testers cannot pay a fee legally as it limits access to the test. Changing the regulations on testing fees could take years. Questar III is currently trying to absorb the costs internally. Tracy is working on a plan. Other states do allow a fee to be charged. New York allows any resident who meets the age requirement to take the test with no proof of proficiency. Tracy reported that no new test sites will be opened due to the lack of resources. Questar III wants to remain open as a testing site and is working to create a plan to continue to be a testing site. It was suggested that WIB Chair write a letter on behalf of the Youth Council to address the change in legislation required for GED testing.

Action Item: The Youth Council will request that the WIB Chair write a letter to Senator Saland regarding legislation for GED testing.

The **draft of the Youth Program RFP** was distributed for member review. As approved by the State in the past, the Workforce Office staff drafted the RFP as Columbia Greene is small area without a separate entity available to create the RFP, but will not be part of the review process. WIO staff will not be involved when responses are reviewed by the subcommittee. The RFP was last put out three years ago. Major changes have taken place since last issued due to changes in the dual sets of performance measures we were operating under at that time. The common measures now apply to all programs. The federal measures were reviewed for the Council. It was noted that follow up services are required under the law. Old core measures have been removed from the RFP to include only common measure. This draft of the RFP also includes an addition of essential work place skills. This addition is in line with a regional effort, and is not required federally or by the state. A discussion was held on the addition of the essential workplace skills and the criteria for this area. The council is in favor of adding the essential workplace skills into the RFP. The final decision needs to be made by June 30th to present to the Board at the July 13th meeting. The RFP will be issued so that applicants have a minimum of 6 weeks from date issued. An agreed upon return date of June 1st was set. A potentially full day meeting for a subcommittee to review the submissions will be scheduled for the beginning of June. Recommendations will be presented to the Board at the July 13th meeting.