

Workforce Investment Board of Columbia & Greene Counties

*Minutes for Monday, April 14, 2003
Room 105
Columbia Greene Community College*

Attendance:

Present: Kit Ali, Karen Diffley, Rikki Beal, John Betts, Bruce Bohnsack, Jim Cullie, Barbara Eacott, Tom Every, Aaron Flach, Patrick Hernandez, Peg Hopper, Al Hulick, Brian Keeler, David Leavitt, Joyce Lissandrello, Cindy MacKay, Jim Molloy, Hilton Perez, Alan Rabideau, Dawn Saul, George Skraastad, Lynn Strunk, Keith Valentine, M. A. Wiltse, Sarah Witham, Geraldine Wolfe and Anthony Zibella.

Excused: Paul Dellio, Agnes Donlon, Jim Galvin, Marylou Eisenhardt, and Richard Phelan.

Absent: Jessica Nabozny and Carol Wilber.

WIO Staff: Maureen Boutin

Consultant: Betty Ann Falkner

Guests: Robert Lew, NYS Department of Labor

With 26 members in attendance, a quorum is present.

WELCOME

The meeting began with a review of the Mission for the WIB and a welcome to all members and guests. Chairman Karen Diffley welcomed new member Alan Rabideau of CSEA Local 426.

STATUS OF VACANCIES

- There are two business vacancies in Columbia County.

CORRESPONDENCE

There were five letters received. A resignation letter was received from Susan Catanzano. A letter was received from Margaret Moree regarding achievement of the second performance benchmark under the Skills Gap II project. There was a letter from our Skills Gap II consultant Eileen Capone regarding her progress on the project. A letter was received from Ron Lassonde, a Senior Auditor for NYS DOL regarding compliance with guidelines. A resignation letter was received from Colleen Rundell.

There were six letters sent. A letter was sent to Gerald Simons regarding the Catanzano resignation. One Board member received a non-attendance letter. Four letters were sent to Youth Providers regarding recent evaluations and the projected decrease in available funding.

ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES

A motion to accept the January 13, 2003 minutes was made by Hilton Perez and seconded by Jim Cullie. All were in favor and the motion was passed.

COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Executive Committee

Chairman Karen Diffley reported on this committee's activities. The committee has been looking into the need for Board Directors and Officers Insurance coverage. Previously, M. A. Wiltse was informed that Columbia County members were covered by Columbia County's insurance policy. In her update to the board, insurance coverage is not certain, unless the board were to incorporate and purchase coverage. A request was made to Robert Lew to find out what insurance coverage there is available for Board's who are not incorporated.

Chairman Diffley also mentioned the confusion with regard to press coverage of the WIB. Recent articles attributed successes to the wrong entities. Several ideas were presented in the committee to resolve the overall issue of the WIB not being known in the community. This included doing press releases after Board meetings and taking advantage of photo opportunities.

Skills Standards Committee

Vice Chair Dawn Saul reported that the committee met to review the progress of the Skills Gap II project. M.A. Wiltse informed the board that four workshops have been scheduled for April 23rd, 30th, May 8th and May 15th. Fifty-seven employees representing nine different companies will be attending one or more workshops, for a total of 80 training slots. Six companies, who have shown interest, are still being pursued. All supervisors whose companies are sending employees are getting a letter from the consultant explaining the training and how the supervisor can help reinforce the training at the workplace. This will help provide a complete approach to the training.

Continuous Quality Committee

Chairman George Skraastad reported that this committee reviewed the swipe card system. M.A. Wiltse provided reports to the committee on the usage of the Career Resource Center. The first reports covered customer demographics from December 2002-February 2003. The committee asked several questions about getting additional data. They were informed that some data was unavailable at this time. The committee requested a standardized procedure to be used when training staff and asked that the report be slightly modified for ease of use.

The committee also heard an update from member Jim Molloy who attended the National Association of workforce Board's Washington convention. Convention delegates met with Senate representatives to discuss WIA reauthorization. He informed the Board that he has an e-mail address for a member of Senator Clinton's staff if any business member wanted to share their success stories on the usage of workforce grants.

Employer Services Committee

Vice Chairman Jim Cullie reported on recent activities of this committee. The committee discussed current WIB policy that states that employer customized training, utilizing WIA

Title IB Adult funds, can be approved for front-line supervisory training and basic computer literacy training for employed workers. This policy was initially approved with the understanding that we would track its potential impact on meeting our required performance measures. Since this policy was implemented we have not used WIA Title IB funds for this type of training because we have been using the Skills Gap II money. That experience has demonstrated that if we had to enroll all the “skills gap” employees into WIA Title I we would not meet our performance measure for “receiving a credential” or “increased wage”.

Several questions were raised regarding the need for a credential and/or wage increase and the WIB’s ability to meet performance measures. M.A. Wiltse reported that the request to discontinue funding this training in its current state does not mean that this training will not be available to employers, just that it will have to either lead to a credential or wage increase. NYS DOL Rep Robert Lew provided additional information on the time frame for a wage increase and how the numbers are calculated. He cautioned the board to consider that the reauthorization will be changing some performance measures and this may change how the board wants to look at this training in the future. The committee recommends removing the automatic approval for computer literacy and supervisory training.

Youth Council

Chairman Pat Hernandez reported on activities of the Youth Council. The Council’s Outreach sub-committee decided to have an Employer Breakfast. The breakfast was held on March 18th. Several local employers attended and heard from two youth representatives of their need for work once they finished their training program. The event generated good press and additional employers have called the Workforce Investment Office for more information.

Youth program providers have been sent a letter regarding massive cuts to funding. The feds are looking at a 70/30 split with the majority of funding going to out of school youth. The Youth Council would like to eliminate new programs from applying for the limited funds.

Chairman Hernandez also invited all board members to the Youth Provider Dinner to be held on May 1st at CGCC from 4:30-6:00. He also repeated his request for new business participants on the Youth Council. Pat also reported that Karen Diffley, WIB chair participated in a youth outreach day where she assisted participants in their painting project at Bliss Towers and then offered mock job interviews with the participants.

NEW BUSINESS

Resolutions:

- Resolved to accept the Employer Services Committee recommendation to remove the following two categories, computer literacy (software) training and the supervisory skills training as options for funding through the WIA

Title IB employed worker Customized Training program. (*This action is required because these two training options will make it impossible for WIA Title 1 to meet its performance measures.*) A motion to accept was made by Kit Ali and seconded by Lynn Strunk. All were in favor and the motion was approved.

- Resolved to accept the recommendation from the Youth Council that due to reduced funding, PY 03 Youth Project Proposals will only be accepted from current providers and that in reviewing PY 03 proposals preference will be given to out-of-school programs and those projects that utilize cost cutting measures. A motion to accept was made by Dawn Saul and seconded by Joyce Lissandrello. All were in favor and the motion was approved.

GOOD AND WELFARE

- WIB Marketing effort-Photo Opportunity- pictures were taken of Board members for possible use in local newspapers along with an article on the work of the board. New member bios will also be published along with a picture if possible.

ONE STOP OPERATOR DIRECTOR'S REPORT

- *Participation Report*- M. A. Wiltse reviewed the participation report. Unemployment in the two counties is very low. Hilton Perez reported that the Department of Labor is working on standardizing reports across the state so there is consistent information available to all WIB's on the employment outlook. As part of her report M. A. Wiltse shared a market penetration rate graph with the board. It shows we are reaching approximately 10-11% of the unemployed population. Only new unemployed people are being counted so as to get as close to an unduplicated count as possible with the swipe card system. She also reviewed the library station usage. Some questions arose regarding the low usage at some libraries. M.A. explained that the program was offered to all libraries in the two counties, that training was provided for all participants and that this is a self-service program.
- *Budget Report*- M.A. shared the PY 03 allocation numbers for WIA Title IB. Again, the local area will see a reduction in funds. Our local area hasn't felt the cuts so much in the past due to carryover funds and additional funds we have sought out. The State is now using its prerogative, based on Federal pressure, to strongly encourage local areas to carryover no more than 20% of previous years funds into the next program year. Therefore, next year (beginning July 2003) is going to be the year where the funding cuts will really be felt and will likely reduce the amount of training we will be able to offer residents.

OLD BUSINESS

- Report on Board Survey- Betty Ann Falkner reported on the results of the Board self-assessment survey. Board members were thanked for their participation. Four areas to review came out of the survey-marketing, new board member orientation

and continual development of to board members, increase in available data and communication between meetings, with other WIB's, the state and partners. This raised the question of what to do with this information and how best to use this survey as a continuous improvement tool. Board members agreed that they would like to have a half-day retreat with a facilitator to discuss the survey and agree on some action items for the future. This will be looked into with the intent to get a facilitator to assist the board with coming up with action items to work on for continuous improvement.

GOOD AND WELFARE

- Member Peg Hopper of Community Action of Greene County reported to the members that their Partners Catch a Ride program will lose funding as of September. They currently serve 35 people every day. The cost of this program is \$126,000 a year. This led to discussion among the board. Several members mentioned sending letters of support from the WIB regarding the reduction of state TANFF funds asking that they be redistributed to support Human services agencies. Other suggestions included: 1. Members who are impacted by the cuts sending a letter, 2. A letter campaign from individual members and 3. Employer groups impacted by losing employers to send letters.
- Chairman Karen Diffley reviewed the Board Meeting Schedule for the last board meeting of this program year:
 - Tuesday, June 24, 2003 @ 8:30 a.m.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made to adjourn by Patrick Hernandez and seconded by Bruce Bohnsack. All were in favor and the meeting was adjourned at 7:30 p.m.