

Workforce Investment Board of Columbia & Greene Counties

Minutes for October 15, 2009 5:30 p.m. Columbia Greene Community College

WELCOME

Anthony Zibella welcomed new members, Terri Drobner (America Bio Medica), Deb Tuttle (Novapak) and Tracy Racicot (Questar III) and guest, Maureen Boutin (WIO).

Chair Tony Zibella called the meeting. A sign in sheet confirmed attendance.

Attendance:

Present: Frank Alguire, Betty Betts, John Betts, Russ Coloton, Fran DelGaudio, Terri Drobner, Patrick Gabriel, Susan Hollister, David LaFleur, David Lester, Cindy MacKay, Rebecca Main, Mary Prazma, Tracy Racicot, Karen Schoonmaker, Deb Tuttle, Mike Veeder, M. A. Wiltse, and Anthony Zibella.

Excused: Pam Dusharm, Ken Flood, Diane Franzman, Kary Jablonka, Kate Konopka, Rob LaBuff, Ann Luby, Sally Sharkey, Tina Sharpe, Lynn Strunk and Terry McGee Ward.

Absent: Deneen Byrne, Tom Every, Mike Kutski, David Scott

Consultant: Katy Drake

Guests: Maureen Boutin (WIO)

With 19 members in attendance, a quorum is not present.

STATUS OF VACANCIES

- One vacancy for Columbia County business
- Two vacancies for Greene County business (1 appointment pending)
- A Community Based Organization is pending appointment for Greene County.

ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES

A motion was made by John Betts, seconded by Frank Alguire and carried by the Board to accept the Board Meeting Minutes for July 14, 2009. All Board meeting minutes are posted on the website, www.columbiagreeworks.org.

CORRESPONDENCE

Frank Alguire, WIB secretary, noted that the following correspondence is available for member review:

Letters sent:

- July 31, 2009 Letter to Mr. Jim Baldwin, District Superintendent, regarding appointment of an Adult Education Representative.
- August 17, 2009 Update to the Greene County Legislature and Columbia County Board of Supervisors on WIB recruitment and pending appointments.
- Individual recruitment letters

Letters Received:

- Letter from Dawn Bucci, Assistant Director of Accounting to Mr. Jeff Muiriello, Catskill District Treasurer regarding review of financial records.
- Notice of Obligation regarding ARRA reporting from Karen Colman, DEWS Director.
- Award letters from Patricia Smith for Building Skills in New York Grant
- Notice of Obligation regarding Disabilities Program Navigator from Karen Coleman, DEWS Director

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.

One Stop Operator 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 7-01-09 to 9-30-09 (verbally adding to the report a total of eleven students in CNA training), Unemployment Rates, Local Activities Local Report and Marketing Efforts.

A brief review of PY08 performance measures occurred. The challenges of keeping customers engaged for the 72 weeks they now receive in unemployment insurance was discussed.

ARRA funds have all been obligated. Some funding is expected to be de-obligated as Pell grants are received by students. The change in the level of Pell grants may have a positive impact. Other funding will be sought through connections with DSS and Community Action. Services at the One Stop will continue in the areas of career development, referrals, computer literacy, on line learning and the Employee Enhancement Program. Generally the more expensive ITAs, such as LPN and degree programs start in September with the college schedule, so there should not be a demand for these ITAs until PY10. Smaller ITAs may be able to be funded through de-obligated funds.

OLD BUSINESS

Update on RFP #13-N "Regional Economic Transformation Strategies through a Sector or Cluster Based Approach"

A CD of the Greater Capital Region Talent Pipeline Report prepared by Alan Krieger under the # 13 N grant was distributed to all members. Board members are encouraged to read the two page Executive Summary. Twenty-first century career flash cards, providing information on technical careers, were also distributed to all members. Additional flash cards and CDs are available through the Workforce Office.

The effectiveness of the WIB system was questioned based on an issue discussed in the Talent Pipeline Report. The report discussed businesses' frustration with the inaction of the WIA system in addressing businesses concerns. M.A. Wiltse pointed out that one of the main reasons businesses express frustration with the system is the lack of funding. As an example, she pointed out that our local area have had our funds cut over 50% since the start of WIA in 2000. The #13 N Grant and the ARRA funding have put some funding back which is now moving these projects.

NEW BUSINESS

WIA Reauthorization

The impact of WIA Reauthorization was discussed. MA Wiltse is in process of drafting the critical issues to be discussed based on a webinar presented by Rochelle Daniels ("It's not the Economy, Stupid-It's the Governance"). The Executive Committee will be meeting within the month to plan a course of action. It is suggested that we respond now before the law is rewritten to stress the importance of local Boards. MA Wiltse pointed out that there are no national

Workforce Investment Board of Columbia & Greene Counties

studies available on the effectiveness of the current governance system, so only opinions are available regarding the efficiency of the system. The challenges of “super boards” (regional) was discussed in regards to the impact on local job seekers and businesses.

As reviewed in the Committee Reports, the following resolutions were made:

Business Services’ Resolution on In Demand Occupation List

- The Business Services Committee put forth a resolution to approve the “Community and Social Occupations” to the In Demand Occupations List.

Business Services Resolution on funding tuition

- A motion was made to focus limited funding directly on tuition and to allow the Career Center to reallocate funding designated for childcare and educational support services.

Youth Council’s Resolutions

- A motion was made to amend the youth ITA System to include the stimulus definition of youth 18-24 and to allow stimulus funding to support ITAs based on priorities set by DOL, retroactive to July 1, 2009.

.As a quorum was not present at the meeting, these resolutions will be addressed in a special Executive Committee Meeting and brought again before the Board at the next meeting.

Letter regarding Catskill GED Program’s missed funding opportunity in PY08

The Board discussed the missed funding opportunity for the Catskill GED Program and supported the Youth Council and Executive Committee’s recommendation of writing a letter to the GED Program Coordinator and Catskill Superintendent.

Summer Youth Video

As the sound was not working on the Summer Youth Employment Video, a link to the video will be distributed via email to all Board members. The video illustrates the value to the summer youth program and shows the youth ages 14 - 15 in the different programs gaining work readiness skills.

GOOD AND WELFARE

John Betts and Betty Rosato Betts were congratulated on their recent wedding.

Mr. Frank Alguire updated the Board on Greene County Economic Development, Tourism and Planning for the past quarter. Mr. Alguire shared information regarding projects seeking grant funds for Greene County: A micro brewery in Athens, the world’s largest zip line at Hunter Mountain and a high tech water bottling company in Halcott Center (www.NYSpringwater.com). NY Spring Water is expected to create 35 new jobs.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:45

Please Mark Your Calendar

Upcoming Special Events	Date, Time, Location	Information:
WIB Full Board Meetings	January 13 , 2010 8:30 a.m. (Date Changed) Room 614 CG P.A.C. April 27, 2010 5:30 p.m.(Date Changed) July 13, 2010 8:30 a.m.	Contact Katy Drake at Drake@mh cable.com or 965-1421
<i>Meetings are held in The Professional Academic Building at the College unless otherwise noted</i>		

Workforce Investment Board of Columbia & Greene Counties

Respectfully submitted, Katy Drake/WIB Consultant

Business Services Committee

September 24, 2009 8:30 a.m.

OJT- Employee Enhancement Program-HR Roundtable

The Employee Enhancement Program was cancelled for September due to lack of enrollments. It is believed that because new hires have been so severely impacted by the economy that few employers had people to send to the program. A class will be offered again in October/November.

The Building Skills in New York (BUSINYS) grants were awarded. The three companies that worked directly with the WIA office on the grant received funding—Taconic, Wolfgang and COARC. It is estimated that 18 organizations in the region applied and 13 were awarded grant funds.

Fall Job Fair

The Department of Labor has not yet committed to the financial and human resource support they have provided for past job fairs. In the past, the job fairs have been a joint responsibility of DOL and WIO. The current economy was discussed noting that the fair would be expected to generate many job seekers, but few real job opportunities. Extremely limited training funds, due to the amount already spent on training (\$313,000 obligated to date), would create a challenge for inviting training providers. The committee agreed that continuing to offer “on-site recruitment” opportunities would meet businesses’ needs. On-site recruitment refers to the option of businesses setting up tables outside of the cafeteria, or scheduling a classroom in the PAC building and advertising their recruitment event. Posting on Craig’s List and local websites has proven successful for local businesses looking to attract qualified workers. The committee agreed to pursue the partnership with DOL for career fairs when the economy warrants a local career fair; potentially the April Job Fair.

Update on Training Fund Obligations

MA Wiltse distributed the PY09 ITA Report. Total obligations, including both formula funds and ARRA funding, is at \$313,000. The average cost per student was noted at \$2,921.35. Financial aid (Pell) is still pending and will cut the obligated costs and provide additional money for training this year. TAA (Trade Adjustment Act) funding was also discussed, noting that TAA paid for an additional six hours of ESL (English as Second Language) classes to extend the program offered by Questar III.

The costs beyond tuition were discussed by the committee. Support services costs, such as uniforms, testing fees and child care supports, can be expensive and deflect limited funding from additional training spots. Reaching out to employers or the health care consortium to match supports for much needed medical positions (LPNs, CNAs, RNs) was suggested. The committee was informed that LPN tuition rose almost \$2,000 over the past year.

A motion was made to focus limited funding directly on tuition and to allow Career Center staff to reallocate funding currently designated for childcare and educational supplies to tuition. The Career Center staff will design the specific policies, but it will eliminate Educational Supports, except for books, to customers that have received an ITA above \$3000. MA will aggressively investigate supports to supplement the funding in high demand occupations (healthcare). Not supplementing childcare at this time would restore an additional \$12,000 to the training budget. Not supplementing additional costs, such as uniforms and testing fees, could restore as much as \$7,000 to the training budget. It was noted all ARRA funds have been obligated.

In Demand Occupation List

A resolution was made to confirm “Community and Social Occupations” to the In Demand Occupations List

Continuous Quality Improvement Committee Meeting

Minutes for October 1, 2009 5:30 p.m.

Columbia Greene's Stimulus Funds Plan

MA Wiltse reviewed the challenges and successes under the American Reinvestment and Recovery Act (ARRA) funding. Columbia Greene received \$476,903 in stimulus funding. All ARRA funds are obligated.

The greatest challenge under the ARRA has been still not having enough funding to serve the customers. MA reviewed the projects that have been accomplished through ARRA funding. Stimulus money was utilized to implement a mechanical technology program which started in August with 5 students funded under WIA and 3 funded through the Trade Adjustment Act (TAA). A CNA program was reinstated serving 11 students. The certification test for the CNA program was September 30 and results are still pending.

The Workforce Investment Office worked closely with Questar III to increase an English as a Second Language (ESL) program by 6 additional hours per week through TAA funds. It is believed that the students who are successful in the ESL classes will pipeline into the mechanical technology program.

Keyboarding and navigating the internet classes also occurred serving 30 -35 students. Students in these programs are taught the very basics of computer use.

Program Year 2008 Final Performance Report

The System Improvement Indicators and Common Measures for PY08 were distributed to the committee. The committee reviewed the passed and failed measures for PY08. Standards and Data collection methods were reviewed for each measure. Missed incentive funds equal about 50% of total potential incentive funds.

The committee suggested assigning a staff to define each of the goals and to monitor progress to ensure all staff know the workings and documentation required to accomplish the measures.

The PY09 Incentive Based Systems Improvement Indicators draft was reviewed. The WIO is now counting anyone who was supported in getting into training even if the person is not WIA funded. The initial designation of "in need of career development" (NCDS) was discussed as it is now potentially a goal for PY09. "In Need of Career Development Services" cannot be adjusted or corrected once in the system if the customer was designated "Job Search Ready". As the data cannot be updated or corrected, C-G has already missed this measure which requires 100% of people in training be "in need of Career Development Services".

Reducing the number of participants who exit while still qualifying for UI benefits will be assigned to one person for a monthly review of figures. As the unemployment insurance period has expanded from 26 weeks to 72 weeks, the challenge of meeting this goal for all areas is daunting.

Increasing the number of youth participating in Individual Training Accounts (ITAs) was addressed in a policy in the October 1st youth meeting. Two youth participants may be started in ITAs, which will allow Columbia Greene to achieve this measure.

Two measures will attempt to be renegotiated (Training levels and reducing the number of participants who exit while certifying for UI benefits).

Quarterly reports were distributed indicating WIA Service type by funding stream and information on newly registered participants.

Action Item

A policy audit will be scheduled for the winter meeting.

Executive Committee

October 6, 2009 5:30 p.m.

The meeting began with a review and discussion of committee resolutions. The Business Services Committee put forth a resolution to approve "Community and Social Occupations" to the In Demand Occupation List. This category was left off the updated list approved by the Board at the July meeting in error and has been approved by the Business Services Committee to be added to the In Demand Occupation List for Columbia Greene.

The Business Services Committee also put forth a resolution to focus limited funding directly on tuition and requested to reallocate supportive service and educational support funding to tuition. This money is usually used for childcare and Educational Support costs (testing fees, uniforms, etc). This reallocation will redirect \$12,000 from childcare to tuition and up to \$7,000 from educational supports to tuition. The goal is to increase the number of people in training, so this reallocation is in line with state priorities. Concern was expressed as to whether students may not be able to complete training if childcare support is not available. MA Wiltse noted that no one has brought that concern forth who is currently in training. The Executive Committee agrees with the focus on tuition as long as this shift does not prevent students from completing their training. A small amount of discretionary funding would be available should the situation arise that childcare assistance is necessary for successful completion of training.

The Youth Council resolution for supporting two ITAs for youth was discussed. To be eligible for incentive funds for PY09, Columbia Greene must fund 2 youth ITAs. The Youth ITA policy is in place but has not been implemented due to shrinking funds. ARRA funds are available to serve two youth enrolled in the LPN program.

The status of an ITA in Sarah Witham's name was discussed. MA will check to see if an ITA was issued and recognition will be made once this ITA is established.

The missed opportunity for \$3,000 in supplies and materials for the Catskill GED program was discussed. Due to lack of follow through, the Catskill Program did not order the approved supplies by the deadline. A letter will be drafted on behalf of the Council and the Board that expresses our concern over this missed opportunity for significant program funds.

WIA Reauthorization

A Power Point presentation was distributed outlining information regarding WIA reauthorization. Now is a critical time for the Board to get the message out regarding the value of the local workforce system. The Executive Committee will work to draft the critical points so that members can send letters in support of the system. The Executive Committee will meet in October to further discuss the issue and course of action.

Fall Job Fair

Due to a lack of commitment by DOL in support of the Fall Job Fair, the traditional fair will not be held this year. In the past, the fair has been a joint effort between local and state. Consideration regarding the spring job fair will be given at the beginning of the new year.

Business Appointments

One business representative for Greene County and one business representative for Columbia County are still in the recruitment process.

Workforce Investment Board of Columbia & Greene Counties

Youth Council

October 1, 2009 9:00 a.m.

Work Readiness Credential (Sector Strategies Grant Update -#13N)

MA Wiltse provided an overview of year two for the Work Readiness Credential Program under the 13N grant. An RFP has been drafted to hire a consultant to coordinate regional standards between current providers, establish an electronic library for work readiness curriculums and materials from local programs, investigate a funding stream to maintain the program in future years and develop a brand/logo for the 11 county region. The consultant will also focus on establishing buy in from the local businesses to add value to the program.

Mark Decker will be adding work readiness components into the current Columbia Greene's YES program in addition to the current educational gains focus.

A general update on the BEST Program was provided. The programs are currently championed by both counties Economic Development agencies, and Chambers of Commerce. They have contracted with Questar III to provide support to participating schools.

TCAP (Technical Career Awareness Program) Sector Strategies Grant Update -#13N)

Marketing materials, including TV ads, promoting technical careers in the capital region were created under an RFP by BOCES in the first year of the grant. The second year of the grant will focus on rolling out the materials created. A web link to sample ads will be provided once obtained.

Flash cards of 21st century technical careers were distributed to the committee. These flash cards were distributed to local schools and focus on careers in advanced materials, biotechnology, information technology, nanotechnology and renewable energy. Additional sets of the flashcards are available through the Workforce Office.

Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP)

Mark Decker presented information on the Summer Youth Program. Due to ARRA funding, and NYS TANF funds, 178 youth were served between the two counties. The ARRA funds expanded the timeframe of the program serving youth starting in May through September. Under the stimulus funds the age of youth served also expanded, serving ages 14- 24. Twenty two youth have been continued with placements in non subsidized work after the summer youth program. Mark was commended for this remarkable success during this difficult economy. This year, 12% continued beyond the summer program, compared to 6% in 2008.

The four week program on campus serving 14 and 15 years old was outlined for the committee. Youth gained work experience in the areas of culinary arts, science & health and videography. It was noted that all the youth in the science & health component are CPR certified and participated in the field trips/site visits. The Videography group created a video of the SYEP. This video will be shared with the Council at the end of the meeting. The Culinary group ran a café during the summer providing breakfast, lunch and good will on campus. The café was run like a business in teaching the youth in the areas of hosting, taking orders, working a cash register, meal preparation, menu creation and kitchen practices. The "Learn Today Café" was very well received on campus giving youth experience in a restaurant setting. Healthy menu choices were added to the menu per the Workforce Investment Board's suggestion.

Magazine and newspaper articles reporting the success of the Summer Youth Program were passed around for Council review. Copies of the articles will be included in the quarterly reports to the Legislature and Board of Supervisor's Office.

Approximately \$8,000 of stimulus funds remain unbudgeted. Directing those funds to Individual Training Accounts (ITA) was discussed. If Columbia Greene enrolls two youth in ITAs, then the local area will meet a NYS DOL created incentive measures, which would make Columbia Greene eligible to receive a small incentive award next year. MA Wiltse distributed the policy that allows youth access to ITAs. The policy was created in 2001 but due to ongoing funding cuts money has not been available for ITAs to serve youth. Two students already enrolled in an LPN program could be served under this policy with Pell paying half their tuition and the ITA covering the other half.

A motion was made to amend the youth ITA System to include the stimulus definition of youth 18-24 and to allow stimulus funding to support ITAs based on priorities set by DOL, retroactive to July 1, 2009.

Workforce Investment Board of Columbia & Greene Counties

Update on Youth Programs

It was brought to the Council's attention that the Catskill GED program did not follow through on the purchase of equipment and materials granted to them through a contract modification increase of \$3,000 in PY08. At past meetings, the Council had approved an amended budget of materials and equipment that the Catskill GED Program was to purchase by June 30, 2009 (end of WIA fiscal year). Concern were expressed that while approved for these needed purchases, the Catskill GED program did not follow through in the required time frame and lost the additional \$3000 funding. The Council would like a letter to be drafted and forwarded to both the program supervisor and the Catskill School District's superintendent, to express our concern and disappointment at this missed opportunity.