

Workforce Investment Board of Columbia & Greene Counties

Minutes for April 7, 2004

Columbia Greene Community College- Room 105

Attendance:

Present: Kit Ali, Rikki Beal, John Betts, Bruce Bohnsack, John Craft, Jim Cullie, Karen Diffley, Pam Dusharm, Barbara Eacott, Diane Franzman, Jim Galvin, Al Hulick, David Lester, Joyce Lissandrello, Cindy MacKay, Jim Molloy, Irene Norsworthy, Hilton Perez, David Segalla, M. A. Wiltse, Sarah Witham, and Anthony Zibella.

Excused: Tom Every, Aaron Flach, Paul Dellio, Susan Hollister, Brian Keeler, Terry McGee-Ward, Ralph Marino, Alan Rabideau, Dawn Saul, Tina Sharpe, Lynn Strunk, and David Leavitt.

Guests: Suzanne Pollard, Empire State Economic Development, Mary Moores, Mental Health Association and Gail Aadland, United Stationers.

WIO Staff: Maureen Boutin

Consultant: Betty Ann Falkner

With 22 members in attendance, a quorum is present.



WELCOME

The meeting began with a welcome to all members and guests. Chairman Karen Diffley welcomed guests Suzanne Pollard of Empire State Development, Mary Moores, Mental Health Association and Gail Aadland of United Stationers, a potential new member. New members David Lester and John Craft were also welcomed to the Board.

STATUS OF VACANCIES

- There are two vacancies in Greene County, one for a business representative and one for a representative of a community based veteran's organization.

CORRESPONDENCE

There were six letters received. The reading of correspondence by the secretary was waived. Members who wished to were able to review the correspondence. A letter from Maggie Moree on the Youth Performance Measures. A letter from the Greene County Legislature appointing Russ Coloton of Hunter Mountain to serve on the Board. Richard Phelan sent a letter of resignation, as did George Skraastad. A letter was received from the Columbia County Board of Supervisors appointing David Lester of Taconic Farms and John Craft of Chatco to the Board.

Fourteen letters were sent out this past quarter. A Thank You letter was sent to Keith Valentine on his service to the Board. A Dinner Dialogue invitation letter was sent to local elected officials. A packet of information on the Youth Employability Program and Youth Futures Survey was sent to Jeff Baltes as a representative of the Columbia-Greene Superintendents Association. Welcome new board member letters were sent to Russ Coloton, David Lester and John Craft. Funding request letters were sent to Charles Schumer, Hilary Clinton, John Sweeney, Stephen Saland and James Seward. New York State funding letters were sent to Stephen Saland and James Seward.

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Board members requested that the funding letter be made available to everyone who might want to send it out from their business or organization. Letters will also be sent to elected officials and Chambers of Commerce.

ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES

A motion to accept the January 7, 2004 minutes was made by Tony Zibella and seconded by Jim Cullie. All were in favor and the motion was passed.



COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Marketing Committee

Jim Cullie reviewed the report of activities for the committee. This committee met three times in the past quarter. The group worked on a Power Point Presentation that was delivered to the local elected officials at the Dinner Dialogue meeting in February. The presentation will also be available to all partners as part of a Marketing Outreach effort by the Board. That presentation was voted a success by all Board members who applauded the work of the committee. M. A. Wiltse also thanked committee members for their hard work.

Skills Standards Committee

Chair Rikke Beal shared the activities of this committee with members. This committee met to discuss changes to the In-Demand Occupations list. The committee reviewed the list and separated it into two categories: one category is for occupations that are appropriate for ITA's (Individual Training Accounts) because they pay over \$8.00 per hour and require an Associates Degree or less for entry into the field. The other category includes those occupations that individuals can learn through OJT (On-the-Job training) or occupations that tend to require constant skill upgrading to maintain employment and could be appropriate for employed worker training programs.

Chair Rikke Beal told the Board that the revisions to the In-Demand Occupations list would not supersede any other Board policies regarding who is be eligible for ITA funding.

Employer Services Committee

New Chair Jim Galvin reported on this committee's activities. He highlighted the upcoming Job Fair to be held at Columbia-Greene Community College on April 21st. Jim also mentioned the work that has been done to prepare for Business Focus groups. Betty Ann Falkner informed the Board that contact has been made with four of the seven host businesses. Dates are being selected to hold the focus groups during the month of May.

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Youth Council

Maureen Boutin presented the report on the activities of the Youth Council. The council met to discuss the progress on efforts to build interest in the community for a Youth Employability Certificate program. This program is modeled on successful programs in Rochester and Niagara County. A meeting was scheduled with the school superintendents on March 12th to present information on the program. The Superintendents that attended the March 12th meeting were very interested in the program and another meeting has been set up for May 5th to discuss the program with other school staff. Also discussed at the meeting was a Youth Futures Survey. Board members were given a copy of the final survey that is now ready to go out to all school district 11th & 12th Graders. Columbia-Greene Community College staff will assist with tabulating and analyzing the surveys.

Maureen also invited all Board members to the Annual Youth Provider Dinner on May 6th from 4:30-6:30 at Columbia Greene Community College Cafeteria.

The Youth Council is also working on a new RFP (Request for Proposals) format that will make it easier for applicants to complete and will incorporate potential changes in Federal performance measures. Our WIB has failed two performance measures for older youth (19-21) employee retention for 6-9 months and earnings gain. This led to a discussion of the issues related to why we didn't meet these measures and a recommendation that the Continuous Quality Improvement Committee should review the issue in more detail.

Executive Committee

Chairman Karen Diffley reported on this committee's activities. The committee reviewed the Strategic Planning activities that have occurred to date. The February Dinner Dialogue with Elected Officials seemed to be well received. Committee members thought the information was well presented and assisted the officials in becoming aware of what is happening in workforce development.

The committee also discussed one area of concern regarding State Set-aside Funding. The Federal government gives funding to New York State and 85% of the funds are allocated to the WIB's. 15% of the money is set aside and New York State has been using a lot of those funds to provide supplemental allocations to WIBs and to fund incumbent worker business training grants. With the state in budget crunch time, there has been talk of that 15% no longer being available to WIB's. It would go to fund other state programs. This could impact the assistance we are able to give to businesses and job seekers. As mentioned earlier, impact letters have been sent to State officials and a draft letter will be available for local businesses that have utilized the funding.

Continuous Quality Committee

New chair Jim Molloy reported that although this committee was unable to meet this quarter due to the press of individual business they would meet and review the results of the WIB Quiz given out at the last Board meeting. Members who still have not sent in their quiz results are encouraged to do so as soon as possible.

One Stop Operator Director's Report

M.A. Wiltse She briefly reviewed the Participation report for the One-Stop Center. Participation among adults has increased slightly at the Career Center.

She also reviewed the Marketing reports, which shows that 46 presentations have been made by Business Services Representative Maureen Boutin or other staff since the last Board meeting. The Extension reports from Satellite sites, which include the local Mid-Hudson Library System were made available as part of the report.

Hilton Perez responded to questions on the Department of Labor Employment statistics on unemployment. Unemployment rates in both counties are up since December 2003 mostly due to the seasonal jobs that end in the first quarter. Rates are still below national averages.

M. A. Wiltse then shared a copy of remarks made by President Bush on the Economy and Job training. Excerpts of his speech were made available by NYATEP (New York Association of Training and Employment Professionals), who pay attention to federal political activities that relate to workforce issues. She informed Board members that the dollar amounts the president used in discussing workforce training included programs (Job Service and WIA Youth) that do not allow training. In addition, she explained that the President stated that 35% of funds were used for administrative purposes, when the WIA law only allows 10% of the funds to be used for administration. He was obviously using a different definition of what constitutes administration.

Any Board member who may be interested in more information on this speech or who had any questions was encouraged to ask.



OLD BUSINESS

Chairman Diffley reported that the February 26th Dinner Dialogue meeting was a big success. Elected officials were impressed by the activities of the Board and pledged their support for future activities.

WIB Quiz- Any members who did not complete the quiz were asked to do so and fax it to 822-2007.

NEW BUSINESS

Resolutions & Discussion:

- Resolved to accept the Skill Standard's committee recommendation that the In-Demand Occupations list be updated and accepted. **A motion was made by Rikke Beal and seconded by Diane Franzman. All were in favor with proxies from Susan Hollister, Tina Sharpe, Aaron Flach, Tom Every, Ralph Marino, Dawn Saul, Paul Dellio and Brian Keeler and the motion was passed.**



GOOD AND WELFARE

- Upcoming Elections- Tony Zibella ascends to Chairman on July 1st. This leaves the positions of Vice Chair, Treasurer and Secretary open. Current Chair Karen Diffley has appointed a nominating committee comprised of John Betts, Jim Cullie and Diane Franzman to accept nominations.
- **Member Education- Economic Development Reports**
 - *Jim Galvin of Columbia County Economic Development* reviewed current projects occurring in Columbia County. Jim related that an Agricultural Housing grant is being submitted for Migrant Housing. Columbia County has also submitted an application for the MicroBusiness Training program. Funding cuts have also affected the operation of their SBA loan program. Funding has been cut by 70% from last year. A new building has gone up in Commerce Park to house Columbia News, a local distributor of newspapers and magazines. The Waterfront cleanup project has begun. It is expected to take 15-18 months and about 22 million dollars to complete. There appears to be money available for new ridership and transportation routes in the county. On the real estate front prices are going high and may be topping off. Two properties on Warren Street just sold for \$450,000 and money is also being spent on upgrading the properties. A steering committee has been formed to look at developing a comprehensive plan that will look at industrial lands, look at attraction and transportation corridors along with zoning. The idea would be to develop an inventory of available lands.
 - *Irene Norsworthy of Greene County Economic Development* reviewed current projects in the works in Greene County. She also mentioned that her Micro Business program needs money also. The construction of Home Depot is moving forward. It is becoming a major draw along the Exit 21 area and is driving up commercial real estate values. The Save-A-Lot Distribution Center is up and running with 90 employees. They will have a total of 130 employees. The Bank of Greene Counties Cocksackie Branch will move to the industrial park and will set the architectural standard for the park. A major project in the works is the Windham Enclave project, which will see 35 High End Condos with prices ranging from \$380,000 to One Million Dollars being built in this 22 million dollar project. Already 30 of the 35 unbuilt units have been sold. GNH Lumber has opened in the Greenville Ames Plaza with a nice retail mix of Kitchen and Bath items. Vesuvio Foods an Italian food supplier has opened up with a 15,000 square foot space. Emergent Care in Cocksackie continues to receive much praise for its work. The Department of Planning and Economic Development has moved to its new offices in the new Greene County Office Building at 411 Main Street in Catskill.
- Mary Moores of the Mental Health Associations Supported Employment Program shared information on the needs of their clients to have part-time jobs. She addressed the Board and shared a brochure outlining the Supported Employment

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Program. Their average candidate is approximately 30 years old and is ready to return to the workforce.

- Partner Education- M. A. Wiltse told the Board that the Workforce Development System includes all the partners and their programs. Our job is to try to coordinate services so that resources are used wisely and we avoid duplication. She then introduced David Segalla who heads VESID- *Vocational and Educational Services for Individuals with Disabilities*. They provide services to individual's aged 16 and up. All applicants must meet certain eligibility requirements- have a disability, have a substantial impediment to employment and there must be a likelihood that the individual will be able to achieve an employment outcome. Our local area has three Masters degree level employment counselors. David shared the VESID brochure with the Board and explained some of the services available to employers. For example, businesses who hire a disabled individual or who have an employee who becomes disabled can receive free consulting services from VESID to assist the business in developing accommodation plans that will help the employee with any productivity issues.



- **Mark Your Calendar**

- Spring Job Fair- *April 21st 10 a.m.-3 p.m.-CGCC*
- 3rd Annual Youth Provider Dinner- *Thursday, May 6th - 4:30-6:30-CGCC*
- Greene County Chamber: Business Woman & Business Man of the Year Award Dinner
 - *Thursday, May 13, 2004*
 - Location to be announced.
- Columbia County Chamber: Business After Hours at Finger Insurance
 - *Thursday, April 22nd – 5:30-7:00*
 - 192 Fairview Ave., Hudson
 - Women's Networking Luncheon
 - *Wednesday, April 28th – 12:00-1:30*
 - The Purple Pepper, 3350 Route 9. Valatie
 - Membership Breakfast
 - *Wednesday May 12th 7:30-9:00*
 - Kozel's Restaurant, Rt. 9H, Ghent
- JSEC Breakfast:
 - Columbia Greene Workforce New York Business Forum-Put us to Work for You!
 - *Thursday, May 20th, 8:00-10:00*

***Last Board Meeting of the Board Year** – all Board members are encouraged to put this date on their calendar and to make attendance at the Board meetings a priority!

- ***Tuesday, June 15, 2004 @ 8:30 a.m.***

ADJOURNMENT- 7:25 p.m.