



SWW Workforce Development Board

Meeting Minutes

of November 4, 2020 Online (ZOOM) Meeting

thejoblink.org

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Joe Serafini (Chair), Ash Anand, Scott Brazie, Michael Billok, Michael Bittel, Dan Dudley, Mark Fish, Maureen Grabowski, Tara McCaughey, Zack Moore, Patricia Myers, Mike Munter, Laura Oswald, Turina Parker, Dominick Patrignani, Caelynn Prylo, Tracey Riley, Shelby Schneider, Wendy Skawinski, Mary Ann Spezio, Tracy Stadel, John Wheatley. (22)

EXCUSED: Marcy McNamara

GUESTS: Jen McCloskey, Liza Ochsendorf, Traci Ross.

STAFF: Bill Resse (Interim Director), Gretchen Steffan, Executive Director in-training.

1. Welcome and Roll Call

Board Chair Serafini opened the meeting and advised a roll call be conducted to ensure quorum. New members were welcomed to the Board, thanked for their willingness to serve and recognized:

Saratoga County: Tara McCaughey, Global Foundries
Marcy McNamara, Saratoga County Human Resources
Patricia Myers, HVCC – TEC Smart Campus

Warren County: Ash Anand, LOTUS Analytics & LOTUS Group of Companies
Maureen Grabowski, Homestead Funding
Zack Moore, Spruce Hospitality Group

Washington County: Mary Ann Spezio, The Fort Miller Group, Inc.

2. Approval of Minutes from June 11, 2020 meeting

Motion to Approve: by Shelby Schneider;

Second: Dominick Patrignani;

Discussion: None;

Vote: Approved unanimously.



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3. Presentation by Melinda Mack, Executive Director of NYATEP (New York Association of Training and Employment Professionals).

Melinda provided a comprehensive overview of the roles and responsibilities of Workforce Development Boards under Federal Legislation enacted in 2015 referred to as WIOA, the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act. She provided background information on the history of workforce development from 1973 to today, defined the purpose of WIOA, and introduced the Primary Program Titles within WIOA representing the core partner programs that are pertinent to the work of Local Workforce Boards, which include:

- Title I (guidelines and funding to: prepare adults, youth, and dislocated workers for employment; fund the career centers/American Job Centers and the delivery of career services, business services and job training, as well as the local Workforce Boards),
- Title II (addressing funding and programs addressing adult education & literacy,
- Title III (funds the Wagner-Peyser employment services program operated by NYS DOL which provides labor exchange services that match employers with qualified job seekers),
- Title IV (supports a wide range of vocational rehabilitation services designed to help individuals with disabilities prepare for and engage in gainful employment.

In addition, Melinda described the goals for workforce boards which include the effective management of resources received by our area and to drive strategy development and implementation for the local workforce system, described the criteria of a high performing Board according to New York State Department of Labor (NYSDOL) Local Plan Template, provided detailed Local Board Responsibilities for Policy, Operations and Strategy related to the boards oversight of the system, centers and WIOA funds received. She further stressed the importance of business sector engagement and that the board is not just advisory.

Melinda concluded her presentation by providing several examples of success stories of Local Workforce Development Boards working collaboratively with regional partners to fulfill the obligations and spirit of WIOA legislation. Melinda then entertained questions from Board Members. As a post-presentation follow-up, Melinda sent the Board NYSDOL information/data on regional unemployment and how to differentiate between those working and those dropping out of the workforce.



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4. Approval of Youth Services Contracts

Bill Resse (Interim Director) provided background for this topic which, was seek approval for contacts for youth basic literacy skills and TASC preparation for the Title I service providers in Warren County (\$15,022) and Washington County (\$14,176).

Motion to Approve: by John Wheatley;

Second: Turina Parker;

Discussion: None;

Vote: Approved unanimously.

5. Summary of the 2020 Summer Youth Employment Program (Written Report provided)

Center Directors Jen McCloskey, Liza Ochsendorf, and Traci Ross provided an overview of their programs for the Board. The COVID Pandemic resulted in the delay of TANF funds being released to the Counties, which limited participation. The Centers received a July 3rd notification, which is several months later than normal. Further, the challenge of having 3 weeks of lead time to start the program provided many obstacles to overcome, including a short window of time for applications, placement, and planning to ensure the safety of participants to meet current COVID-mandated precautions and restrictions. The youth that were able to participate were very committed and program outcomes were met. Although all counties usually have a higher rate of participation, the uncertainty over parents sending their children to the program due to COVID, fewer referrals because of school closures and an inability to communicate with students (phone, email and address changes) caused our numbers to be lower than desired as was the case throughout much of the state. The area had been allocated \$450,569 and served 54 youth at 34 worksites.

6. Update on Career Centers Activity

Jen McCloskey of Saratoga County discussed the upcoming **ALBANY CAN CODE** 10-week Virtual Digital Literacy Class. Starting in November, the program will require a time commitment for students of 2 hours, 2 times per week, for 10 weeks, and a full subscription for Microsoft Office 365 for use on home computers. 60 days of free SPECTRUM WI-Fi is available for those who do not have internet in the residence. There are 20 seats available for this Virtual training opportunity. This is a pilot program, which has had success in neighboring counties. This is paid for from WIOA funds.



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Liza Ochsendorf of Warren County reported that their Center was still closed, but offering all services remotely, including Metrix Learning and employment counseling. All the Center Directors see a virtual services transition and have been meeting weekly with other Capital Region Center Directors remotely to create virtual programming that can be shared among all Capital Region customers. Virtual topics available include: Goal Setting, Interview Preparation, Online Job Search, Overcoming Barriers to Employment, Resume and Cover Letter Development, Social Media and Transferrable Skills. For those with challenges to access technology, they are recommending utilizing local library services. Internet access continues to be a problem for many. Warren County has developed a Wi-Fi map, which is posted on their website, so folks can find Wi-Fi hot spots to utilize for access to internet. Warren County has looked into a loaning program for laptops, but the DOL nixed that idea. Liza has been working with Shelby Schneider (from the Saratoga Prosperity Partnership) on barriers to work. For example, childcare, and transportation. They are working on solutions, coordination, bike-share programs and Grant opportunities to help. This is an example of WDB Partnership to solve regional problems.

Traci Ross of Washington County reported that as of yet they have no Career Center Director. Traci is serving in the interim and collaborating with both Saratoga and Warren Counties. However, a new person should be coming soon. Traci is anticipating a shift in focus to the whole person vs transactional job search methods pre-COVID.

7. Update on Board Activities

Bill Resse reported that he has been working part-time since June addressing basic board responsibilities, meetings, requests and communications. Once Gretchen started he has been focusing on her orientation. He reported that he is working on an Operational Guide.

8. Adjournment