

WIB Meeting Minutes

DATE: June 22, 2021, 9 a.m.

LOCATION/TIME: ZOOM Meeting Platform

ATTENDEES: Jomo Akono, Mary Margaret Aprile, Fred Boeheim, Cheryl Byrne, Tracy Cardwell, John Cappellino, Phyllis Damico, Steve Davis, Silvia Fakler, Andrew Federick, Charles G. Jones, Jr., Thomas Kim, Brian Manley, Michael Martin, Dennis Martinez, Brenda McDuffie, Elizabeth Miller, Robert Mootry, Jr., Spencer Murray, Scott Pallotta, Patricia Riegle, April Sanders, and Myrna Young

EXCUSED  
ABSENT/ Julius Gregg Adams, Terry Chatfield, Jessica Corrigan, Sylvester Dihaan, Joseph Hanna, D. Cory Haqq, Oswaldo Mestre, Jr., Bridget Russo, Ralph Salerno, Russell Sferlazza, Demone Smith, and David Sullivan.

STAFF  
ATTENDEES: Mark Cosgrove, David Kaczor, Francine Nicholas, Denise Raymond, Joseph Ricchiazzi, John Slenker, Lavon Stephens and Geoffrey Szymanski.

GUESTS: Cheryl Fisher, Magavern, Magavern & Grimm

TOPIC	DISCUSSION	ACTION
Call to Order	Mr. Jones called the meeting to order at 9:02 a.m. Mr. Jones thanked the group for their attendance.	
I. Executive Director's Report	<p>Mr. Szymanski reviewed the following topics:</p> <p><b>The Trade &amp; Economic Transition Grant (TET)</b>-National Dislocated Worker Grant (TET-NDWG) was awarded by New York State Department of Labor (NYSDOL) to the WDC. This grant offered training and paid experience to WIOA dislocated workers in demand occupations such as: advanced manufacturing and technology. Mr., Szymanski stated that we are on a proper spending pace to meet our financial TET budget goals. This program is set to expire in September of 2021 with no extensions. Personnel Changes: Alicia McLaughlin has been fully trained by Barbara Schaus. Barbara has returned to retirement. A huge thank you was acknowledged by Mr. Szymanski and the board for her service. HPOG: Health Profession Opportunity Act (HPOG) was not extended by congress and is scheduled to expire on September 29 2021. However, County Executive Mark Poloncarz has stepped up and is utilizing the American Rescue Plan Act (ARP) in his R.E.N.E.W. (Reinvest in Erie's Neighborhoods and Employ our Workforce) plan. Erie County will now be fully funding HPOG for next year.</p> <p><b>WIOA Spending Rate</b>- Mr. Szymanski stated currently we are on pace with our anticipated operating level. With financial carry-over in adult and youth funding from 2019 and 2020 due to the shutdown of our training facilities last year. We are trying to accelerate spending in these two areas as opportunities are beginning to reopen. Extended unemployment insurance enhancement has continued to be detrimental to our programs. However, this is expected to conclude in September. The proposed budget for 2021-2022 will be approximately \$1,000,000 less than last year's operating budget to be nearly \$8,500,000. Mr. Ricchiazzi will go into greater detail with his presentation.</p> <p><b>Business Services</b>-While reorganizing the structure of Business Services to be more efficient, a majority of the Pathways Programs have been completed. On the job training (OJT) has increased while successfully implementing One Stop Operating Systems (OSOS) manager John Slenker's new software tools. Mr. Patel will have greater detail with his presentation.</p> <p><b>WIOA Youth Services Program Year 2020-2021</b>- Currently WIOA Youth Service Providers (Buffalo Urban League, Catholic Charities, and The Service Collaborative of WNY) continue to provide needed services while following all CDC safety protocols. We are in the final year of the initial RFP extension. Mr. Scello will go into more detail upon his presentation.</p> <p><b>Buffalo Employment Training Center (BETC)</b> - The BETC is undergoing a transitional reorganization with the final implementation to take place in</p>	

	<p>late July. This is expected to make the BETC more efficient for our clients. Director Smith will go into greater detail with his presentation.</p> <p><b>Local Plan</b>-Deputy Director David Kaczor has finalized the Local Plan 2021-2024 and submitted it to our regional NYSDOL representative. The plan has been posted to our public website for review and comment. We did receive some comments and they will be reviewed. Mr. Szymanski thanked Ms. Brenda McDuffie for her suggestions at the last meeting, to which the County Executive promptly stepped up to help the HPOG program from ending. Ms. McDuffie stressed the importance of this program and investment for the community, and wanted to publicly thank County Executive Mark Poloncarz.</p>	
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<p>II. Action Items</p> <p>A) Minutes from April 27, 2021 meeting</p> <p>B) PY 2021 Draft Budget- Joseph Ricchiazzi</p>	<p>Mr. Ricchiazzi reviewed the PY 2021 draft budget. There were charts included in the agenda, but also shared via ZOOM. A majority of the budget is impacted by HPOG. Now that the County is funding the HPOG program, a budget modification needs to be submitted. All of the funds and allocations will change across the board.</p> <p><b>Estimated PY 21 Revenue Summary</b> Mr. Ricchiazzi stated a 4% COLA increase due to the prior year not having any COLA increase. Fringe benefit rate calculated at 38% which is the same from PY 20. Included in the fringes is: Cost is shared 75% to employer, 25% to employee, 10% retirement contribution, etc. There is increased carry-over from the previous year. ER-NDWG funding passed through from NYS originating from the CARES ACT. The Trade &amp; Economic Transition Grant (TET) will fully expend as of June 30, 2021. New for 2021 is the Employment Recovery (ER)-NDWG grant from August 27, 2020-September 30, 2022.</p> <p><b>Grant Changes</b>-WIOA Adult is down 1.59%, WIOA Dislocated is up 28.81%, WIOA Admin is up 5.7%, and WIOA Youth is down 1.8%. In all the budget is up 5.59%. HPOG was scheduled to end 09/29/2021 with a \$1.2 million in carry-over. A waiver was applied for due to the 20% spending requirement. The TET grant will be fully expended as of June 30, 2021. New for 2021 is the ER-NDWG grant. Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) is strictly for training and support costs. A different view was presented if the HPOG program would've been lost. Pending is the budget modification in regards to HPOG being funded by the Erie County R.E.N.E.W. Act. Expenses by category were reviewed. Fund reimbursement to County of Erie for one WIB staff member and fund reimbursement to City of Buffalo for BETC Director is reflected in the salaries &amp; fringes. Overall the WIB's budget is down \$4.2 million from PY 20 \$4.6 million. SUNY ERIE's budget is consistent with the previous year's contract. Operating expenses are down slightly because of the HPOG changes. There is an increase in WIOA funds because of the carry-in from HPOG. Total expenditures are budgeted at \$8.5 which is \$1 million less than the previous year. A lot of costs will change when the HPOG grant is picked up again and with the budget modification. For net assets there is \$526,591.00 available as emergency funds. The following charts in the packet were then reviewed: spending costs, training, WIOA Youth, etc.</p> <p>Mr. Mootry asked a question about the emergency funding and that it should be documented in the budget in case other people look at this in the future. Mr. Ricchiazzi mentioned that this is documented on the balance sheet and recorded, but not on the revenue expenditure report for the meeting. In response Mr. Mootry was asking about the transparency to the public on these reports.</p> <p>Mr. Walsh asked the question about statistics on how these dollars help the people we are serving. It was noted that during the last two quarters training has increased. It was stated that COVID has impacted those served and he will work with Mr. Scello on performance metrics. Mr. Jones, Jr. stated that in a future meeting there can be a slide that helps with context of those served. Mr. Walsh questioned how these services impacting the people served would be good to see in reference to previous years. Mr. Jones,</p>	<p><b>Motion to approve the minutes from the April 27, 2021 meeting was made by Ms. Aprile seconded by Mr. Mootry, Jr. Roll call was taken. All were in favor. Motion carried.</b></p> <p><b>Motion to accept the recommendations of the Program Year 2021 Draft Budget was made by Mr. Federick, seconded by Ms. McDuffie. All were in favor. Motion carried.</b></p>
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<p>C) WIOA Adult Dislocated Worker Transfer-Resolution-Joseph Ricchiazzi</p> <p>D) SUNY Erie Career Center-Resolution-Mark Cosgrove</p> <p>E) WNY Networks IT-Resolution- David Kaczor</p> <p>F) Resolution Awarding PY21 System</p>	<p>Jr. and Mr. Kaczor both mentioned the annual report that comes out every year for this information. Mr. Kaczor also mentioned that due to the pandemic, we didn't have an annual report. This information is posted on our website and was recommended for review on the organization's conduct. NYSDOL helps provide statistics provided in the annual report.</p> <p>Mr. Ricchiazzi stated transfers are allowed between the WIOA Adult and Dislocated Worker up to 100% by the Director of Finance under the WIOA Act. This allows the 20% requirements and better serve the populations requiring these funding sources. Ms. Fakler asked for further clarification on the transfer between the funding sources. Mr. Ricchiazzi stated that monetary funding can't be transferred without the board's approval. He also explained further the eligibility between the sources. Ms. Fakler wants to ensure that all parties are being served and no one is being turned away.</p> <p>Mr. Cosgrove stated SUNY Erie operates the Career Center at SUNY North Campus and at the SUNY Erie South Campus. Mr. Cosgrove stated that there are over 35 zip codes to which services are provided such as career management, networking, resume writing, comprehensive assessments, job placement assistance, etc. They service over 170 clients with an average of 11 placements per week. These are pretty good numbers considering a pandemic. According to NYSDOL, pre pandemic, there was over 500 placements per year. SUNY Erie is requesting approval for these funds for the period of July, 1 2021 through June 30, 2022 to operate the Career Centers. Ms. Fakler commented on how pleased she is with the services being provided at these centers.</p> <p>Mr. Kaczor stated last year a formal proposal was presented to maintain services and a web-based presence. The winning contract was WNY Networks Inc. This company has serviced the WIB and WDC for a number of years. A provision was included in the RFP to extend the contract for up to three years. Mr. Galley was selected based off of submission due to quality of service and price point. Staff was asked to give input on this vendor's provided services. Quality of work is reviewed to verify performance. This resolution would allow for a one-year contract extension of our current contract at the same flat rate of \$95/hour, for the period of July1, 2021 through June 30, 2022. Mr. Kaczor stated we have had a successful relationship with Mr. Galley who has been very responsive to staff IT needs. Mr. Davis commented on the value of bundling services, but was underwhelmed by web design services. He asked if certain IT needs had been separated in the RFP versus bundling services. Mr. Kaczor also noted that the website has certain agencies that must be represented on it. Cost is also another factor, but not opposed to redesigning the website. Mr. Walsh Jr. agreed with Mr. Davis that bundling services doesn't necessarily mean efficiency in all IT areas. IT has special skill sets that might need to be separated in a RFP. Mr. Kaczor stated that this will be considered in the future while being conservative with spending. Mr. Szymanski acknowledged these recommendations made by Mr. Davis and Mr. Walsh, Jr.</p> <p>Ms. Nicholas kindly asked Mr. Slenker to temporarily exit the meeting so the RFP could be discussed. In</p>	<p><b>Motion to approve the WIOA Adult Dislocated Worker transfer Resolution that provides the authority to the Director of Finance to transfer up to 100 percent of Program Year 19 &amp; Program Year 20 funds between the Adult and Dislocated Worker programs for the purpose of addressing local area programs and customer needs. Motion was made by Mr. Boeheim, seconded by Mr. Mootry, Jr. All were in favor. Motion carried.</b></p> <p><b>Motion to approve the resolution to authorize the WIB and WDC to enter into a memorandum of understanding and financial agreement with SUNY Erie in an amount not to exceed \$553,492.58 for the period of 7/1/21-6/30/22. Motion was made by Ms. Fakler, seconded by Ms. Cardwell. All were in favor. Motion carried.</b></p> <p><b>Motion to authorize the WDC to enter into a 1-year contract period with WNY Networks Inc., for the express purpose of providing IT and Web Site support services to the WIB, WDC, and SUNY Erie. Services will continue to be billed at a flat rate of \$95 per hour and will be billed in 30-minute increments. The total budget will not exceed \$118,000. Ms. Cardwell made the motion, seconded by Mr. Akono. Opposed by Mr. Davis and Mr. Walsh, Jr. Motion still carries.</b></p> <p><b>Motion to ratify the Workforce Development Consortium (WDC) to enter</b></p>
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<p>Coordinator Contract- Francine Nicholas</p> <p>G) WIOA Youth Incentive Policy-Update-Anthony Scello</p> <p>H) 2021 Fiscal Year Computer Upgrades-Resolution- Joseph Ricchiazzi</p>	<p>March of 2021 a RFP for the One Stop System Coordinator was posted. Only one application was received, reviewed, and had a satisfactory score. Mr. Slenker provides consulting services as the One Stop Coordinator and has done so for the past three years. Mr. Slenker has created an innovative and streamlined approach to One Stop services and system partners.</p> <p>Mr. Scello stated that the local workforce has had a policy in effect for the WIOA Youth Incentive Policy. This policy provides incentives based on individual service plans. Benchmark achievements are documented in order to receive the incentive. Our service providers are the Buffalo Urban League, Catholic charities, and The Service Collaborative of WNY, Inc. Mr. Scello is asking for approval to increase the monetary value in incentives, in order to be more aligned with other similar workforce regions.</p> <p>Mr. Ricchiazzi stated that annually they meet with the IT consultants regarding reliable equipment, especially for customer use. Funds for the computer upgrade were presented in the PY 21 draft budget. BETC operates a Computer Resource Center and proposes the upgrade to 25 computers and 1 redundant server. Thee WDC proposes to purchase 1 redundant server for the Larkin Building recommended by its Information Technology Consultant. The WIB Board must approve purchases over the amount of \$10,000.</p>	<p><b>into a contract with John Slenker, for the express purpose of providing consulting services as the One-Stop System Coordinator for the contract term of 7/1/2021 to 6/30/2022. The total budget will not exceed \$49,998.80. Motion was made by Ms. McDuffie, seconded by Mr. Martin. All were in favor. Motion carried.</b></p> <p><b>Motion to ratify the increase WIOA Youth Incentive Policy. Motion to approve the contract was made by Mr. Mootry, Jr., seconded by Mr. Walsh, Jr. All were in favor. Motion carried.</b></p> <p><b>Motion to authorize the upgrade of 25 computers and purchase of 2 redundant servers between BETC and the Larkin Building. Amount not to exceed \$26,000. Motion to approve the contract was made by Ms. McDuffie, seconded by Ms. Cardwell. All were in favor. Motion carried.</b></p>
<p>III. Business Services Update- Minesh Patel</p> <p>IV. Center Updates</p> <p>a) SUNY Erie Career Center- Denise Raymond</p>	<p>Mr. Patel updated the committee on Business Services on behalf of Ms. Corrigan. All four Pathways Programs have successfully completed three of the four programs. Final data is not yet available for these cohorts. Strategic planning phase is being worked on for the new fiscal year. Additional updates will be made at the October's board meeting. Southern Junction OJT is ongoing and on track for a July 2021 completion. The Business Services Team has 6 open OJT applications in Advanced Manufacturing and Food &amp; Restaurant Service.</p> <p><b>Business &amp; Partner Outreach:</b> We have implemented usage of new tools shared by John Slenker as of May 1, 2021. The NYSDOL Business Directory and Erie County's Dual MBE/WBE Resource list. April's outreach was 45 and May's was 40. Partners served in April were 15 and in May 18. More specific questions can be addressed to Ms. Corrigan.</p> <p>Ms. Raymond thanked the board for approving the contract. She stated job placements has been difficult due to the pandemic and there have been a number of repeat customers. Some of the items she reviewed were: Mr. Cosgrove's NYSDOL numbers that were released. North Campus is open full-time. South Campus is open on Tuesdays. Appointments are available during other days/times. Most customers still prefer virtual services. Ms. Raymond explained the new vaccine requirements for being on campus. There are new, fresh workshops to better help clients. Mr. Davis questioned why customers still prefer virtual and asked if they are given a choice with their initial interview. Ms. Raymond explained some clients prefer not to come in due to language barriers or disabilities. Ms. Fakler wanted to verify we are serving Erie County versus other counties. She was also concerned about the budget aspect of serving our local community. Ms. Raymond stated we service over 35 zip codes and</p>	

<p>V. Other Business</p> <p>Demand Occupation List by Priority- Mark Cosgrove</p> <p>Adjourn</p>	<p>explained in the case of NY State residents from other NY counties, if we are running our workshops for our Erie County constituents anyway, we have allowed residents from other counties to attend our workshops as long as they are registered with the NYSDOL. It doesn't cost anything extra to add online seats via WebEx. Similarly, some of our Erie County customers are taking online workshops at other One-Stop Career Centers across the State as well (in Chautauqua, Rochester, Niagara County, etc.). Customers both in and outside of the State are being referred back to their local Job Centers for resume writing and job search services, as these activities would require staff time. Mr. Kaczor mentioned that NYSDOL refers clients to career centers and their eligibility. He complimented Ms. Raymond's personal phone calls and great public service. There is concern for September when unemployment is slated to end and the demand that will be placed upon SUNY Erie and the BETC center. Ms. Damico commented on misinformation given by an employee as well as challenges faced by NYSDOL due to the pandemic. Hundreds of staff are now being transferred back to their core services and partners.</p> <p>Mr. Cosgrove presented an updated Demand Occupation List. Positions are listed by priority and job demand. A huge thank you to Ms. McDuffie, Mr. Federick, and County Executive Mark Poloncarz for helping HPOG continue for one more year. Mr. Jones, Jr. commented that a lot of jobs from the Demand Occupation List coincide with the HPOG program. He also thanked the same people for helping continue the HPOG program.</p>	<p>Motion to adjourn was made by Ms. Cardwell, seconded by Ms. Fakler. The meeting adjourned at 10:31 am.</p>
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