

Finger Lakes Workforce Investment Board  
**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES**  
Finger Lakes Workforce Investment Board, Conference Room B  
41 Lewis Street, Geneva, NY 14456  
Friday, September 11, 2020 at 9:00 a.m.

**ATTENDANCE:**

**Members:** K. Bailey, J. Celso, J. Davis, S. Davis, L. Freid, S. Griffin, M. Manikowski, A. McGraw, R. Plympton, T. Sloane, J. Vrabel

**Staff:** Karen Springmeier, Michael Woloson, Jennifer May

**I. Economic Development Updates (State of the County – Impact from COVID-19)**

Ontario County – Mr. Manikowski – Henkel, formerly Zotos, has invested \$17-20 million into the Geneva manufacturing site and plans to fill 180 positions. Henkel will host a drive-thru job fair on September 22<sup>nd</sup>. Mr. Manikowski also mentioned that while the mall has reopened, small retail is still struggling. Manufacturing seems to be doing well, though. Constellation Brands corporate office employees are still working remotely. Seneca County – Ms. Davis – del Lago has reopened, but not at full capacity and the county lost \$6 million in tax revenue during the closure. Ms. Davis also reported that there has been growth in the manufacturing sector, the county is looking at reprioritizing the Strategic Plan and they have expanded access to their emergency loan program for businesses impacted by COVID-19. Additionally, Seneca County is still looking for developers for the Army Depot.

Wayne County – Mr. Plympton – The manufactures located on Dean Parkway are doing well and there have been no cases of COVID-19 reported. At Optimax, business has been robust and hiring has begun. Mr. Celso mentioned that the Annual Wayne County Startup Pitch Competition is accepting applications through September 30<sup>th</sup> for the \$32,000 prize.

Yates – Mr. Griffin – Manufacturers and craft beverage operations are cautiously optimistic, but are concerned about another closure or event taking place that would hinder their operations. Agriculture is doing well in the county and a lot of land is being purchased for farming. The Greenidge Generations power plant has now begun bitcoin mining. The steady supply of their own power is helpful in the endeavor.

**II. Workforce Development Updates**

Ontario County – Ms. Bailey – Ontario County staff have been busy with incumbent worker trainings and there have been 8 OJTs started since July 1<sup>st</sup>.

Seneca County – Mr. Vrabel – Job orders are coming in, but businesses are struggling to fill the positions. Job-seekers seem to be sitting back due to the additional UI benefits, but staff are reaching out to the job-seekers and imploring them to take available positions as the additional benefits are expiring. Additionally, the new sick leave directive from the Governor is causing concern for small businesses.

Wayne County – Mr. Celso – Wayne County has seen an increase in demand for OJTs, especially for upgrades. McAlpin Industries is still hiring for multiple positions.

Yates County – Mr. Davis – There are currently 65 open jobs and 871 job-seekers on UI, as of last week. Lisa Principio continues to work with businesses, encouraging them to keep positions with the Shared Work program.

WDI – Ms. Freid – WDI has seen the need for incumbent worker training and the issues caused by lack of childcare options.

**III. FLWIB Update**

- a. Ms. Springmeier stated DOL offices have remained closed and staff continue to work on UI claims. The WIB has been updating the new YouTube channel and virtual workshops on topics such as resume writing and interview skills are being recorded and added to the channel. Ms. Springmeier is also keeping the Board apprised of career center operations and reopening plans.
- b. Mr. Woloson shared that 11,000 emails were sent to job-seekers in the region who are currently receiving UI, promoting the benefits of the “Skill Up Finger Lakes” program. There have been 15-20 new registrations each quarter.
- c. Mr. Plympton informed the group that there isn’t much happening with FAME, but they are looking at the materials coming out of NYATEP regarding getting people back to work. Mr. Plympton also shared that Optimax has created a gap year program, which allows for college bound high school graduates to work full-time, while taking a couple of courses at a community college.
- d. Mr. Sloane shared that FLCC campuses have reopened, and about 75% of classes are hybrid. There have been no reported cases of COVID-19 on the campuses.

**Next meeting: Friday, December 11, 2020, via Zoom.**