

FINGER LAKES WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, November 17, 2021 8:30-10:00am

Via Zoom

ATTENDANCE:

Members: Kathy Baker, Pete Bekisz, Lina Brennan, Sara Bruzee, Bob Coyne, Jennifer DeVault, Randi DiAntonio, Sarah Eighmey, Tom Facer, Michelle Jungermann, Michael Kauffman, Julie Maslyn, Danielle Maloy, Michael Manikowski, Julia Murphy, Dr. Robert Nye, Lori Parish, Joseph Pellerite, Rick Plympton, Dr. Vicky Ramos, Christi Rollo, Michael Rusinko, Eileen Tiberio, Erica Wright

Guests: Kathy Bailey, John Celso, Roderic Cox-Cooper, Joe Davis, Joe Hamm, Mandy Townsend, John Vrabel, Mark Waterstram, Michael Whirtley

Staff: Dréa Badger, Jordan Bates, Lynn Freid, Jen May, Debbie Sowards, Michael Woloson

Absent: Zachary Brooks, Mike Davis, Bob Doebelin, Bonnie Percy, Mitch Rowe, Jim Sinicropi

At 8:35 a.m., Mr. Plympton called the meeting to order. Roll call followed.

ECONOMIC NEWS AND UPDATES:

Economic Issues/Trends/Concerns:

Advanced Manufacturing – Mr. Plympton stated that businesses have been busy and experiencing staffing issues. The recent uptick in COVID cases has also been a concern.

Healthcare – Ms. DeVault shared that along with all other sectors/businesses, Thompson Health is experiencing staffing issues. There are currently more open positions than the hospital has seen in the last twenty years. All employees with religious exemptions for the COVID vaccine will be terminated by Monday, November 22nd. The hospital continues to be busy, with an overflowing emergency departments and urgent cares.

Agriculture – Ms. Eighmey reported that Martini Vineyards is finished with harvest, which was affected by the rain and warm nights over the summer. The 2021 vintage will have lower alcohol wines due to the low sugar content in the grapes. Mr. Facer stated that the apple harvest is also complete, and the crop was estimated to be slightly smaller than average. Demand for apples appears to be decent.

Economic Development – Mr. Manikowski stated that economic developers are dealing with the unique challenge of having so many COVID economic relief initiatives available to all types of businesses and business sectors and a team has been put together to help businesses through the process of receiving assistance.

Retail – Mr. Kauffman reported that Eastview Mall is also experiencing hiring challenges but sales are strong. Inventory levels are expected to be an issue, but it remains unclear how big of an issue.

State Workforce – Ms. DiAntonio stated the homes for developmentally disabled individuals are severely understaffed, with eleven group homes to be suspended soon. Direct support staff are being mandated to work double and triple shifts and nursing staff are leaving to work as travel nurses for the increased wages. Ontario ARC is also in a staffing crisis, but with increased wages being offered, they were able to fill forty-five positions, according to Ms. Jungermann. Ms. Tiberio shared that these challenges are seen across all of the human services continuum.

ACTION ITEM: Mr. Plympton suggested that the concerns affecting healthcare and other human services be a topic at future board meetings to remain aware of the labor shortage crisis and its impacts to these industries.

Education – Dr. Nye reported that FLCC has the potential to help with the Applied Learning Internship program and suggested those with specific needs contact Jay Donahue.

Program Changes

Ms. Murphy shared that DOL staff have been engaging with every work search mandated customer, even after the customer's initial three appointments. Since the end of June, staff have engaged 616 job seekers, for a total of 975 appointments. 801 additional phone calls have been conducted with customers requesting assistance. DOL will be hosting virtual job fairs on a monthly basis going forward, with the next scheduled for December 8th. Ms. Murphy also shared that Lyons staff have temporarily located to the Geneva location while new space is located in Lyons. The rental lease with Wayne County Complex will not be renewed. Mr. Woloson added that true front door traffic and remote contacts with the career centers have increased.

COMMITTEE UPDATES:

Finance & Audit Committee – Ms. Sowards reported that a resolution to approve the PY'20 Independent Audit is before this board and WIB staff are closely monitoring contractor budgets.

Governance & Membership Committee – Mr. Manikowski and Ms. Freid informed the group that the board is at full membership, except for one vacancy in Seneca County. New members Julie Maslyn and Jim Sinicropi were welcomed.

Marketing & Communications – Mr. Bekisz reported that the committee has been meeting monthly and serving as a sounding board for WIB staff as they navigate Finger Lakes Hires and other initiatives. Mr. Bekisz thanked the WIB team for their hard work on Finger Lakes Hires.

Performance & Evaluation – Ms. Baker stated that the committee last met in October with industry leaders to review and make updates to the Demand Occupation List. The OJT Outcome report was reviewed, which showed an overall 87% success rate. The committee will meet again in December.

ACTION ITEM: It was determined that an annual review of the Demand Occupation List would be a good effort to best effectively monitor industry employment needs moving out of the pandemic.

Economic Development Committee – Mr. Manikowski shared that at the October 15th meeting, Matt Hurlbutt of Greater Rochester Enterprise (GRE) joined the committee to discuss the impact of the organization on the nine-county region. Following the meeting, Mr. Manikowski, Mr. Plympton and WIB staff meet with representatives from GRE to discuss support for Finger Lakes Hires. Although no financial support for the program was offered, good networking options were made.

Youth – Ms. Parish stated that the committee met on November 10th and ensured that the committee is adhering to guidance from the state and discussed the upcoming “Finger Lakes Works...with their hands!”. Ms. Badger is looking for volunteers to serve on the RFP Review Subcommittee to review submitted RFPs for Youth contractors, once all have been received.

FAME – Donations for the student scholarship are being solicited and the fund is at a healthy level currently. FAME is also moving forward with the strategic planning process with CauseWay and continues to search for a new chair.

Director’s Report – From last board meeting survey results, board members shared they like to see more corporate/business training options. Mike Woloson and Ms. Freid met with KSA Training Solutions, which had several of the training options listed as areas of interest. See resource link for an overview and brochure and pricing structure in the meeting notes. KSA encourages employers to sign up for same training and split cost for optimal savings. Today’s survey will have an item to check if interested in business training and we’ll get you connected. Last board meeting we presented trauma informed workplace – Mr. Woloson is organizing/coordinating with the One-Stop Operator to offer this training to the to the nine county Finger Lakes region. If you are interested in trauma informed training for the work-place let, please us know on the survey. Ms. Freid thanked the Business Service representatives – we’ve been working on updating the OJT policy and will have a final copy for the board to approve at the January meeting. Lastly, there will be a three 3 year WIOA funded position to assist all individuals with disabilities – the intent is that the position would become self-sustained by the regional area at the end of the 3 years and continue on as needed for the community for all in need – not just WIOA eligible persons.

PY’20 Independent Audit, Mark Waterstram, The Bonadio Group

Mr. Waterstram, of The Bonadio Group, reviewed the draft independent audit with the board. The audit showed no findings or areas of concern. Mr. Waterstram also noted the challenges faced by the WIB, including the continued impact of COVID, turnover at the upper management level of the agency and the banking/fraud issue. The full audit is available for review upon request.

New Business/Consent Agenda

Approval of minutes from September 15, 2021 meeting

Resolution 05-21 Approval of PY’20 Independent Audit

Resolution 06-21 Approval of Demand Occupation List

A motion to approve minutes from the September 15, 2021 meeting was made by Ms. Parish and seconded by Mr. Facer. All in favor, motion carried.

A motion to approve resolutions 05-21 and 06-21 was made by Mr. Rusinko and seconded by Ms. Jungermann. All in favor, motion carried.

The 5 Pillars of Job Quality, Mandy Townsend, JVS-Boston

Ms. Townsend gave an overview of the 5 Pillars of Job Quality: Salary, Wage; Schedule Flexibility/Predictability; Availability of Benefits; Access to a Career Ladder; Supportive Work Environment. See resource page for links to full presentation and sample Business Benchmarking Report.

Next Board Meeting – Wednesday, January 19, 2022, via Zoom

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Mr. Manikowski and seconded by Mr. Bekisz. All in favor, motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 9:51 a.m.

Resources

5 Pillars of Job Quality, Mandy Townsend, JVS-Boston <https://fingerlakesworks.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/Pillars-of-Job-Quality.pdf>

Sample Business Benchmarking Report <https://fingerlakesworks.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/Sample-Business-Benchmarking-Report.pdf>