



A Private-Public Partnership Serving Kalamazoo and St. Joseph Counties  
222 S. Westnedge Avenue, Kalamazoo, Michigan 49007-4628

**Workforce Development Board Executive Committee Meeting Minutes  
January 8, 2009**

Workforce Development Board Chair, Mary Oudsema, called the meeting to order at 7:30 a.m. at the W. E. Upjohn Institute for Employment Research, 300 S. Westnedge Avenue, Kalamazoo, Michigan.

**Executive Committee Members Present:** Dennis Berkebile (PS), Thom Brennan (PS), Susan Einspahr (PS), Lisa Godfrey (PS), Joe Herdus (PS), Jerry Love (PS), Mary Oudsema (PS), Marilyn Potgiesser (PS)

**Members Absent:** Barry Visel (PS)

**MW Staff Present:** Kathy Olsen, Craig Schreuder, Kara Stewart, Suprotik Stotz-Ghosh

**Guests Present:** John Davis (DHS), John Dillworth (Goodwill), Curt Mastos (MI-HRDI)

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**Motion made by Joe Herdus and supported by Susan Einspahr to approve the Workforce Development Board (WDB) Executive Committee meeting minutes of November 6, 2008; the WDB Full Board meeting notes of November 6, 2008; and the WDB Executive Committee meeting notes of December 4, 2008. Motion carried.**

**STAFF REPORTS**

**Program Plans** – Kara Stewart requested board consideration and approval of the *Disability Program Navigator (DPN) Grant* in the amount of \$13,684, which includes carry-in, for the professional development of staff, the purchase of assistive technology equipment, and capacity building of the Kalamazoo St. Joseph Michigan Works Area professionals. She reported plans are for the Disability Awareness Resource Team (DART), a standing advisory committee of the Kalamazoo-St. Joseph Workforce Development Board, to assist in the planning and use of these funds for the Program Year beginning July 1, 1008 and ending June 30, 2009.

Under the *No Worker Left Behind (NWLB) Initiative* Kara requested approval of Workforce Investment Grant funding in the amount of \$37,195 to enable additional training opportunities for eligible individuals. She reported this funding may only be used to support direct training and is capped at \$5,000 per year for two years (for a total of \$10,000) for each individual. Kara Stewart also requested approval of another *NWLB Initiative* to use General Fund / General Purpose funding in the amount of \$190,000 to provide a wide range of training for special projects, target groups and individuals eligible under the NWLB initiative guidelines. She noted the amount was increased from \$177,000 as reported last month. She further reported some of these funds can be used for “wrap-around” services; however, at least 60% of the funds must be identified for direct training expenses. The program year for both NWLB program plans is October 1, 2008 through September 30, 2009.

Kara requested approval of the *Department of Human Services Transfer for Employment Related Supportive Services Plan* to support employment related supportive services to Family Independence (FIP) Program clients enrolled in the Jobs, Education and Training (JET) Program. The amount was reported to be \$15,000 and is for the time period beginning October 1, 2008 through August 31, 2009.

**Motion made by Lisa Godfrey and supported by Joe Herdus to approve the PY2008 Disability Program Navigator Plan in the amount of \$13,684, the No Worker Left Behind (NWLB) Workforce Investment Grant Plan in the amount of \$37,195, the NWLB General Fund / General Purpose Grant Plan in the amount of \$190,000 and the Department of Human Services Transfer for Employment-Related Supportive Services Program Plan in the amount of \$15,000. Motion carried.**

**WDB Appointment**

**Motion made by Jerry Love and supported by Susan Einspahr to approve the appointment of Jacqueline Wahl, representing Bronson Healthcare and replacing Marilyn Potgiesser, to a private sector seat on the Kalamazoo-St. Joseph Workforce Development Board for the remainder of a two-year term beginning immediately and ending December 31, 2010. Motion carried.**

**EAG Appointments**

**Motion made by Lisa Godfrey and supported by Susan Einspahr to approve the appointment of Sandy Standish, Superintendent of Comstock Public Schools, representing local school districts and replacing Terry Conklin; and the appointment of Peter Palasinski, Director of Sturgis Community Education, replacing Lois Millet, to the Kalamazoo-St. Joseph Workforce Development Board Education Advisory Group. Motion carried.**

**Program Status Report** - Suprotik Stotz-Ghosh reported the Workforce Investment Act Programs are well into the program year and most are ahead of the expected number to be served. The program year for the Jobs, Education and Training (JET) Program began October 1, 2009 and the report includes one month of activity. The number of unemployed individuals continues to grow. The individuals are required to register on the Michigan Talent Bank in order to collect unemployment and this has resulted in increased traffic at both of our service centers. Many of the individuals, however, are having difficulty filing their claim with the Unemployment Agency and there has been a lot of negative media attention regarding this. Under the Michigan Prisoner Re-entry Initiative (MPRI) participants were previously referred from one correctional facility; now there are five facilities making referrals. The 90 day retention rate will be added to the Program Status Report next month. The Securing Children's Opportunities, Possibilities and Empowerment (SCOPE) Program continues to provide support to the children and spouses of incarcerated parents. Forty-eight children in 24 four families are receiving services using a wrap-around approach to meet multiple needs. All of the mothers from the SCOPE families are receiving some sort of public assistance. Staff are currently pursuing possible funding to support the continuation of the SCOPE program through March 2010.

**Legislative Update** – Craig Schreuder reported there has been a lot of media coverage regarding President Elect Obama's proposed stimulus plan and that various interest groups have submitted proposals requesting significant increases to Employment Services funding. Craig also provided additional information regarding the impact of the increased number of layoffs around the country. There were reports of the unemployment claims system via the Internet "crashing" in three states. Although Michigan's system has not crashed, claimants continue to have extreme difficulty accessing the system to file their claims. There were also recent local news reports prematurely announcing and promoting an on-line Unemployment application process that was under a testing phase. Craig commended the Michigan Works Employment Services staff for their excellent customer service and their ability to handle customer frustrations with patience and compassion. If customer frustrations reach a point where staff are unable to handle the situations, they are prepared to secure services from a security firm.

Suprotik Stotz-Ghosh reported Bob Straits was recently elected to serve as the President of the Michigan Works Association's Director's Council. He also reported that Bob represents Michigan on the Board of the Great Lakes Employment and Training Association (GLETA), an employment and training consortium comprised of ten Midwestern states.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**Executive Committee** – No report.

**Monitoring and Evaluation Committee** – No Report

**Marketing Committee** – Kathy Olsen reported the Michigan Works Association's annual Alumni Award celebration will be held in Lansing on Tuesday, February 3, 2009 and recognition of all local alumni nominees will take place at the February 5 WDB meeting. Mary Oudsema reported staff is preparing a program flow chart for Board members and there are plans to have it available at the February 5 meeting.

**MEMBERS TIME** – Kara Stewart reported plans are to release the Request for Proposals (RFP) for the Adult and Dislocated Worker Programs and Services on January 22, 2009. Staff are seeking volunteers from the Workforce Development Board to serve on the RFP Committee to review proposals received. A meeting will be scheduled late February or early March for the review. She also announced plans to release the RFP for Employment Services and One Stop Operations during the month of March and requested Board volunteers to review those proposals as well. RFP meeting dates will be announced at the February Board meeting.

