



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

**Workforce Development Board Meeting Minutes  
February 4, 2010**

WDB Chair, Dennis Berkebile called the meeting to order at 8:05 a.m. at the W. E. Upjohn Institute, 300 South Westnedge Avenue, Kalamazoo, Michigan.

**Members Present:** Jennifer Alday (PS), Rick Anderson (Labor), Robin Baker (At-Large), Dennis Berkebile (PS), Thom Brennan (PS), Diane Donovan (PS), Susan Einspahr (PS), Peggy Gagen (CBO), Lisa Godfrey (PS), Brian Johnson (PS), Chris Kadulski (DHS), Ian Kennedy (PS), Jerry Love (PS), Linda Marcon (PS), Jan Opalewski (PS), Mary Oudsema (PS), Marilyn Potgiesser (PS-alternate), Sabrina Pritchett-Evans (PS), Casey Putnam (Educ), Barry Visel (PS), Jackie Wahl (PS)

**Members Absent:** Jim Harrington (Educ), Erv Heidbrink (Labor), Joe Herdus (PS), Ellen Kisinger-Rothi (CBO), Cathy Knapp (Econ Dev), Kim Luther (DOC), Anne Moreland (PS), Steward Sandstrom (PS), Robert Smith (MRS)

**Other Committee Members Present:** Lori Stanaszek (Labor/GKUW)

**MW Staff Present:** Jeanne Konrad, Kathy Olsen, Suprotik Stotz-Ghosh, Robert Straits

**Service Providers:** Shelly Bixler-Martin (Y.O.U./KRESA), Don Edgerly (Y.O.U./KRESA), Curt Mastos (M-HRDI), Eric Stewart (LMC), Tim McGann (LMC)

**Guests Present:** Jill Bland (SW MI First), Barbara Marshall (SJCISD), Ed Schlabach (Bronson), Bridget Timmeney (WEUI)

**RECOGNITION OF ALUMNI NOMINEES** – On behalf of the Kalamazoo-St. Joseph Workforce Development Board, four nominees for the Michigan Works! Association’s annual Outstanding Alumni Award were recognized at the meeting for their achievements in training and employment. One of the nominees, Mr. Lavern “Ed” Schlabach, was selected to represent the Kalamazoo-St. Joseph MWA at the annual event in Lansing on January 26. Chair Dennis Berkebile reported Mr. Schlabach was laid off from the tool and die industry and made a significant career change into the field of nursing. He earned his LPN, RN and Associate Degree of Applied Science and was hired as a registered nurse at Bronson Hospital where he works full-time, third shift, in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit. Ed Schlabach and employer representatives, Jackie Wahl and Marilyn Potgiesser were present to accept a plaque presented to him from the Board. Mr. Schlabach thanked the Board for the support he received through Michigan Works! The other nominees were: Ms. Devin Holder who is employed by Heritage Upjohn Community Care Center; Ms. Antelene Longstreet who is employed by Lake Michigan College; and Ms. Lawanda Miller who is employed by Sonic America’s Drive-In. Details regarding each participant’s success story were provided in a program that was distributed at the meeting. Kathy Olsen reported that plaques will be presented to the three other nominees who were unable to attend the meeting at a later date.

**RECOGNITION OF OUTGOING CHAIR** – On behalf of the Workforce Development Board, Dennis Berkebile presented a plaque to Mary Oudsema in recognition of her distinguished and devoted service as 2008 and 2009 chairperson of the Kalamazoo and St. Joseph Counties Workforce Development Board. Mary thanked the Board for the recognition and stated that staff made the job easy. She enjoyed serving on the Board and was looking forward to continuing her service on the Board.

**PROGRAM** – Jill Bland, Vice President for Southwest Michigan First, gave a presentation on “Economic and Workforce Development in Southwest Michigan.” She provided a brief history of the organization and reported the vision of Southwest Michigan First is to create abundance in the community through private sector employment. Their mission is to be a regional catalyst for jobs and wealth creation. She provided details of the various activities associated with the organization’s areas of focus. The focus areas included retention/expansion, recruitment, leadership, public policy, innovation, community government relations, and economic infrastructure.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**Motion made by Susan Einspahr and supported by Jerry Love to approve the Workforce Development Board meeting minutes of November 5, 2009. Motion carried.**

**Motion made by Jerry Love and supported by Susan Einspahr to approve the Workforce Development Executive Committee meeting minutes of January 7, 2010. Motion carried.**

#### **STAFF REPORTS**

**WDB Plans** - Kathy Olsen requested Board consideration and approval of the Michigan Works System Administrative Procedures Plan. She reported the plan is a non-financial administrative document that incorporates the various required forms, certifications, stipulations and administrative procedures applicable for all programs funded through the Michigan Department of Energy, Labor & Economic Growth. The plan is for the 2010 calendar year beginning January 1 and ending December 31.

**Motion made by Lisa Godfrey and supported by Susan Einspahr to approve the Michigan Works System Plan for the period January 1 through December 31, 2010. Motion carried.**

**WDB Policies** - Jeanne Konrad requested Board consideration and approval of Board policy #30 for Trade Adjustment Assistance Training Waivers. She reported ongoing changes in the Trade Act warranted a new local policy to provide guidance for issuing, continuing, extending, revoking and denying training waivers and that the role of the waiver is to continue eligibility for Trade Readjustment Allowance. A local procedure for issuing Trade waivers was also developed to complement the policy.

**Motion made by Lisa Godfrey and supported by Jerry Love to approve the Workforce Development Board Policy #30 – Trade Adjustment Assistance Training Waivers. Motion carried.**

**Program Status Report** - Suprotik Stotz-Ghosh reported the focus for the Adult and Dislocated Worker Programs has been to enroll individuals into training and the number enrolled is higher than in previous years. The retention rate at 90 days for the Jobs, Education and Training (JET) Program is at 50%. Staff is compiling data to provide a Return on Investment report in the near future. Under special initiatives, the CASOM (Comprehensive Approaches to Sex Offender Management) pilot concluded and the current focus is to incorporate this model into the Michigan Prisoner Re-Entry Initiative (MPRI). The State's goals for enrollments in training under the No Worker Left Behind (NWLB) initiative was exceeded. Under extremely short notice, local service providers worked hard to have another Road Construction Apprenticeship Readiness (RCAR) Training program up and running in Kalamazoo by January 11.

**Request for Proposals** - Kathy Olsen reported two Request for Proposals (RFP) will be released on February 8. The RFPs are for Employment Services and the One Stop Operator for the Kalamazoo-St. Joseph Michigan Works Area. A minimum of three Board volunteers are needed to review the proposals submitted during the week of March 15, 2010. The date and time of the RFP review will depend on the volunteers and their availability. Board members, Susan Einspahr, Lisa Godfrey, Jerry Love, Jan Opalewski and Lori Stanaszek volunteered to review the proposals.

**Legislative Update** – Bob Straits reported there has been recent attention at the federal level regarding the reauthorization of the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) and the probability exists that there may be another major change in the legislation. The focus is on a business driven model with local control and private sector majority on the Workforce Boards. Labor and education would continue to have representation on the Boards. There is more emphasis on increased funding for training; however, he noted there is a need for a balance because individuals with more barriers need more staff support to address the barriers. The number of federal performance measures may be reduced to those that focus on placement, retention and cost. Other areas of focus include youth career development, alignment of programs, local partnerships with education and economic development, and flexible funding. Michigan is already ahead of many other states when it comes to aligning programs. President Obama and Congress are moving toward passing a Jobs bill; it is hopeful that the Bill will pass before summer and that it includes funding for a summer youth program.

**Workforce Boards of Excellence Initiative** - Bob Straits distributed a summary of the Workforce Boards of Excellence Initiative. He reported the Governor's Workforce Board, the Council for Labor and Economic Growth (CLEG), is interested in aligning their goals and processes with those of local workforce areas. They hope to identify local practices that maximize effectiveness of the Boards. He highlighted two Board practices in the Kalamazoo-St. Joseph MWA that are unique. The first is the willingness of Board members to serve on a RFP Committee to learn more about incoming allocations and their distribution and noted that not all MWAs do this. Another practice is that the Monitoring and Evaluation Committee meets directly with service providers and participants each month to learn first-hand what happens in the field. As practices are identified, they will be shared so that each area can learn from others around the State. This initiative will be on the March WDB Executive Committee meeting for further discussion. Bob also reported the State is looking for a healthcare representative from southwest Michigan to serve on CLEG. The appointment would be to replace Matt Chambers from Three Rivers Health who recently moved out-of-state, creating a vacancy. One Board member mentioned appointing a local representative to serve on CLEG would align with Southwest Michigan First's goal of increasing the number of local residents that serve on State boards and commissions. Bob reported the nomination of Marilyn Potgiesser, representing Bronson Healthcare was submitted as a possible replacement.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**Monitoring and Evaluation Committee** - Barry Visel reported that the Monitoring and Evaluation Committee met at Youth Opportunities Unlimited (Y.O.U.) in January to review the Youth Program and services. Staff spent a considerable amount of time discussing the federal performance measures. Members requested that staff report data in a simple easily understood format and to gather information regarding the cost effectiveness of the programs. The youth interviewed at the meeting were excited about their involvement in the program and reported program staff provide guidance and encouragement in order to help them to succeed and they stated staff are often like having another parent. Youth also stated they would like more time in the work experience activity. Diane Donovan reported the youth may not realize that work experience may be limited due to budget constraints. Y.O.U. program staff also met with the Committee. Their presentation covered the process used for transferring Youth from the Summer Program into the year-round program – what worked and where there were opportunities for improvement. They also highlighted some of the tools and initiatives used to improve skills and how staff is working with schools in both counties. NovaNET, an on-line program used to recover high school credits needed for graduation, was one tool used to help youth succeed that was highlighted. Program staff also covered challenges encountered in today’s economy and asked Board members to consider helping. Suggestions were to meet with participants in an informal setting to discuss adult expectations and career development and to provide business connections for work site development and/or youth employment.

**Marketing Committee** - Kathy Olsen reported during January MW staff gave a presentation to the Kalamazoo Area Labor Management Committee on January 20 and participated in a career fair at American Greetings/Designware on January 21. Staff was asked to give a presentation to the Kalamazoo County Board of Commissioners on March 16. She announced there was an open house on Friday, January 29 from 1:00 – 4:00 p.m. at the Rose Street office to highlight reemployment services for professional and technical workers. The annual MW Association Alumni Awards ceremony was held on January 26 in Lansing. Ed Schlabach, who was recognized at today’s meeting, was previously selected to represent the Kalamazoo-St. Joseph MW Area at the event. He was one of 25 participants who received an award presented by legislative representatives. All of the award recipients were grateful for the opportunity to receive training for a new career through Michigan Works! Copies of the Alumni Award programs were distributed at the meeting.

Kathy also reported graduates of the Energy Auditor class held at Glen Oaks Community College (GOCC) gave a presentation on the details of their training to DELEG staff on January 28. The students shared information about the training and some of the challenges they have encountered since graduation. Challenges include finding employment and/or securing the costly equipment necessary for conducting energy audits, starting a new business and additional training to expand options. Dr. Wheeler from GOCC spoke about the college’s plans to expand the training into a certificate program that would evolve into an Associate’s degree. Staff from Building Science Academy and Michigan Works! shared information about their roles in designing the training program. MW staff has been engaged in follow-up meetings with Glen Oaks and Building Science Academy to build on the success and to address the challenges. She noted that the most immediate challenge is placement in employment and/or securing equipment that students could use for self employment and welcomed suggestions from Board members.

**OLD BUSINESS** – None.

**MEMBERS & CITIZENS TIME** – Some members offered to send letters to support Marilyn Potgiesser’s nomination to CLEG.

**UPCOMING MEETINGS** - The next meeting of the Executive Committee is scheduled for Thursday, March 4, 2010 at 7:30 a.m. at the Upjohn Institute in Kalamazoo. The next Monitoring and Evaluation Committee meeting is scheduled for Thursday, February 18, 2010 at the Michigan Works Service Center in Kalamazoo. The next meeting of the full Workforce Development Board is scheduled for Thursday, May 6, 2010 at 8:00 a.m. at the Michigan Works Service Center in Three Rivers.

**ADJOURNMENT** - With no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 9:28 a.m.

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Kathy Olsen \_\_\_\_\_ Date

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Dennis Berkebile \_\_\_\_\_ Date