



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

**Workforce Development Board Meeting Minutes
May 6, 2010**

WDB Chair, Dennis Berkebile called the meeting to order at 8:00 a.m. at the Michigan Works Service Center, 16587 Enterprise Drive, Three Rivers, Michigan.

Members Present: Omar Alston (DOC-Alternate), Rick Anderson (Labor), Morris Applebey (Labor), Dennis Berkebile (PS), Thom Brennan (PS), Diane Donovan (PS), Susan Einspahr (PS), Peggy Gagen (CBO), Jim Harrington (Educ), Ian Kennedy (PS), Sabrina Pritchett-Evans (PS), Casey Putnam (Educ), Robert Smith (MRS), Barry Visel (PS), Jackie Wahl (PS)

Members Absent: Jennifer Alday (PS), Robin Baker (At-Large), Jill Bland (Econ Dev), Lisa Godfrey (PS), Brian Johnson (PS), Erv Heidbrink (Labor), Joe Herdus (PS), Chris Kadulski (DHS), Ellen Kisinger-Rothi (CBO), Cathy Knapp (Econ Dev), Jerry Love (PS), Kim Luther (DOC), Linda Marcon (PS), Anne Moreland (PS), Jan Opalewski (PS), Mary Oudsema (PS), Steward Sandstrom (PS)

MW Staff Present: Ben Damerow, Jeanne Konrad, Dallas Oberlee, Kathy Olsen, Suprotik Stotz-Ghosh, Kara Stewart, Robert Straits, Jim Walters

Service Providers: Ernie Howard (M-HRDI), Curt Mastos (M-HRDI), Lisa Smith (Y.O.U./KRESA), Eric Stewart (LMC), Tim McGann (LMC)

Guests Present: Cathy Abbs, (Sturgis Chamber), David Casterline (Armstrong International), Barbara Marshall (SJCISD), Rebecca Parsons (ITS), Marcia Saunders (SJCEDC), Christy Trammell (Three Rivers Chamber)

PROGRAM – Dave Casterline reported Armstrong International has experienced fabulous collaboration working with Michigan Works and Glen Oaks Community College. The company has been in existence for 110 years. They are always looking for continuous improvement opportunities and the company has benefited tremendously from grant funding for training incumbent workers in customer service, team building, value stream mapping and LEED. Michigan Works staff, Suprotik Stotz-Ghosh and Kristi Potts, have been extremely helpful in administering the grant. It was a balancing act for the company to complete the training during an entire computer system changeover; however, the process went very smooth. As a result of the training, staff is better prepared to serve their customers and meet customer needs. He recommended that Michigan Works continue offering incumbent worker training.

Rebecca Parsons reported the International Trucking School (ITS) worked with Michigan Works staff and Glen Oaks Community College to develop a 15 week, Class A, CDL training and the 31 credits earned from the training can be applied to an Associate degree. She cited a need for increasing the number of trained truck drivers due to the aging and retiring workforce. A number of females were trained during the past year and many facilities are paying relocation expenses for graduates to become trainers at their facilities. She reported that ITS recently purchased a training facility in Allegan and will be adding heavy equipment training. Safety requirements are changing in the trucking industry and training now includes a lot of on-line learning along with two weeks of forty hours a week actual driving. Ernie Howard reported the on-line portion is extremely helpful for veterans who now can complete some of the training while in the service. Rebecca stated ITS is very supportive of the "Drive the Guard" Program which allows veterans to earn a Class A CDL when they enlist and before they deploy. Curt Mastos reported the Michigan Works partnership with ITS covers many years and goes back to when they were located in Coldwater. He also stated that ITS is very involved in the Richard Crane Memorial Truck Show held annually in St. Ignace that brings truckers from all over the country to compete in a skills contest.

Marcia Saunders reported she has been working as a grant writer for the City of Sturgis, City of Three Rivers, St. Joseph County and the St. Joseph County Economic Development Corporation for the past 2 ½ years. Michigan Works, the Chambers of Commerce organizations and Glen Oaks Community College are more recent partners in the grant application collaborative. She cited recent examples that included a 2.8 million CBJT grant for Energy Efficiency Training for new and incumbent workers for a five county area which unfortunately was not funded; and a five million Department of Energy grant application that is still pending. She noted that relationships are established and the initial base for grant applications is set for a quick turnaround as new grant opportunities arise.

Bob Straits reported that David Casterline previously served on the Kalamazoo-St. Joseph Workforce Development Board. Dennis Berkebile stated the business cases reported on at today's meeting are testaments to what working together can accomplish.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion made by Peggy Gagen and supported by Jackie Wahl to approve the Workforce Development Board meeting minutes of February 4, 2009 and the Workforce Development Executive Committee meeting minutes of March 4, 2010. Motion carried.

STAFF REPORTS

WDB Plans – Kara Stewart requested Board consideration and approval of the Trade Case Management Services Plan. She reported the funding identified is a combination of Trade and Globalization Adjustment Assistance (TGAAA) and Wagner-Peyser Reemployment Services American Recovery and Reinvestment Act dollars. Additionally, another \$182 was awarded following the distribution of the plan summary. The purpose of the plan is to further support case management for Trade eligible participants during the period October 1, 2009 through September 30, 2010.

Motion made by Thom Brennan and supported by Susan Einspahr to approve the Trade Case Management Services Plan for the period October 1, 2009 through September 30, 2010. Motion carried.

Workforce Boards of Excellence – Suprotik Stotz-Ghosh reported the Michigan Council for Labor and Economic Growth (CLEG) has been charged with developing strategies for continuous improvement of the state workforce investment system. To do this, they are seeking input from local Michigan Works Areas (MWA) regarding the attributes of a quality workforce system in five different areas and participation by each of the twenty-five Workforce Development Boards across the State is optional. We understand that the State's workforce strategy will likely change under a new Governor; however, we do see this as an opportunity to share our best practices which may help create a more strategic statewide system. At an upcoming Monitoring and Evaluation Committee meeting, staff will help Board volunteers understand the different levels of engagement and offer opportunities for members to be involved at a level that aligns with individual interests. Internally, MW administrative staff has held discussion on system goals to focus on for the 2010-2011 program year. Bob Straits reported the Workforce Boards of Excellence initiative surfaced following discussion with Matt Chambers, a former CLEG member from St. Joseph County. Matt recognized a need to educate the State Board on work being done in each MWA that is customized to local needs. As a result, the State is now gathering input from each MWA to identify how to align, what is locally customized, and to share best practices. In responding to a question from a Board member, Bob explained that CLEG members are appointed for a time limited term and the new Governor would have the option of reappointing a member or appointing a new member as each person's term expires.

Program Status Report - Suprotik Stotz-Ghosh reported the Program Status Report contains data through March 31, 2010. He stated that the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) Programs have completed three quarters. The WIA Adult Program enrollments are at 66% of contract goal and because the focus has been on long-term training that resulted in a higher obligation for individuals in training, the enrollment goal will most likely not be met. However, for those who have finished training, the employment rate is on target. The total served under the WIA Youth Program includes individuals enrolled in the 2009 Summer Work Experience Program. Lisa Smith from Y.O.U./KRESA reported the Youth Program is at 95% enrollment without the summer enrollments. Suprotik also reported the Jobs, Education and Training (JET) Program employment and retention rates are below goals but are steadily increasing and that those who are obtaining a job are keeping the job. Under special initiatives, ten of 15 participants completed the Road Construction Apprenticeship Readiness (RCAR) training program and 4 of the 10 are in non-training related employment. We are hopeful that this will change as there have been some recent inquiries from construction contractors.

Legislative Update – Bob Straits reported last summer federal funds were received for a Summer Work Experience Program and we were encouraged to spend it quickly and wisely. Y.O.U. staff did a super job enrolling over 1,000 youth. As a result, we anticipated additional funding but so far that has not happened. Legislation for a summer program, approximately half the size of last summer, is currently in the Senate. It is being held up while the Senate identifies how to fund it. Locally, the City of Kalamazoo along with a local foundation will fund a much smaller (8-10%) summer program. If a federal program were to be funded, Y.O.U. is under contract for another year to operate all youth programs in our area. WIA reauthorization, with recommendations from local workforce development organizations, is still being considered; however, it is currently on hold along with TANF reauthorization legislation. With this being an election year for the State and knowing that 90% of workforce development funding is federal; the local strategy is to focus on the federally funded programs.

Workforce Development Board – An updated list of the Kalamazoo-St. Joseph Workforce Development Board was included with the Agenda packet.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Monitoring and Evaluation Committee – Diane Donovan reported the Monitoring and Evaluation Committee met in March to review the Jobs, Education and Training (JET) Program for Kalamazoo County. Lake Michigan College is under contract to provide these services in Kalamazoo and St. Joseph Counties. The Committee interviewed one male and five female participants and all were very appreciative of the services received. Two had problems with their financial aid at KVCC that staff helped to resolve. One person had relocated to Michigan and was doing volunteer work while she was working on finishing her BA. Another participant reported she encountered an increased challenge finding work in today’s market and needed assistance from JET staff. She also stated as a result of the staff assistance, she was able to find a more professional job. LMC staff reported on the transition of services from the former provider to LMC and the future plans for the program. One goal is for all participants to achieve a certain level of the Michigan National Career Readiness (NCRC) certificate and for each to include this on their resume. Staff is also working with the Business Services Team to coordinate employer contacts. Immediate changes that were highlighted included a significant increase in participant accountability, required attendance and a stronger relationship with the Department of Human Services in an effort to improve participation rates and triage meetings. There are also more workshop offerings for the participants. A challenge has been helping participants increase their education skills because federal rules do not allow the program to count time spent earning a high school diploma or a GED toward meeting participation requirements. In April, the Committee reviewed the Michigan Prisoner Re-entry Initiative (MPRI) and 3 male participants were interviewed. All three were employed and stated they were pleased with the assistance they received. Their job search period ranged from 90 days to ten months. The most significant challenges reported were obtaining documentation for social security and ID cards and transportation. Bus tokens are used to assist with transportation and one of the individuals reported he rode a bicycle all winter to get to his appointments and to work. When responding to a question regarding what was most helpful in finding employment, one individual stated being up front and honest and another stated he first volunteered with an employer to gain trust and to show his work ethic.

Marketing Committee - Kathy Olsen reported Michigan Works partnered with Glen Oaks Community College (GOCC) to host a job fair at GOCC on April 15. Michigan Works staff from throughout the State met with legislative representatives on April 21 in Lansing to promote workforce development programs. May is Workforce Development Month and Michigan Works is sponsoring and/or participating in a number of events during the month. On May 12, Michigan Works will have a booth at the Project Connect Event that will be held at the Kalamazoo fairgrounds. The purpose of the event is to connect individuals to community resources. On May 18, Michigan Works is one of the sponsors for the Kalamazoo Area Human Resource Managers Day Conference. On May 21 there will be a Michigan Prisoner Re-Entry Initiative public forum at Kalamazoo Valley Community College’s downtown campus from 2-4 p.m. to address concerns regarding offender re-entry. On May 25 Michigan Works is a sponsor of the Sustainability Forum that will be held at Aquinas College. On May 26 Michigan Works will have a booth at the annual Kalamazoo Area Chamber of Commerce Business Expo and Michigan Works is also one of the sponsors for the event. Attendees were given copies of the most recent Return on Investment brochure for the Kalamazoo-St. Joseph MWA along with Fast Facts about workforce development programs.

Disability Awareness Resource Team (DART) – Robert Smith thanked Jeanne Konrad for the support she provides to the Disability Awareness Resource Team (DART). He reported the Committee has many new members and the last few meetings were used to share information about the Michigan Works System and the many community resources available. He reported many individuals receiving services choose not to disclose a disability and as a result, data generated through the Management Information System (MIS) does not accurately reflect the true number of individuals with disabilities who are being served. These individuals, along with others who are willing to disclose a disability, struggle with understanding what services are available to them. The Committee is charged with making recommendations to the full Board as to how to better serve individuals with disabilities. Some Michigan Works areas have received funding to hire staff to serve as a disability navigator for a Michigan Works Service Center. The navigator assists with matching the needs of each individual to the best services available to them. Bob Straits added that the Service Centers are designed to be self-help; however, this does not always work for the population that requires additional assistance to navigate services. Bob Smith reported the challenge has been identifying sufficient funding for staffing this position at all Service Centers. Therefore it is even more important that ongoing training is provided to all staff, especially as turnover occurs.

Education Advisory Group (EAG) – Kathy Olsen reported the Education Advisory Group (EAG) recently met to review plans for the 2010-11 program year for the CTE Perkins and Tech Prep grants. In the coming year the Intermediate School Districts in Kalamazoo and St. Joseph County will focus on increasing student enrollment and successful completion in non-traditional areas of study in order to meet State established goals. The EAG Committee was also provided with a summary of the results of recent report “A Framework for Transformation” for Michigan’s Adult Education System

OLD BUSINESS – None.

MEMBERS & CITIZENS TIME – Eric Stewart reported twenty-one staff are enrolled in training to become certified as a Global Career Development Facilitator (GCDF).

Kara Stewart reported a Request for Proposal (RFP) for the Michigan Prisoner Re-Entry Initiative will be released in the near future and staff will be asking for Board volunteers to serve on the RFP Review Committee that will be meeting during the month of June.

Suprotik Stotz-Ghosh announced that Susan Einspahr was presented the Kalamazoo Area Chamber of Commerce's Community Trustee Award on April 8, 2010.

UPCOMING MEETINGS - The next meeting of the full Workforce Development Board is scheduled for Thursday, September 9, 2010 at 8:00 a.m. at the Michigan Works Service Center in Three Rivers. The next Monitoring and Evaluation Committee meeting is scheduled for Thursday, May 20, 2010 at the Michigan Works Service Center in Three Rivers. The next meeting of the Executive Committee is scheduled for Thursday, June 3, 2010 at 7:30 a.m. at the Upjohn Institute in Kalamazoo.

ADJOURNMENT - With no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 9:25 a.m.

Kathy Olsen Date

Dennis Berkebile Date