



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

Workforce Development Board Meeting Minutes **February 1, 2007**

WDB Chair, Jerry Love called the meeting to order at 8:06 a.m. at the Holiday Inn Express in Three Rivers, Michigan.

Members Present: Cathy Annis (Econ Dev), Nasim Ansari (PS), Robin Baker (At-Large), Dennis Berkebile (PS), Thom Brennan (PS), Diane Donovan (PS), Don Edgerly (PS), Susan Einspahr (PS), Lisa Godfrey (PS), Erv Heidbrink (Labor), Jill Hess (PS), Ellen Kisinger-Rothi (CBO), Jerry Love (PS), Mary Oudsema (PS), Suprotik Stotz-Ghosh (CBO), Barry Visel (PS)

Members Absent: David Allen (PS), Rick Anderson (Labor), John Boss (Labor), Jim Harrington (PS), Donna Hepner (DOC), Joe Herdus (PS), Margie Hojara-Hadsell (MRS), Chris Kadulski (DHS), Linda Marcon (PS), Shelby Meyer (PS), Marilyn Potgiesser (PS), Armando Romero (PS), Bernie Stankewicz (Educ),

MW Staff Present: Jeanne Konrad, Kathy Olsen, Craig Schreuder, Kara Stewart, Bob Straits

Guests Present: Karen Carlisle (Y.O.U.), Matt Chambers (Three Rivers Health), John Davis (DHS), John Dillworth (Goodwill), Jill Ferris (MRS), Ernie Howard (HRDI), Tim McGann (LMC), Deb Miller (K/RESA EFE), Dolly Roselip (Y.O.U.), Steward Sandstrom (Kalamazoo Area Chamber of Commerce)

GUEST SPEAKERS

WDB Chair, Jerry Love introduced Matt Chambers, CEO of Three Rivers Health and Acting Chair for the Governor's Council on Labor and Economic Growth. Mr. Chambers reported the State is taking a regional approach to workforce development and looking at sector specific issues. He recommended that members read "The Vital Center," a Brookings report on the Great Lakes Region's challenges to adapting to the changing economy and the President's report on education and the workforce, "Tough Choices or Tough Times," which can be purchased at Barnes and Nobles. The book identifies ten specific areas to be addressed in restructuring education as well as the priorities. He reported the Council for Labor and Economic Growth (CLEG) has adopted Solutions for Michigan's 21st Century Workforce. "Solutions" includes six guiding value statements as they relate to the workforce: innovation and creativity, diversity and inclusion, employability and advancement, education and training, and business solutions. The Solutions for Michigan's 21st Century Workforce will be used to align the private and public sectors and to focus on value driven behavior.

WDB Chair, Jerry Love introduced Cathy Annis, Executive Director of the St. Joseph County Economic Development Corporation (SJCEDC). Ms. Annis reported the EDC has a one person staff and a 19 member Board of Directors and the Board has established primary areas of focus for the organization. Topics covered during her presentation included a history of the organization, business retention, business attraction, and Brownfield redevelopment. She distributed copies of the organization's annual report and highlighted a number of projects that included tax exemptions, grants received from the Michigan Department of Economic Development (MEDC), Incumbent Worker Training Grants from Michigan Works, a Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) received for infrastructure for the Lear Corporation expansion, and Brownfield assessments and redevelopments. She also reported that SJCEDC is partnering with other agencies for regional economic development initiatives and collaborating with workforce development and education partners. Dialog with the members present at the meeting included discussion of local industrial parks, regional economic development, and hopeful future progress toward the development of US-131 through St. Joseph County. Ms. Annis referred the audience to the St. Joseph County economic development report card on the final page of the SJCEDC annual report that identified the dollars generated and jobs created in St. Joseph County during the past year.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion made by Barry Visel and supported by Mary Oudsema to approve the WDB meeting minutes of November 2, 2006 and the WDB Executive Committee Meeting Minutes of December 7, 2006. Motion carried.

KALAMAZOO COUNTY

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Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities - Michigan Relay Center 1-800-649-3777 (Voice and TTY)*

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Executive Committee

Plans – Craig Schreuder requested Board consideration and approval of the program plan for the WIA Incentive Funds for PY2005 Performance. The plan recommendation is to support the implementation of 21st century workforce development/business services strategies. This includes staff support for the overall coordination of the new business services model for the Kalamazoo-St. Joseph Michigan Works Area, staff directly responsible for the interaction with the business community, and the identification of current and anticipated needs of businesses.

Motion made by Susan Einspahr and supported by Tom Brennan to approve the WIA Incentive Funds for PY2005 Performance Plan. Motion carried.

Monitoring and Evaluation Committee – Suprotik Stotz-Ghosh reported the Monitoring and Evaluation Committee met with Y.O.U. staff and participants in January to review the Workforce Investment Act adult program and services. The subcontractor staff had many positive comments regarding the additional support provided to them by the Workforce Development Board. Subcontractor staff have been using a form that was introduced to them in September by the Committee. The form is a tool to help staff identify barriers to providing services and to give the staff an opportunity to offer suggestions for addressing the barriers. The participants interviewed provided positive feedback regarding training and services received and offered a suggestion for improving the process used for transportation assistance. John Davis reported the participants had some concern regarding the intensity of the CNA class and that the State of Michigan is reviewing the curriculum.

Marketing Committee – No report.

STAFF REPORTS

Model Program “Solutions for Employee Retention” - Bob Straits reported the Workforce Development Board challenged staff to design a workforce development program to address employee retention without limitations and restrictions. Staff reviewed best practices and numerous workforce development strategies and developed a local model that focused on hiring and retention strategies. The Committee realized they needed to develop a customized plan, one employer at a time, and Borgess Medical Center stepped forward. Plans are to further develop the model with Bronson Healthcare and Heritage Community. Funding for the project was provided through foundation grants. Don Edgerly explained that Borgess focused on retention of employees at all levels and with the help of Michigan Works staff, developed a customized plan for processing Borgess applications that includes multiple levels of screening and assessing candidates during the hiring process as well as follow-up to address employee needs for retention and to track success. Five targeted entry level positions that required a literacy assessment were included in the pilot. The positions included housekeeping, food and nutrition, service associates, patient care associates, and central processing. Don provided a thorough description of the project from the point the applicant applies for a job, through the assessment, literacy testing, job reality check, interviewing and hiring process. Dolly Roselip reported the previously developed “Reality Check” that is used for individuals prior to enrolling in CNA training was customized to fit the needs of Borgess Medical Center for this project. Don announced that eighteen employees were hired on January 8, 2007, another four on January 22 and 6-8 are scheduled to begin next Monday. During the retention phase, the instructor meets with managers and employees in order to address any concerns they may have. Don explained by using this model, the hiring process has become more centralized and all candidates go through the same assessment and screening process. As a result, Borgess is seeing more qualified candidates. The entire process from the applicant’s initial application to being referred for an interview takes one week. The individuals who have been selected for hire have taken personal pride in being selected and have ownership in their own success. Managers at Borgess have indicated they are able to identify which employees were referred to them by Michigan Works because of the professional manner they portray. Beginning July 1, Borgess Medical Center is prepared to begin paying for this service. Mary Oudsema, a Board member serving on the committee overseeing this project, commented that it was a difficult process to move the project out of the design stage. She expressed her thanks for the foundation funding that was provided as seed money and is thrilled to see the project move into implementation. The fact that Borgess Medical Center recognizes the value and is willing to pay for this service is a testament of its success.

Bob Straits reported the Kalamazoo-St. Joseph MWA is part of a five county consortium working to improve services to employers on a regional basis under the **21st Century Workforce Initiative**. A team of local staff are attending training in Lansing that is focused on economic development, workforce development and education using a unified approach when meeting with employers. The legislature is expected to continue funding the **Workforce Investment Act** programs

for the remainder of fiscal year 07 at 06 levels through a continuing resolution. A new model for Work First called **JET (Jobs, Education and Training)** is being piloted in four counties and there are plans to implement JET statewide in October. The JET model calls for the Department of Human Services to assess all clients prior to referring them to the workforce development programs. The **Michigan Prisoner Re-entry Program (MPRI)** has had 125 prisoners paroled to Kalamazoo County since October 2005. A committee is working on the program design for the expansion of this program to include St. Joseph County later this year. A pilot grant was also received by Kalamazoo County to expand the MPRI program to include services to sex offenders who are returning to the community and a coordinator has been hired for the pilot. This population has many restrictions as to where they may live or work.

MEMBER’S TIME – Suprotik Stotz-Ghosh announced he will be leaving the Greater Kalamazoo United Way and the Kalamazoo-St. Joseph Workforce Development Board and he will be joining the Michigan Works staff later this month.

CITIZEN’S TIME – Craig Schreuder introduced Deb Miller, Executive Director for the Education for Employment (EFE) program at K/RESA. He announced that Ms. Miller replaced Tom Conor who previously held this position. Ms. Miller previously worked in career technical education and currently serves on the Workforce Development Board’s Education Advisory Group (EAG).

Bob Straits thanked the speakers for their presentations and the members for their contributions to today’s discussion.

NEXT MEETING – The next Executive Committee meeting is scheduled for Thursday, March 1, 2007 at 7:30 a.m. at the Upjohn Institute/Michigan Works office in Kalamazoo. The next combined Executive Committee and full WDB meeting is scheduled for Thursday, May 3, 2007 from 8:00 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. and the agenda will include annual planning. The next Monitoring and Evaluation Committee meeting is scheduled for 7:30 a.m. on Thursday, February 15, 2007 at the Youth Opportunities Unlimited office in Kalamazoo.

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

Robert A. Straits _____ Date

Jerry Love _____ Date