



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  
March 10, 2005**

WDB Co-Chair, Jerry Love called the meeting to order at 7:31 a.m. at Michigan Works!/Upjohn Institute, 222 S. Westnedge Avenue, Kalamazoo, Michigan.

**Members Present:** Thom Brennan (PS), Tom Drabik (PS), Susan Einspahr (PS), Lisa Godfrey (PS), Joe Herdus (PS), Jerry Love (PS), Mary Oudsema (PS), Pat Pangburn (PS), Marilyn Potgiesser (PS), Membership 11, Attendance-9 (82%), PS-9 (100%)

**Other WDB Members Present:** Armando Romero (PS)

**MW Staff Present:** Barbara Newhouse, Kathy Olsen, Craig Schreuder, Kara Stewart, Bob Straits

**Guests Present:** John Davis (DHS), Jack Mekemson (Goodwill), Dolly Roselip (ETC)

**I Approval of Minutes**

**Motion made by Tom Drabik and supported by Jerry Love to approve the Workforce Development Board/WDB Executive Committee meeting minutes of February 3, 2005. Motion carried.**

**II Committee Reports**

**A. Executive Committee**

**1. Program Funding** – Craig Schreuder reported an additional \$11,847 was received for the Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) program to assist workers who have lost their jobs due to work being sent to foreign countries. This brings the total Trade funds to \$40,674 for FY2005. The Kalamazoo County Department of Human Services transferred \$30,000 to the Kalamazoo-St. Joseph MWA for the support of employment-related supportive services for Family Independence Program clients. The Michigan Works System Administrative Procedures Plan, a non-financial administrative document, was updated to include additional forms, certifications, stipulations, and administrative procedures applicable for all programs funded through the Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Growth.

**Motion made by Joe Herdus and supported by Jerry Love to approve the additional funds for the Trade Adjustment Assistance Program, the transfer of funds from Kalamazoo County Department of Human Services to the Kalamazoo-St. Joseph MWA and the Michigan Works System Administrative Procedures Plan. Motion carried.**

**2. NAWB Conference** – Bob Straits reported the WIA reauthorization was passed by the House but not the Senate. The House bill is similar to the President's plan. The merging of program funds would allow for more local discretion; however, is a concern because it becomes an easy target for future budget cuts. Craig Schreuder reported there was some focus on funding for one stop centers that included discussion regarding having partners contribute toward the operation of the centers. Homeland security was identified at the conference as the second highest growing industry.

**B. Monitoring and Evaluation Committee** – Kathy Olsen reported the Monitoring and Evaluation Committee met at the Three Rivers Service Center for the purpose of reviewing employment services in St. Joseph County. ETC staff reported to the committee that they are conducting employment workshops at remote locations in the community as an additional outreach effort. ETC staff also reported that traffic at the service center is low considering the high unemployment rate in St. Joseph County. The committee recommended that ETC staff hold some focus groups in the community to help determine why the usage is low.

**C. Marketing Committee** – Mary Oudsema reported the Kalamazoo-St. Joseph MW is co-sponsoring the Job and Business Expo at Glen Oaks Community College and Housing Resources' Walk for the Homeless. She announced that Kathy Olsen will be participating in the Walk and that she is asking for pledge sponsors.

**III. Staff Reports** - Bob Straits introduced Barbara Newhouse and reported that Michigan Works is restructuring the administrative staff in regard to contracts, monitoring, and planning. Barbara is assigned to work with Work First subcontractors and Kathy

Olsen will work with the subcontractors operating Workforce Investment Act programs. Barbara and Kathy will handle contracts, monitoring, communication, and flow of information with the subcontractors. Kara will be learning the planning process.

Tom Drabik and Bob Straits attended a breakfast meeting with the Governor earlier this week. Discussion revolved around TANF funding and filling available jobs. Community colleges are being asked to fill the training gap and to train people in areas of high demand, mainly in healthcare. The Governor also wants to fill 30,000 jobs in the next year. The role of Michigan Works will be to assist with a coordinated statewide marketing approach that targets employers in an effort to increase employer usage of the service centers. Bob Straits reported ES staff are working with Southwest Michigan First, M-TEC and MEDC to establish a coordinated effort for making business retention calls. They are working on a system that will include a list of questions to ask that will provide the needed information to all of the agencies, no matter who makes the call and to avoid duplicate calls. Susan Einspahr reported the City of Kalamazoo is also making retention calls and members agreed they should be included. Craig Schreuder reported discussions with the State were finalized last week for an EDJT grant with Parker Hannifin to train 400 workers and to hire 100 new workers.

Bob Straits reported the local Regional Skill Alliance is focused on the healthcare industry and will be holding symposiums in our eight county area to share best practices. Craig Schreuder reported staff assigned to the RSA project surveyed healthcare employers and approximately 45% responded. Of the responses received, four employers committed to serving on the RSA advisory committee. Marilyn Potgiesser reported there are many health care jobs that are currently unfilled, as an example she expressed a need to fill 14 respiratory therapists at Bronson. These positions have been vacant for over a year and Bronson's workforce development plan is committed to training for eight of these positions. A barrier for the so many people who are placed on waiting lists for classes is that there are currently not enough instructors available to teach the classes. Staff are working with healthcare trainers to identify the needs and address them.

Bob Straits reported another unfunded initiative supported by the Bush administration is the Prisoner Re-entry Program. Bob stated the he, Jack Mekemson and Dolly Roselip are working on a committee to establish how this would be done locally. He reported approximately 400 ex-offenders return to the Kalamazoo community each year and the program is designed to work with these individuals prior to their release from prison as well as when they return to the community. Case managers would be assigned to work with the participants and employers for job placement, follow-up and retention. There are six pilot programs in Michigan; however, so far there is no funding assigned to Kalamazoo. If funding is allocated for the project, the County hopes to have a Program Coordinator. Dolly Roselip added a local initiative called Project Return is already underway in Kalamazoo County.

- IV. Member Time** – Mary Oudsema reported the Model Program is moving ahead quickly. The next employer meeting is March 29. The program design is to fill in the gaps of current programs. Plans are to house a program coordinator at the service center. Assistance will be available to help employers fill available jobs from entry level to skilled. Staff would be available for a longer period of time to provide mentoring to the individuals placed in jobs, coordinate supportive services, and be available to assist in solving problems as they arise. Employers committed to the program would eventually pay a monthly fee for the program's funding. Currently, three employers have expressed their commitment to the program and others have expressed interest. The occupational clusters that the program will focus on will depend on the demand of the participating businesses. The key will be to provide services beyond 30 days after employment. The extended case management will allow for retaining be a cost savings in recruiting and turnover.

Tom Drabik reported the Kalamazoo County Commissioners are looking forward to the Michigan Works presentation at the next Kalamazoo Board of Commissioners Committee of the Whole meeting on Tuesday, March 15 at 4:00 p.m. He announced the meeting is open to anyone who wishes to attend.

- V. Next Meeting** - The next Executive Committee meeting is scheduled for Thursday, April 7, 2005 at 7:30 a.m. at Michigan Works/Upjohn Institute.
- VI. Adjournment** – With no further business to discuss the meeting was adjourned at 8:32 a.m.

---

Robert A. Straits

Date

---

Thom Brennan

Date