



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**  
**April 3, 2008**

WDB Chair, Mary Oudsema called the meeting to order at 7:33 a.m. at Michigan Works/Upjohn Institute Office, 222 S. Westnedge Avenue, Kalamazoo, Michigan.

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

**Members Absent:** Joe Herdus (PS), Jerry Love (PS), Linda Marcon (PS)

**MW Staff Present:** Jeanne Konrad, Kathy Olsen, Craig Schreuder, Suprotik Stotz-Ghosh, Bob Straits

**Guests Present:** Omar Alston (DOC), John Davis (DHS), John Dillworth (Goodwill), Curt Mastos (HRDI), Tim McGann (LMC), Dolly Roselip (Y.O.U./KRESA), Cincy Sullivan (Y.O.U./KRESA), Jack Urban (Kal County Commissioner)

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**Motion made by Lisa Godfrey and supported by Dennis Berkebile to approve the WDB meeting minutes of February 7, 2008. Motion carried.**

**STAFF REPORTS**

**Workforce Development Plans** – Craig Schreuder requested Board consideration and approval of the *Department of Human Service (DHS) Employment Related Supportive Services Plan*. He reported the plan is to transfer funds from DHS to the Kalamazoo-St. Joseph Michigan Works Area for the purpose of providing employment-related supportive services to Family Independence clients enrolled in the JET (formerly Work First) Program. He further identified that the funds would be used specifically for assistance with transportation support services to St. Joseph County participants.

**Motion made by Lisa Godfrey and supported by Marilyn Potgiesser to approve the DHS Employment Related Supportive Services Plan. Motion carried.**

Kathy Olsen provided an update on the *Road Construction Apprenticeship Readiness (RCAR) Program*. She reported the RCAR Program targets preparing women, minorities and low income individuals for entrance into an apprenticeship training program for a career in road construction. Five public recruitment meetings were held to introduce those interested to the requirements of the RCAR Program. Over 150 individuals attended the public meetings. Those who were interested in learning more about the program attended a RCAR orientation meeting where additional details regarding requirements, testing and benefits were provided. In order to be accepted into the RCAR Program, individuals had to meet all of the minimum requirements and also pass the WorkKeys tests for Math, Reading and Locating Information at a level 3 or above, as well as pass a drug test and physical. The demographics of the finalists is diverse and includes, women, minorities and ex-offenders from southwest Michigan. The local class for the RCAR Program is limited to 20 participants. A Selection Committee will be interviewing the qualified participants to make the final selection.

Craig Schreuder announced the RFP Committee will be meeting April 10 to review the proposals submitted for the *Workforce Investment Act Youth Program*.

Bob Straits reported since the implementation of the *No Worker Left Behind (NWLB)* Initiative last August, staff have been working with community colleges to provide more short-term training opportunities. This included automotive and welding academies at Kalamazoo Valley Community College. Bob distributed copies of a communication from the college thanking Tom Rueber, a case manager in the WIA Adult Program, for the excellent communication and coordination he provided for enrollment of individuals into training programs during a very narrow window of time. Of the 15 students enrolled in the welding academy class, 5 of them were approved for training using NWLB funding.

**Workforce Development Policies** – None.

**Program Status Report** – Suprotik Stotz-Ghosh distributed copies of the Program Status Report containing data through February 29, 2008. Section I of the report included data on outcomes of the core employment and training programs and section II included data on outcomes for special workforce development initiatives. He stated that data on the RCAR program will be included in the next report.

**Legislative Update** – Bob Straits reported the WIA funding rescission is to recover unspent funding as far back as 2005. Some states have as much as 35-40% of unspent funds. In Michigan, the amount of unspent funding was small and the State has advised MWA Directors that the State will cover the payback of funds and will not be asking local areas to return funding. The Governor’s State budget plan includes funding for the Michigan Prisoner Re-Entry (MPRI) Initiative and 40 million for the NWLB Initiative. There are ongoing discussions at the State level as to how the MPRI Program is organized and the State continues to look for ways to improve the program. Omar Alston reported legislative representatives have been invited to attend the local MPRI Steering Committee and Transition Team meetings. Although WIA funding has been cut for the new program year, the State is expecting to receive additional WIA funding due to Michigan’s high unemployment rate. This should allow for maintaining a level of funding similar to the current year. If State NWLB funds are approved, this will most likely result in an increase for the Dislocated Worker and Adult Programs.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**Executive Committee** – No Report.

**Monitoring and Evaluation Committee** – Dennis Berkebile reported the Monitoring and Evaluation Committee met at Goodwill Industries during the month of March. Goodwill staff appear to be doing well in their ability to continually adjust to the many changes of the JET Program. Committee members were concerned that participation in education and training activities does not count as part of the 20 required core hours and that the training and education hours are above and beyond the core participation. Bob Straits reported this has been conveyed to the State; however, this is a federal requirement and the federal focus remains on placement, wages and retention.

**Marketing Committee** – Kathy Olsen reported announcements have been sent out changing the date of the May Workforce Development Board meeting to Friday, May 2. The Board meeting will begin at 9:00 a.m. and will be followed by a ribbon cutting ceremony celebrating the opening of the new Three Rivers Michigan Works Service Center. Committee members agreed to a tentative agenda for the day that includes having a short Board meeting, a presentation on training with 4-5 speakers, followed by the ribbon cutting at approximately 10:00 a.m.

**OLD BUSINESS** – None.

**MEMBER’S TIME** – John Davis reported the annual ISAAC Banquet is this Saturday, April 5 at the WMU Bernhard Center. The event begins at 6:00 p.m. and the cost is \$35.00. The guest speaker is Howard Wolpe.

**CITIZEN’S TIME** – John Dillworth announced that Housing Resources, Inc. (HRI) is moving into Goodwill’s Alcott Street office. HRI will be occupying the second floor of the building. He also announced that Goodwill Industries of Southwestern Michigan and Housing Resources, Inc. jointly received the Department of Human Services Star Award for their program efforts where assistance for housing and employment services are combined and where such efforts has resulted in a success rate four times that of the JET Program. He noted this award is the DHS Star Award and should not be confused with the local Star Awards.

**NEXT MEETING** – The next combined Executive Committee and full WDB meeting is scheduled for 9:00 a.m. on Friday, May 2, 2008 at the new Michigan Works Service Center in Three Rivers, Michigan. The meeting will be followed by a ribbon cutting ceremony opening the new center. The next Monitoring and Evaluation Committee meeting is scheduled for Thursday, May 17, 2008 from 7:30 – 9:00 a.m. at the Michigan Works Service Center in Kalamazoo.

**ADJOURNMENT** – With no further business to discuss the meeting was adjourned at 8:10 a.m.