



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

**Workforce Development Board Meeting Minutes
May 3, 2007**

WDB Vice-Chair, Mary Oudsema called the meeting to order at 7:59 a.m. at the Park Club, 219 West South Street, Kalamazoo, Michigan.

Members Present: Nasim Ansari (PS), Rick Anderson (Labor), Robin Baker (At-Large), Dennis Berkebile (PS), Thom Brennan (PS), Diane Donovan (PS), Don Edgerly (PS), Susan Einspahr (PS), Bill Farmer (Labor), Lisa Godfrey (PS), Jill Hess (PS), Joe Herdus (PS), Ellen Kisinger-Rothi (CBO), Linda Marcon (PS), Mary Oudsema (PS), Marilyn Potgiesser (PS), Armando Romero (PS), Dave Sanford (PS Alternate for Sandstrom), Barry Visel (PS)

Members Absent: David Allen (PS), Cathy Annis (Econ Dev), Erv Heidbrink (Labor), Jim Harrington (PS), Margie Hojara-Hadsell (MRS), Chris Kadulski (DHS), Jerry Love (PS), Shelby Meyer (PS), Bernie Stankewicz (Educ)

MW Staff Present: Ben Damerow, Dallas Oberlee, Kathy Olsen, Craig Schreuder, Kara Stewart, Suprotik Stotz-Ghosh, Bob Straits, Bridget Timmeney, Jim Walters

Guests Present: John Davis (DHS), John Dillworth (Goodwill), Dennis Hart (MRS), Curt Mastos (HRDI), Cincy Sullivan (K/RESA EFE)

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion made by Marilyn Potgiesser and supported by Diane Donovan to approve the WDB meeting minutes of February 1, 2007. Motion carried.

Motion made by Susan Einspahr and supported by Thom Brennan to approve the WDB Executive Committee meeting minutes of April 5, 2007.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Executive Committee – No Report

Monitoring and Evaluation Committee – Linda Marcon reported the Monitoring and Evaluation Committee met at Goodwill Industries in April to review the Kalamazoo County Work First program. Goodwill staff provided the Committee with a summary of the highlights, challenges and opportunities of the program. The Committee also met with five program participants. Some of the participants reported being skeptical about the requirement to participate in Work First; however once enrolled, found it to be beneficial.

Marketing Committee – Kathy Olsen distributed copies of the Spring 2007 Michigan Works newsletter for the Kalamazoo-St. Joseph MWA. She also distributed copies of the Annual Report for the program year that ended September 30, 2006.

INTRO ACTIVITY

Kathy Olsen provided a handout that listed Board members' appointment dates to the Workforce Development Board. The handout also included a list of MW staff and their responsibilities. Members present had the opportunity to interview another person at the meeting to learn more about their interests and community involvement. Each person then introduced the person they interviewed to the rest of the group.

STAFF REPORTS

Programs – Bob Straits reported Don Edgerly, Wilma Wilder and he recently gave a presentation on the Model Program Borgess Project at the Great Lakes Employment and Training Association (GLETA) Conference in St. Louis. The project continues to evolve and open doors for disadvantaged individuals who otherwise would not have opportunities. Bob stated that he has received two additional invitations to give a presentation on the Model at future conferences.

Michigan Prisoner Reentry Initiative (MPRI) – Ben Damerow reported the MPRI focuses on addressing the needs of ex-offenders by providing them with the necessary tools to succeed in the community. The goal is to improve parole success rates by using a three phase model. During the “getting ready” phase, inmates scheduled for release are transferred to one site; one month prior to being released, the MPRI team meets with the parolee in prison and sets up appointments. During the “going home” phase, MPRI staff work with the parolee to set up a structured schedule. During the “staying home” phase, support for specific needs is provided. The MPRI program began with eight pilot sites. Additional sites were added this past October and the remainder of the State, including St. Joseph County, will be operating MPRI programs by October, 2007. The emphasis is on workforce development and Michigan Works has contracted with Goodwill Industries to provide these services for the MPRI program. In addition to placement in employment, some of the participants are enrolling in classes at the community college. To date 183 individuals were released in the Kalamazoo area; 29 of those placed in employment have been working for 6 months, 35 are at 90 day employment retention and 21 have returned to prison.

Securing Children’s Opportunities Possibilities & Empowerment (SCOPE) – Ben Damerow reported the SCOPE program focuses on breaking the inter-generational cycle of crime by supporting the development of children of incarcerated parents. SCOPE aims to reduce or eliminate the effects of known risk factors on children and their families and hopes to reverse the trend in which 70% of the children of incarcerated parents become caught up in the criminal justice system. A grant was received from the Kalamazoo Foundation for the SCOPE program to work with 25 families of participants who are in the MPRI program. A matching grant may also be available from the JEHT Foundation. Some of the supportive services include a parenting class offered by Prevention Works, reading assessments through the WMU College of Education, group therapy provided by Catholic Family Services, mentors from Big Brothers Big Sisters, social activities at the Boys and Girls Club and tracking of behavior and grades while in school by Kalamazoo Public Schools.

Comprehensive Approaches to Sex Offender Management (CASOM) – Dallas Oberlee reported a team has been meeting locally to collaboratively plan and implement a system-wide plan using comprehensive evidence based approaches for the management of sex offenders. The CASOM Collaboration Team includes an Executive Committee charged with making key program decisions as well as subcommittees that will be responsible for supervision, risk assessment, system flow, public education and program evaluation. Key elements of the plan include collaboration among key stakeholders in the community, following a victim centered approach, providing specialized knowledge and training, GPS monitoring, tether units, polygraphs, public education and the use of a case management team that includes the supervising officer, the treatment provider, the polygraph examiner and a victim advocate.

Work First / Jobs, Education & Training (JET) – Kara Stewart reported the State is moving forward with plans to change the workforce development program for individuals who are on public assistance from the Work First model that promotes job placement as the first priority to the Jobs, Education and Training (JET) model that promotes obtaining employment in a job that will sustain an individual and their family. During this past year there were 8 pilot JET sites; the entire State will move to the JET model beginning October 1. In Michigan, the current economy is a challenge for this program. The State is working on aligning the data collection system for the Department of Labor and Economic Growth with the system used by the Department of Human Services. The State has implemented a Family Assisted Screening Tool called FAST, which is a self evaluation that will gather information from participants and can be used to help identify barriers.

21st Century Project – Suprotik Stotz-Ghosh reported the State of Michigan recognizes the need to change and the purpose of the 21st Century Workforce Initiative is to develop coordinated regional strategies to build a workforce and economy that can embrace innovation and support the development of new industries. The initiative involves transitioning from a singular focus on job seekers to a dual focus that also addresses the needs of businesses. Suprotik reported a number of local staff participated in a training developed by MSU for business services.

Policy Guidelines – Craig Schreuder reported staff are reviewing local Workforce Development Board policies and will recommend changes. The Board will be asked to approve these policy changes in the near future.

MEMBER’S TIME – Linda Marcon announced the next Business Review Forum will be held on May 16, 2007 from 7:30 – 9:30 a.m. at the KVCC Arcadia Campus in Kalamazoo. The topic will be on career training innovations and Bob Straits is one of the featured speakers. Another Board member expressed concern regarding the high number of literacy issues in the community and reported some community agencies are attempting to raise funds to address literacy. With State and Federal cuts in funding, it would be helpful to identify other resources that could be used to address this barrier.

CITIZEN’S TIME – Curt Mastos stated he has been working with the Dislocated Worker Program for 18 years and he expressed his appreciation for the willingness of MW staff to ask for input from the service providers. John Dillworth stated that the average Work First participant is at a 5th grade education level. He also invited attendees to attend an open house on Friday, May 18, 2007 from 2:00 to 7:00 p.m. at the Goodwill office on Alcott Street. John Davis announced the annual ISAAC banquet is scheduled for this Friday at the Kalamazoo Radisson. One of issues on ISAAC’s statewide platform has been employment. Cincy Sullivan announced there will be Health Care Careers Job Fair at the Kalamazoo Michigan Works Service Center on May 9, 2007 from 6:00 – 8:00 p.m. This is an invitation only event and approximately 75 job seekers who have the qualifications the employers are seeking are invited to meet with 8-9 employers. Bill Farmer announced the Kalamazoo Area Labor Management Committee is hosting their annual Tribute Dinner on May 16, 2007 at WMU’s Fetzer Center. The primary purpose of KALM is to foster cooperation between business and labor organizations and the event is to celebrate successes.

NEXT MEETING – The next Executive Committee meeting is scheduled for Thursday, June 7, 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, September 13, 2007 from 8:00 a.m. to 9:30 a.m. The next Monitoring and Evaluation Committee meeting is scheduled for 7:30 a.m. on Thursday, May 24, 2007 at the Michigan Works Work First office in Three Rivers. The annual Michigan Works Conference is scheduled for September 9-11, 2007 in Grand Rapids, Michigan.

ADJOURNMENT – With no further business to discuss the meeting was adjourned at 9:58 a.m.

Robert A. Straits

Date

Mary Oudsema

Date