



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

**Workforce Development Board and
Workforce Development Board Executive Committee
September 2, 2004**

WDB Chair, Thom Brennan called the meeting to order at 8:10 a.m. at the W.E. Upjohn Institute, 300 S. Westnedge Avenue, Kalamazoo, Michigan.

WDB Members Present: David Allen (Econ Dev), Rick Anderson (Labor), Robin Baker (At-Large), Thom Brennan (PS), Diane Donovan (PS), Tom Drabik (PS), Susan Einspahr (PS), Mark Fricke (PS), Lisa Godfrey (PS), Erv Heidbrink (Labor), Joe Herdus (PS), Margie Hojara-Hadsell (MRS), Chris Kadulski (FIA), Ellen Kisinger-Rothi (CBO), Linda Marcon (PS), Mary Oudsema (PS), Marilyn Potgiesser (PS), Armando Romero (PS), Bernie Stankewicz (Educ), Suprotik Stotz-Ghosh (CBO).
Membership 27, Attendance-20 (74%), PS-11 (55%)

MW Staff Present: Kathy Olsen, Craig Schreuder, Kara Stewart, Bob Straits, Bridget Timmeney, Jim Walters, Linda Whitlock

Guests Present: Dennis Berkebile (Consumers Energy), John Davis (FIA), Chad Howell (City of Kalamazoo), Curt Mastos (M-HRDI), Jerome Kisscorni (City of Kalamazoo), John Long (Kalamazoo Regional Chamber of Commerce), Jack Mekemson (Goodwill), Dolly Roselip (ETC)

I. Approval of Minutes

Motion made by Ellen Kisinger-Rothi and supported by Susan Einspahr to approve the WDB Executive Committee meeting minutes of August 5, 2004. Motion carried.

Motion made by Marilyn Potgiesser and supported by Linda Marcon to approve the WDB Executive Committee/Full WDB meeting minutes of May 6, 2004. Motion carried.

II. Incumbent Worker Program – Craig Schreuder reported the Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Growth (MDLEG) announced the availability of limited resources that target incumbent workers. The resources will be allocated to Michigan Works Areas on a competitive basis to address specific strategic goals supporting the Governor's Reshaping Michigan's Workforce work plan. In Kalamazoo-St. Joseph the Incumbent Worker Grant will focus resources to strengthen incumbent worker skills in two industry sectors: Health Care and Manufacturing.

Motion made by Bernie Stankewicz and supported by Marilyn Potgiesser to approve the Incumbent Worker Program for PY2004. Motion carried.

III. Regional Skill Alliances - Craig Schreuder reported the State of Michigan established 13 Regional Skill Alliances (RSAs) throughout the state. RSAs are locally managed partnerships formed to address workforce issues affecting firms operating in the same industry in a distinct geographic area. The Southwest Michigan Regional Skill Alliance (RSA) represents eight counties in three contiguous Michigan Works Area regions of Southwest Michigan (Barry, Branch, and Calhoun; Berrien, Cass and Van Buren; and Kalamazoo and St. Joseph Counties). The Southwest Michigan RSA will focus on the Health Care industry and will encompass the industry, education and training providers, potential and incumbent workers, the public workforce development system, and economic development. The RSA is a three-year project; the first year is being funded by the State and the following two years will be locally funded.

IV. WDB Appointments/Renewals

Motion Made by David Allen and supported by Mary Oudsema to approve

- **A change in the private sector business represented by Joe Herdus to Blue Fish Cruise and Travel;**
- **The appointment of Dennis Berkebile, Area Manager, Consumers Energy to fill a private sector seat vacated by Mark Dmytro for the balance of a two-year term beginning immediately and ending December 31, 2004 and for a two-year term from January 1, 2005 to December 31, 2006; and**

- **The reappointment of Thom Brennan (PS), Erv Heidbrink (Labor), Tom Drabik (PS), James Harrington (Education), Margie Hojara-Hadsell (Rehabilitation), Myra Johnson (PS), Chris Kadulski (Public Assistance), Linda Marcon (PS), Marilyn Potgiesser (PS), Armando Romero (PS), Robin Baker (At-Large), Suprotik Stotz-Ghosh (CBO), Richard Anderson (Labor-Alternate), and Sherry Thomas-Cloud (Public Assistance-Alternate) for two-year terms beginning January 1, 2005 and expiring December 31, 2006.**

V. Program – Economic Development – Chad Howell, Development Manager, City of Kalamazoo, spoke to the audience about economic development projects in Kalamazoo County and highlighted the redevelopment of brownfield areas within the City of Kalamazoo. Jerome Kisscorni, Assistant City Manager, City of Kalamazoo reported the City’s economic development office works closely with Southwest Michigan First in business recruitment and retention. He reported many employers have expressed the need for better screening of workers as well as programs and services to support workers such as mentoring, training, transportation and daycare services. Recently, the City has been working with Michigan Works Employment Services and HRDI to introduce local employers to services available through Michigan Works Service Centers. David Allen, Executive Director, St. Joseph County Economic Development Corporation and WDB member spoke about economic development in St. Joseph County. Both presentations stressed the importance of regional economic development. Areas in which the WDB can assist were identified to be the development of the Southwest Michigan Regional Skill Alliance; an improved linkage between K-12 and higher education, especially in math and science; an increase in outreach to employers; soft skills development in workers; and support of the local community colleges.

VI. Workforce Development Model Bridget Timmeney presented information regarding a model program “Creating Economic Opportunities,” a workforce development proposal for low-income residents of Kalamazoo County. The program is a joint effort of the Kalamazoo-St. Joseph Workforce Development Board and the W.E. Upjohn Institute for Employment Research. The mission is to better help Kalamazoo County low-income individuals and families obtain jobs leading to economic self-sufficiency. The vision of the program is to enhance the existing workforce development system to provide longer-term, more personalized assistance to both the low-income workers and to their potential employers. Bridget explained “Creating Economic Opportunities” has some similar components of the existing “Making It Work” Program; however the proposed model includes a lower case management ratio and a much stronger link with employers. The immediate challenge is employer commitment to invest in training and education of employees. Marilyn Potgiesser from Bronson Healthcare stated it is the employer’s business to be committed to workforce development; doing so reduces turnover and improves the quality of the workforce. One member indicated he would like to see this workforce development model expanded to include St. Joseph County.

VII. Committee Reports.

- A. **Executive Committee** – No Report
- B. **Monitoring & Evaluation Committee** – No Report
- C. **Marketing Committee** – Mary Oudsema reported over 270 individuals attended the Michigan Works 2004 Employment & Career Forum at KVCC Arcadia Campus on Tuesday, August 17, 2004. Several area employers, educators, community organizations and WDB members volunteered to present at the workshops. Many positive comments were received from presenters and attendees regarding the benefits of the event. Mary presented a certificate of appreciation to WDB member, Diane Donovan, for outstanding dedication and commitment in providing service and assistance to individuals at the 2003 & 2004 Michigan Works! Employment & Career Forums. Mary asked anyone interested in receiving a copy of the Michigan Works Association newsletter, to complete the Newsline mailing form. The form should be given to Kathy Olsen for forwarding to the State Association.

VIII. Upcoming Meetings - The next Executive Committee meeting is scheduled for Thursday, October 7, 2004 at 7:30 a.m. at the Michigan Works!/Upjohn Institute Office. The next Monitoring and Evaluation Committee meeting is scheduled for 7:30 a.m. on Thursday, September 16, 2004 at Employment & Training Connections. The next full WDB is scheduled for Thursday, November 4, 2004 at a location in St. Joseph County to be announced.

IX. Adjournment – With no further business to discuss the meeting was adjourned at 9:55 a.m.

Robert A. Straits

Date

Thom Brennan

Date