

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD
Executive Committee Meeting
March 6, 2003

Chair Marilyn Potgiesser called the Workforce Development Board Executive Committee meeting to order at 7:32 a.m. at Michigan Works!/Upjohn Institute, 536 West Lovell Street, Kalamazoo, Michigan.

Committee Members Present: Thom Brennan (PS), Susan Einspahr (PS), Lisa Godfrey (PS), Joe Herdus (PS), Jerry Love (PS), Mary Oudsema (PS), Pat Pangburn (PS), Marilyn Potgiesser (PS), Suprotik Stotz-Ghosh (CBO) Membership – 9, Attendance –9 (100%), PS (89%)

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

I. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION: To approve the Workforce Development Board Executive Committee meeting minutes of
Jerry Love February 6, 2003. **Support:** Joe Herdus. **Vote:** Unanimously approved.

II. COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. Executive Committee

1. Poverty Initiative – Bob Straits reported the Poverty Initiative evolved out of the City of Kalamazoo’s vote on the living wage. Individuals interested in this initiative have been discussing what can be done in the community to address poverty. The group has expanded and committee members were invited to attend a joint Kalamazoo City and Kalamazoo County board meeting on Tuesday, March 11 where a resolution will be adopted for the release of the Kalamazoo Poverty Initiative. David Artley from the County, Suprotik Stotz-Ghosh from the United Way and Bridget Timmeney from the Upjohn Institute are loaned staff for this initiative. The Community Task Force Against Poverty is looking at gaps in employment and housing and it was suggested that at some point in the near future, David Artley meet with the WDB Executive Committee.

2. NAWB - Marilyn Potgiesser reported this years NAWB Forum was the largest in attendance. She attended sessions on workforce development and healthcare. Thom Brennan reported he attended a session where futurist, Ed Barlow, participated in a panel discussion on strategic thinking in preparing the workforce for changing jobs and a global economy, particularly in healthcare. Bob Straits commented that the partisan nature was clearly divided at this year’s forum. One senator from California was advocating a block grant for the reauthorization of funding for workforce development programs while a representative from Michigan took the same issues and had an opposite view. Both sides are in full agreement that attention needs to be given to the reauthorization, however they continue to differ on how it will be done. The division of opinion continued for other issues as well. Craig reported funding for some education programs are also up for reauthorization and the cuts that are happening throughout the nation will have an impact on career planning.

B. Monitoring and Evaluation Committee – Jerry Love reported the Monitoring and Evaluation Committee met at Employment and Training Connections. Retention has been a problem throughout the county and staff are trying some innovative ideas to address this issue. ETC now has a quarterly newsletter with helpful information that is distributed to participants. ETC also applied for and received a small grant that will be used to provide gift certificates to participants after 60 days of employment. Participants meet in weekly roundtable discussions to network and share their ideas. Transportation, childcare and housing continue to be leading barriers to employment. During the past six months, the number of participants brand new to the program has increased. The participants stated the orientation process was excellent and they found the staff to be very caring. The participants did express frustration with the tight job market and recommended they be allowed to apply for jobs at employer sites in the mornings rather than afternoons. One person wanted to study cosmetology, however at the time this was not on the approved list. Craig commented cosmetology is a very detailed and state regulated industry and it takes two years to be fully trained and educated in this area. Participants must also review if the course of study is for an occupation in demand. The state issues a list of approved providers and cosmetology was added to the list last year.

C. Marketing Committee –Mary Oudsema reported Michigan Works (MW) would be represented at a job fair at the Kalamazoo Radisson on Thursday, March 25. MW is co-sponsoring a job fair with Glen Oaks Community College (GOCC) to be held on April 16 at GOCC. The following week MW will be at the student employment Expo at Kalamazoo Valley Community College. In May, MW will again co-sponsor the Kalamazoo Region Chamber of Commerce’s annual Business Expo at the Kalamazoo Radisson. Suprotik Stotz-Ghosh reported the Greater Kalamazoo United Way is planning a youth job fair. Members agreed to support this initiative. Marilyn Potgiesser commented Bronson Hospital is working on an initiative to educate families about the many careers in healthcare.

III. STAFF REPORTS

A. Program Status – Bob Straits reported under the WIA programs, goals are being met in most areas and ETC is concentrating on achieving goals in areas currently below what is expected. HRDI is not meeting goals in the dislocated worker program. Welfare programs that end in October are at or above goals. In the Employment Service area, services to job seekers is near 100%, however services to employers is low. All departments at the State level were told to do anything they could to cut costs. Partners in Adult Learning (PAL) is a legislative performance based contract and staff at the state did not understand this. Funding for PAL was cut without authority to make that decision. Six MWAs ended local programs, including Kalamazoo-St. Joseph. The 19 areas that continued to operate realized they could not meet performance without enrollments. If funds become available our subcontractors indicate they could restart the program fairly quickly.

B. Legislative Update – Bob Straits reported plan amounts for WIA programs are 20% lower than last year. Reed Act funding is uncertain at this time. There is a state match for WtW dollars, however if the state does not have the match there will not be any funds in this area.

C. RFP Process - Craig stated there will be Requests for Proposals for four programs: WIA Adult, WIA Dislocated Worker, Employment Services and Welfare-to-Work. Most likely, there will be a change in structure for the WIA programs, e.g. the adult and dislocated worker services will be combined. The WIA and ES programs must be implemented by July 1. Extra time could be allowed for WtW proposals, however this would mean two separate evaluations. Some of the committee members did not see a need for extra response time and committee members indicated they preferred to have one evaluation meeting. Jerry Love offered to ask members of the Monitoring and Evaluation Committee to sit on the RFP Committee. Teams could be formed for evaluating the various proposals rather than having the entire committee review all proposals.

IV. MEMBERS TIME – Suprotik announced the GKUW is coordinating a PeaceJam event. GKUW received funding for two years to do this and the Nobel Laureate selected to visit Kalamazoo this year is Adolfo Perez Esquivel, the 1980 Nobel Peace Prize winner. This event is free to the public and will be held on March 14 at 7:30 p.m. at Western Michigan University in the East ballroom of the Bernhard Center. The Greater Kalamazoo United Way is the regional affiliate for a four state area that includes Michigan, Ohio, Indiana and Illinois. During Mr. Esquivel’s visit, he will work with 200 students from PeaceJam clubs from the four state area with a heavier concentration from Michigan. Groups of students can participate if they have an adult who is willing to work with them as an advisor.

V. CITIZENS TIME –None.

VI. UPCOMING MEETINGS –The next WDB Executive Committee meeting is scheduled for Thursday, April 3, 2003 at Michigan Works/Upjohn Institute, 536 West Lovell Street, Kalamazoo, Michigan.

VII. ADJOURNMENT - With no further business to discuss, Chair Potgiesser adjourned the meeting at 8:40 a.m..

Robert A. Straits Date

Marilyn Potgiesser Date