

**Workforce Development Board  
Meeting Minutes  
Tuesday, September 21, 2021  
8:00AM - 9:30AM  
Meeting Scheduled via Zoom**

**Attendees:** Dana Abramson, Mary Beth Artuso, Kyle Banks, Thomas Battley, Rodric Cox-Cooper, Bob Coyne, Sergio Esteban, Melissa Geska, Adrian Hale, Glen Jeter, Kathy Miner, Tyrone Reaves, Gary Rogers, George Scharr, Michael Weed, Randy Andre, Romanda Gibson-Stevenson, Seanelle Hawkins, Joseph Leone, Ana Liss, Dan Maloney, Angelica Perez-Delgado, Patricia Stovall-Lane

**Absent:** Rachel Baranello, Bert Brinkerhoff, Corinda Crossdale, Ann Kowal, Daniele Lyman-Torres, Danielle Maloy, Roosevelt Mareus, Mark Rogacki, Joe Wesley,

**Staff:** David Seeley, Viatta Carter, Shawn Curran, Michael DeBole, Theodore Jordan, Lee Koslow, Behiye Mansour, Antwan Williams, Kathy Ziegler, Mary McKeown

**Guest:** Joseph Hamm, Jeffery McCann

**Call to Order:**

The meeting was called to order by Sergio Esteban at 8:02AM.

**Introductions**

Sergio Esteban welcomed RochesterWorks! staff and Board Members to the meeting today, noting this is the first Board Meeting with David Seeley, the new Executive Director. Sergio also extended a welcome to our 2 new members: Tyrone Reaves, President - TruForm Manufacturing and Rodric Cox-Cooper, Regional Director - Workforce Development Institute.

**Approval of Meeting Minutes**

A motion to approve the June 15, 2021 meeting minutes was made by George Scharr and seconded by Thomas Battley. The motion was passed unanimously.

**Finance Committee:**

**Michael DeBole Provided a Packet Covering the Summary of Expenses July 1, 2020 – June 30, 2021**

Michael DeBole began his report by noting that our financials for fiscal year 2020 ended on a good note. Our WIOA funding, which includes Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth, did achieve the 80% allocations of funding. Another good thing that happened this year was the PPP loan we had as a liability in PY2019 with the recommendation of Bonadio, became forgiven because we received a settlement of forgiveness for the loan. We received the letter late summer, so that will be reported in PY2020 as a Revenue item and will be removed as a liability.

Our Summer Youth Program for 2021 was much better than prior year. We had 253 Participants this year vs. 175 Participants last year; however, the participation was low compared to pre-COVID. The program will end September 30, 2021. During pre-Covid, we had approximately 400+ Participants involved with the program. Post-Covid, we are seeing progress with the Participants' activity.

The Career Center at 691 St. Paul Street, are conducting assessments for the Employability Assessment Program and its approximately 60+ Participants per month. The operations are moving along, and we are waiting for the Work Experience Program to be re-established. We are waiting for the approval from the State and hopefully that will be soon.

The Bonadio Group audit will be commencing in last 2 weeks of October. Our New York State audit began as of September 15<sup>th</sup>. We have until September 28<sup>th</sup> to provide them with all the supporting documents. They are hoping to wrap up the audit by October 12<sup>th</sup>, with a Financial Review Letter by mid-November, which will include the status of our Financial Review.

Mike concluded overall, our Revenues were fair considering we have \$3 Million remaining, of which some is WIOA and a portion of it is the Summer Youth Program. Our Direct Services, which are our ITAs and OJTs, were reasonable considering the circumstances of post COVID. However, the individuals who participated did get through the process at 100%. The numbers are down a bit this year and we had approximately 194 ITA Participants processed through, compared to last year of 268. Overall, the budget was 25% under and our Carryover, we had a surplus of \$180K. The Carryover is approximately \$1 Million, of which is our WIOA funding. The carryover is to maintain the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter of the new Program Year 2021, until we receive the balance of our allotment funding.

A motion to approve the Financial Report as presented was made by Michael Weed and seconded by Gary Rogers. The motion was passed unanimously.

### **Youth Committee:**

#### **Youth Services Update**

Antwan Williams reported on the following topics:

- **Partnerships:**  
Over the last couple of months, Antwan has spent time connecting with various partners in the community to re-establish who we are, what we do and to remind people of our new location. He will also be connecting with a new partner fairly soon, the RCSD, who may be able to provide an even bigger role in assisting Youth with gaining access to their work permit prior to the release of the application.
- **New Funding:**  
Regarding new funding this year, Department of Labor gave us a little over \$500K to extend summer employment for the out of school population. The goal with this is to have those individuals placed in subsidized work experience for 10 weeks and then beyond that, the Employer would pick those individuals up. We have also been running these young people through job readiness. Granted, our numbers are small right now. Out of 20 Youth who applied, only 5 to-date have followed through, so we have our work cut out in terms of reaching our goal of having 50 Youth enrolled into our program by December 15<sup>th</sup>. Eligibility for the program includes they must meet the 20% poverty guidelines and live within 1 of the 9 zip codes that are heavily impacted by gun violence.
- **WIOA Administrator Round Table:**  
Antwan met with the Navigator administrators to brainstorm and address what we can do as a system to improve the system. Items that stood out include the need to create a universal flyer that will promote all of the programs that are being funded through RochesterWorks!, to create an onboarding process across the board, so that at the end of the day, everyone is receiving the same information as it pertains to their roles utilizing the Navigator model, and to streamline our partnerships with RCSD OACES and REOC. The goal is for RochesterWorks! to take the lead in streamlining the partnerships to minimize confusion and implementing a much smoother referral process.
- **Summer Employment:**  
We recognize that one of the issues young people struggle with, is with their working papers. Every year we take in over 2,000 applications and yet we still struggle with getting the young people to follow through; however, the thought process says if we can start some type of campaign with getting young people on board to get their working papers in ahead of time, before the release of the application, we will have a higher turnout with our numbers. Pre-pandemic, there were 841 Youth who participated back in 2019. The goal for 2020 was to have 1,000, but

then the pandemic hit. It is understandable that the numbers are relatively low, but we are looking to increase those numbers next year.

## **Workforce Innovation Committee:**

### **Career Center Report**

Viatta Carter reported on the following topics:

- **Career Center Reopening:**  
In July, the Career Center began a hybrid schedule with staff gradually coming back into the office. As of September 13<sup>th</sup>, they've reopened to the Community. Staff and customers are following all Covid protocols that have been established for the Career Center. The Community will have to become familiar with the new system that is in place for seeing customers. Previously customers could walk in without having an appointment and could meet with anyone. With Covid restrictions now in place, an appointment only system has been implemented. To meet with an advisor, customers can call the Career Center directly or they can schedule an appointment through our website.
- **Services:**  
Job Seeker services are continuing to be offered and include resume, interviewing skills and job strategies. Prior to staff coming fully back into the office, they were working with customers, either by phone or through Zoom, the entire time throughout the height of the pandemic. They will continue to offer workshops virtually through the remainder of September. Their goal is to start offering some workshops in person, sometime in October. They had 316 Initial Assessments with new customers that came through the Career Center and 119 of those customers were individuals receiving Unemployment Insurance. They had 205 repeat customers returning to receive assistance with their job search. Partnerships that were established during the pandemic and we continue to work with include RIT Cyber Security Boot Camp in providing resume and job search services to their students. They had 3 cohorts of 25 students, and we were able to provide services to them. Another partnership established was with the Monroe County Library System where we facilitated 10 workshops to patrons. We also facilitated 3 job readiness workshops to the library staff, training them on how to service individuals that come in requiring assistance. We are also re-establishing our apprenticeship program with Kodak. We started this a couple of years ago and will continue to provide them with WorkKeys ACT assessments for skills development.

### **Business Services Update**

David Seeley reported the following on behalf of John Premo:

Although most activity remained the same, RochesterWorks! Business Services closed out the program year with the highest number of job postings since the implementation of our web-based job board. There were 3,424 Job Postings added to the RochesterWorks! Job Board. The trend is continuing into the new program year. Similar to the record job postings, we are promoting a higher-than-normal number of recruitment events hosted by individual companies. RochesterWorks! hosted 65 Recruitment Events. Until we are able to resume offering in-person recruitments again, Business Services will continue to assist business by providing a free outlet of increased visibility for their labor needs, along with hiring incentives to offset the cost of training new hires for the skills necessary to be productive team members. In addition, Business Services had 28 Training Contracts (Work Based Training), 1,376 Unique Employer Engagements and 239 Referrals to Additional Resources.

### **St. Paul Career Center Report**

Kathy Ziegler reported that customers have returned for in-person Employability Assessments mid-August. There have been no issues or concerns with current Covid protocols. Activities being facilitated at this time include Employability Assessments, Job Search Assistance, Resume Development, and other assistance as required. They have also been assisting Youth Services with Youth Job Readiness Training.

## Items for Board Action:

Lee Koslow reported on the following items:

- Comprehensive Gun Violence Prevention Program Policy:  
Three changes have come about since the Executive Committee approved this policy:
  - 1) We have expanded the eligibility for one of the types of qualified community service providers to include not just 501(c)3s, but also units of local government.
  - 2) We have changed a little bit the way that the second type of service provider, our currently selected navigator agencies, will draw on training and supportive services dollars. Now we will allow them to co-enroll these individuals in the WIOA Youth Program. This will allow them to leverage WIOA funds in addition to the State funds.
  - 3) We slightly changed the definition for our benchmark outcome for the qualified Community Service Providers, for the placement piece, allowing for both subsidized and unsubsidized placements to align it with what we are being held to by NYSDOL.

A motion to approve the Comprehensive Gun Violence Prevention Program Policy as presented was made by Thomas Battley and seconded by George Scharr. The motion was passed unanimously.

- Resolution to Approve Gun Violence Prevention Program Service Provider RFQ:  
Lee explained that we intend to contract out most of this money to organizations that are best positioned to serve this population, much like we do with the WIOA Youth dollars, where we contract out to Navigator agencies. We would like to do a Request For Qualifications, with a two-pronged approach:
  - 1) Expand our WIOA Youth Navigator Program to serve up to 270 of the 675 proposed program participants. This would include adding 10 additional Youth Navigators at \$60K a piece, for a total of \$600K.
  - 2) Generate a list of Qualified Community Service Providers to serve at least 405 program participants with \$905K available in this RFQ. The Qualified Community Service Providers would be approved on a service plan and would receive milestone payments of up to \$3,500 per participant total.

A motion to authorize RochesterWorks, Inc. to release a two-part Request for Qualifications to procure approximately \$1,505,000 in Gun Violence Prevention Program Services was made by Gary Rogers and seconded by Thomas Battley. The motion was passed unanimously.

- Resolution to Approve Payrolling Contract Extensions:  
Lee explained that TES Staffing and RBA Staffing each have one year remaining on contracts with multi-year renewal options. These are fee-for-service contracts to provide payrolling services and to serve as the employer of record for paid work experiences. TES Staffing serves as a primary provider for year-round and summer youth placements and as a secondary provider for all other payrolling services. RBA Staffing serves as a primary provider for all adult placements and as a secondary provider for all other payrolling services.

A motion to approve the renewal of fee-for-service payrolling contracts with TES Staffing, with an estimated budget of \$1,600,000 and RBA Staffing, with an estimated budget of \$300,000, for a final renewal period beginning on October 1, 2021 and ending on September 30, 2022 was made by Melissa Geska and seconded by Kathy Miner. The motion was passed unanimously.

- Resolution to Approve Changes to the Occupations in Demand List:  
Lee explained that the Occupations in Demand List was last updated two years ago and includes 53 occupations with 24,200 average annual openings. Its main use is to aid in the selection of classroom training programs in demand occupations and allows us to make recommendations to fund Individual Training Account (ITA) training under the WIOA Adult/Dislocated Worker, and to a smaller extent, Youth programs.

We are proposing one deletion from the Occupations in Demand List, Electrical and Electronics Engineering Technicians, and that is because the average annual openings have decreased, and this is the occupation with the lowest number average annual openings on the list. We have not

funded any training grants lately in this occupation. The training level would be an Associate's degree.

Lee added that we are proposing 12 additions to the Occupations in Demand List, which is the most we have had in quite a while. Taking a look at the new projections, this was a group of occupations that look like it would fit and be in line with increased opportunities for Adults over age 24 to use an ITA toward a Bachelor's degree. Most of these proposed additions are Bachelor's degree occupations that have either increased in demand or have simply been overlooked in the past.

The following occupations require a Bachelor's degree:

- Market Research Analysts and Marketing Specialists
- Substance Abuse, Behavioral Disorder, and Mental Health Counselors
- Child, Family, and School Social Workers
- Elementary School Teachers, Except Special Education
- Middle School Teachers, Except Special and Career/Technical Education
- Secondary School Teachers, Except Special and Career/Technical Education
- Special Education Teachers, Secondary School
- Graphic Designers
- Public Relations Specialists

A motion to approve the 1 deletion and 12 additions to the Occupations in Demand List was made by Michael Weed and seconded by George Scharr. The motion was carried unanimously.

- Resolution to Approve Policy Updates:

Lee explained the updates that are being recommended are focused toward poverty reduction and equity when it comes to use of our training services. The updates include:

WIOA Policy 101 - Priority of Service: Amend the policy to increase the wage for ITA-eligible employed workers from \$15 to \$18 per hour or less, to be indexed to the inflation rate each year.

WIOA Policy 104 - Individual Training Account (ITA) Guidelines: Amend the policy to allow for funding the last two years toward a Bachelor's degree program for all Adult and Dislocated Workers, now including WIOA Adults over the age of 24.

A motion to authorize the updates to the WIOA local policies, effective September 21, 2021, was made by Gary Rogers and seconded by Romanda Gibson-Stevenson. The motion was passed unanimously.

### **Director's Report:**

David Seeley reported on the following items:

- Strategic Planning Discussion:

Dave reported that he has met with almost every Board Member 1:1 in the past several weeks. He has also met with other stakeholders in the Community to better understand the workforce system and perhaps how RochesterWorks' role might evolve and transform within that context. He feels there is a need to have a strategic planning process for RochesterWorks! that will help to figure out who we are, who we want to be, who we can be, what opportunities there are, and where we fit in with the whole system. RochesterWorks! should be the focal point the workforce system revolves around. We do a 4-year strategic plan that could build off that, although that plan doesn't look as much outside the organization as need be, as far as where opportunities might lie. By the next Workforce Development Board meeting, Dave's goal is to have a plan in place. He will convene a work group made up of both RochesterWorks! Board Members and key RochesterWorks! staff. The work group will likely do an RFP for a firm with a facilitator who really knows this and can help move the process along and get us to where we need to be.

- Grant Opportunities:  
Dave reported on an opportunity in which we are going to be playing, hopefully a central role and with the County, that is a federal program administered by the Department of Commerce, the EDA. It is called the Good Jobs Program, which came out of the American Rescue Plan. It is a workforce program that looks to create a more refined, efficient system with better capacity. It is set in 3 stages: planning, program design and implementation. A lot of the planning elements are already in place, so Dave has had discussions with Ana Liss and the County Executive about the County, with RochesterWorks! support, taking the lead. The other component of that is our goal to have regional buy in for this, because the Regional Council process, which is 9 counties, has been talking about the need for this for quite some time. A lot of the framework already exists, and a regional work group has been set up. A regional application is more competitive, for a number of reasons, so this is one thing we are going to strive to do. RochesterWorks! will be very much involved in that effort. January is the deadline, but we have already started with supportive organizations, such as RMAPI, and the County has already started to convene stakeholders.
- Regional Collaboration:  
Dave explained this is broader and ties in with the discussion on the Good Jobs Program. The workforce system has a lot of good moving parts. They just sometimes don't always communicate with one another, and it is complex. Our goal is to provide clarity for both businesses and job seekers, to take a program that has a lot of good working elements, a lot of infrastructure already in place, and make it work better. Dave's priority will be to make sure that we are not just connecting with other key components of the workforce system, but that we are also establishing, really cementing in a working relationship with them into our MO. We need to impress upon our organization the need to constantly be facing outward and interacting with all components of the workforce system. One thing that ties into this, that Dave made the Board aware of at this meeting, is his priority to get RochesterWorks! in a consolidated operation, as right now, we are in 4 different locations. There is a rationale to consolidate our efforts at least into 1 or 2 locations. There is value, especially for our customers, if we are looking to simplify the process in this whole workforce experience. There are efficiencies that we might realize with housing things under 1 roof, and this is a collaboration that will be explored. Regardless of the location and still having a lease at the Career Center, Dave's long-term plan is to get us under 1 roof.
- Member Orientation:  
Dave wants to ensure our new Board Members are receiving an orientation to provide some clarity and a broad overview of what we do, why we do it, and how we do it. He welcomes all members to an orientation if they feel the need to brush up on this information.

**Other:**

**Members Sharing & Feedback**

Sergio Esteban thanked the Board Members and staff for a great meeting today and is pleased with the plan that has been suggested to move forward with. Hopefully in December, if conditions are such that we can do this, we will be able to have an option to meet in person.

**Adjournment 9:30AM**

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Romanda Gibson-Stevenson and seconded by George Scharr. The motion was passed unanimously.

**Meeting Schedule:**

December 21, 2021

Approved



David Seeley

12-21-21

Date

Submitted by: Mary McKeown

Reviewed by:

David Seeley 10/18/2021

Michael DeBole 10/7/2021

Antwan Williams 10/5/2021

Lee Koslow 10/5/2021

John Premo 10/05/21

Viatta Carter 10/7/2021

Kathy Ziegler 10/19/21