

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

**Attendees:** Dana Abramson, Thomas Battley, Bert Brinkerhoff, Bob Coyne, Sergio Esteban, Melissa Geska, Glen Jeter, Ann Kowal, Kathy Miner, Gary Rogers, George Scharr, Michael Weed, Joe Wesley, Randy Andre, Rodric Cox-Cooper, Romanda Gibson-Stevenson, Joseph Leone, Ana Liss, Danielle Maloy, Roosevelt Mareus, Angelica Perez-Delgado, Mark Rogacki, Patricia Stovall-Lane

**Absent:** Mary Beth Artuso, Kyle Banks, Rachel Baranello, Tyrone Reaves, Corinda Crossdale, Seanelle Hawkins, Daniele Lyman-Torres, Dan Maloney

**Staff:** David Seeley, Viatta Carter, Shawn Curran, Michael DeBole, Lee Koslow, Behiye Mansour, Mary McKeown, Laura Seelman, Antwan Williams, Marisol Young, Clark Rodman, Jill Nocera, Joseph DiPiazza

**Guests:** Craig Stevens and Amanda Della Sala, The Bonadio Group

**Call to Order:**

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

**Introductions:**

**Approval of Meeting Minutes**

A motion to approve the September 21, 2021 meeting minutes was made by Melissa Geska and seconded by George Scharr. The motion was passed unanimously.

**Finance Committee:**

**Craig Stevens and Amanda Della Sala, The Bonadio Group, Bonadio Annual Report**

The Bonadio Annual Report was provided and reviewed.

Craig Stevens reported he and Amanda Della Sala met with the Executive, Finance and Audit Committee on November 16<sup>th</sup> and went through the financial statements in much more detail.

Amanda led the discussion today by first noting some high-level information that is important for Board Members to know about the audit process. The audit went extremely smoothly this year. They had full cooperation from management throughout the entire process and they had no audit adjustments as part of the audit either. This is really important to know that the information management is utilizing and presenting throughout the year is good quality numbers. These financial statements were reviewed with the Executive, Finance and Audit Committee in November in pretty good detail. The Committee did approve of the issuance and finalization of these financial statements, so these are final, and the Form 990 and Char 500 tax information has also been finalized as well.

Amanda reviewed the Executive Summary which includes the following key outcomes:

- The Organization adopted a new Accounting Standard (ASU) 2014-09, which is Revenue from Contracts with Customers. There was no effect on total net assets or the change in net assets as a result of adopting this standard.
- The Organization's Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) loan totaling \$337,500 was forgiven and recorded as a gain on forgiveness.
- Internal control findings: No material weaknesses or significant deficiencies in internal control were identified.

Amanda also reviewed the following items included in the Other Required Communications section:

- Independence re-evaluation: There were no independence matters that occurred throughout the audit process.
- Material uncertainties related to events and conditions: There were no conditions that lead to any substantial doubt about the Organization's ability to continue as a going concern.
- Fraud: They did not identify any potential or known fraud or illegal acts throughout the audit process.
- Non-compliance with laws and regulations: They did not identify any instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations.
- Other matters: There were no other matters arising from the audit that are significant to the oversight of the Organization's financial reporting process.

### **Amanda Della Salla of the Bonadio Group Provided an Overview of the Finalized Financial Statements**

Statement of Activities and Change in Net Assets:

- Revenue - Total revenue for fiscal 2020 was just about \$8.4M and fiscal 21 was down to just about \$6.7M.
- Federal and State Grant Revenue funding in fiscal 2021 was heavily impacted due to Covid. Many of our Career Center services had to change from in-person to virtual options and that resulted in less interest from the public. The most notable decrease was in the TANF funding, which was down just about \$1M year over year.
- Expenses - Expenses are down from about \$8.8M in fiscal 2020 to \$6.8M in fiscal 2021 and are decreasing in line with Revenue funding. Less interested services also impacted Expenses, most specifically the Individual Training and Wage Subsidy Expenses.
- Other Revenue - Gain on forgiveness of the Paycheck Protection Program loan was a liability last year, forgiven in fiscal 2021, so recorded as Revenue in fiscal 2021. With the Gain on forgiveness of the \$337K, the Organization ended the year with a positive change in Net Assets of just about \$165K.

A motion to approve The Bonadio Group Independent Auditor's Report as presented was made by Joe Wesley and seconded by Bert Brinkerhoff. The motion was passed unanimously.

## **Michael DeBole Provided a Packet Covering the Summary of Expenses July 1, 2021 - September 30, 2021**

Michael DeBole began his presentation by extending a thank you to the financial team for doing a great job with the financial report. He also thanked the Management Team and all staff, as we had many challenges this past year, starting early Spring with the transition of moving the Career Center from 255 North Goodman Street to 100 College Avenue during the Covid timeframe, and then in January 2021, the Executive Director, Peter Pecor passed away, so we had quite a few challenges, a lot of adversity, and Mike again thanked the Management Team and the entire staff in guiding us through this difficult time.

Michael reported that currently, our WIOA funding is where we expected it to be at 73%. There was an adjustment due to the higher Adult spending vs. the Dislocated Worker spending. Mike requested an approval, noting this was previously approved at the Executive, Finance and Audit Committee Meeting in November, to transfer \$300K from Dislocated Worker funds to Adult funds.

A motion to approve the transfer of PY 2021 funds from Dislocated Worker funds to Adult funds in the amount of \$300K as presented was made by Romanda Gibson-Stevenson and seconded by Glen Jeter. The motion was passed unanimously.

Michael also reported our New York State DOL Audit took place the first 2 weeks of October. We received the audit reports in December and according to DOL, we had no findings for our PY20 4<sup>th</sup> quarter financial reports. This was followed up with our Bonadio Audit, which was the last 2 weeks of October, so our organization experienced a lot of juggling and challenges to get our work completed this year.

Michael also reported on the Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP), which included 253 participants, compared to 140 participants last year. Thank you to the Youth Team for keeping the online application process open through the end of July, as that helped increase the participation of the participants. As of September, we have spent almost \$754K in the program, and by the end of December, we are close to \$1M being spent, compared to prior year.

### **2022 Benefit Plan**

Michael DeBole reported RochesterWorks, Inc. will be keeping the same medical plans that we had last year with Excellus, which include the Platinum 2 Copay and the Silver 16 High-deductible, and these premiums have increased by 10%. Dental and vision premiums have remained the same. Last year we had a total of 59 employees and this year we have about 46 employees. We did have an aggregate decrease of 15% in total premium costs. The aggregate contribution by RochesterWorks! was increased from 78% to 80% to help our current staff and encourage new employees, if and when we do hire, by offering a healthy benefit package.

A motion to approve the 2022 Medical Benefits as presented was made by Joseph Leone and seconded by Melissa Geska. The motion was passed unanimously.

## **Items for Board Action:**

### **Approve the purchase of a Virtual Job Fair service using funds from Monroe County Industrial Development Corporation Funds**

Dave Seeley began the discussion by noting over the past two years, RochesterWorks, Inc. initiated a search to demo and test available virtual job fair software platforms for potential use by our customers. Virtual job fairs simulate the job fair experience using a digital platform that allows businesses and job seekers to interact without the travel, expense, or social distancing concerns of in-person events. As job fairs are our most visible resource, we want to make sure that we are able to sustain our ability to provide employers and potential job seekers with this opportunity to connect on a more efficient basis. RWI began having conversations with Ana Liss, our Board Member at the County, about wanting to have a more focused partnership with Monroe County, with regards to branding our outreach and ensuring that it is more visible. One component discussed was that of procuring a virtual job fair software. RWI followed our outlined procurement procedures and received 3 quotes from different vendors as part of this search process. RWI applied for and was awarded \$16K in funding from the MCIDC to enter into a 1-year license with software vendor Premier Virtual. Funds awarded include \$15,300 for the license, as well as an additional \$700 to cover marketing costs to promote the events to the community. RWI will partner with the County to host and promote a series of these events over the course of the one-year license for general groups of employers, targeted industry sectors or for a single employer. Initial events are expected to be held sometime in the first quarter of 2022.

A motion to approve the purchase of Premier Virtual software and moving forward with this initiative in partnership with MCIDC was made by George Scharr and seconded by Angelica Perez-Delgado. The motion was passed unanimously. Note: Ana Liss, Executive Director of MCIDC, recused herself from this vote.

### **Approve the hiring of a consultant to facilitate Strategic Planning Process**

Dave Seeley began the discussion by stating RochesterWorks, Inc. would like to commence a Strategic Planning Process upon gaining a consent to move forward. After the September meeting, a steering committee was empaneled, consisting of both Board Members and RW staff. There are approximately 16 members on the steering committee and the initial function of this committee was the development and approval of the RFP, which was issued on November 8, 2021. We received 6 qualified responses to the RFP and elected to interview 3 firms. An RFP Interview Subcommittee, consisting of 7 steering committee members, interviewed the finalists and has made a recommendation to the Workforce Development Board that it procure the services of The Carpino Group to assist RochesterWorks, Inc. with the development of a strategic plan. This will come with an estimated budget of \$25,500, but we will also ask for an allowance of \$10,000 in the event of unexpected costs that come up.

A motion to approve the hiring of The Carpino Group to assist with strategic planning services for RochesterWorks, Inc. with an estimated budget of \$25,500 for a contract period not to exceed one-year upon execution, with an allowance of no more than 10% overage for unanticipated expenses was made by Melissa Geska and seconded by Michael Weed. The motion was passed unanimously.

## **Youth Committee:**

### **Youth Services Update**

Antwan Williams reported on the following topics:

#### **ROCSeeds Update:**

ROCSeeds is a Youth direct placement program, funded by Monroe County using State funding. It targets Youth living in areas impacted by gun violence.

- 118 Applications submitted online.
- 80 Applicants registered for JRT Sessions but were no-shows or did not complete.
- 38 Applicants followed through/attended both JRT Sessions.
- Comparing numbers with SYEP, 1/3 of those applying are following through.
- 14 are still active and 9 are being considered for permanent employment.

#### **Learnings:**

- Noticed early on, many were not ready for immediate employment.
- Slow response from initial phone call to discuss employment opportunities.
- Many Youth could not articulate the kind of work they were looking for.
- There is a need for more intensive job readiness training.
- There should be a minimum of 4 weeks with pay.
- Many were afraid they would lose their disability benefits, parent's Section 8, etc.
- There is a need for some education around public assistance when onboarding Youth.
- There is a need for an on-hand case/social worker.
- Many exhibited a need for wrap-around services beyond the offered supportive services.

#### **Employers:**

- Spotlighted Tyrone Reaves, Truform Manufacturing Corporation and WDB Member, who was very flexible in working with the Youth and having those conversations, finding out why they were showing up late or whatever was going on. He would take the conversation to the next level, to have that conversation, and sometimes a hard conversation, in order to let that individual know where they were falling short, in order to correct their path. Tyrone has done well in helping the Youth work through their situations.

#### **Future Goals:**

- Develop more partnerships with employers willing to work with our targeted population.
- Provide an orientation/onboarding with employers to provide background information and best practices on the population we are serving.

#### **Gun Violence Prevention Program:**

- Deadline to apply for the RFQ is December 31<sup>st</sup>
- 4 Navigator programs will participate in the program.
- 2 Additional applications submitted from other Community Partners are being reviewed.

#### **Summer Youth Employment RFP:**

- RFP posted on November 17, 2021.
- Optional Bidders Conference will be held on January 12, 2022.
- Deadline to submit applications is January 26, 2022.

## **Workforce Innovation Committee:**

### **Career Center Report**

Viatta Carter introduced Clark Rodman and Jill Nocera who reported on the Opioid National Dislocated Worker Grant. Last year, RochesterWorks! was awarded a \$500K grant made available through the NYS Department of Labor by the US Department of Labor through December 2021.

Clark began the discussion by reviewing the initial target numbers, that included:

- 5 CASAC Trainees (Credentialed Alcohol and Substance Abuse Counselor) that assist with tuition, application fees and allocate 300 hours of paid, supervised experiential hours each.
- 15 Certified Recovery Peer Advocates that assist with tuition, application fees and allocate 500 hours of paid, supervised experiential hours each.
- Provide 75 Career Services, including Career exploration, career development, resume writing, cover letter writing, LinkedIn, job search strategies, portfolio creation, etc.
- Provide 30 classroom, OJT, Apprenticeship, Transitional jobs.
- Provide 30 Supportive Services, including bus passes, etc.

To be eligible for the funding, the job seeker must meet the following 2 basic criteria:

1. Dislocated Worker (Unemployed or Underemployed by Department of Labor Standards).
2. Be affected by the Opioid Health Crisis in one of the following categories:
  - a. Impacted by the opioid crisis because the individual, a friend, or family member has a history of opioid use.
  - b. An individual who may or may not be impacted by the opioid crisis, but is seeking to enter professions that could help in addressing the opioid crisis and its causes (ie: Certified Recovery Peer Advocate or Credentialed Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Counselor).

Success in the program included:

- 100% Completed all trainings in Individual Employment/Educational Plans.
  - \* 35 Covered through ONDWG
  - \* 11 Covered through other grant sources
- 98% of participants are gainfully employed.
- Higher numbers than the targeted numbers were achieved in most cases.
  - \* RW has only received the first 2 installments of ONDWG; the third installment has been delayed due to the impact of Covid-19. Despite the delay, ONDWG has been highly successful by exceeding most of the initial target numbers.
- Researched other opportunities to help participants achieve their end credentials. These are additional certifications achieved outside of the initial target numbers.

### **Business Services Update**

Welcome to Laura Seelman in her new role as Business Services Manager.

Laura began her discussion by noting the Business Services Team continues to receive a high number of inquiries from businesses challenged with hiring in the current labor market.

- 981 Job Postings
- 8 Training Contracts (work based)
- 352 Employer Engagements
- 45 Partner Referrals

Business Services has been hosting a combination of in-person and online recruiting events over the recent months to help our business customers. Prior to the introduction of our virtual job fair platform, we were partnering with ACCES-VR to set up virtual spotlight events to highlight industries that were particularly impacted by Covid.

- 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter PY2021, held 4 virtual recruiting spotlight events and collected resumes from over 283 job seekers to refer to 48 businesses in the Food Service/Hospitality, Customer Service, Manufacturing/Production and Non-Profit industries.
- Hosted 8 events total from January through October 2021. These events will be replaced with Virtual Job Fairs in 2022, which will allow for greater engagement and interaction between job seekers and businesses.

Business Services partnered with Pro-Roc (Professional Recruiters of Rochester) last fall to host an in-person job fair at the Memorial Art Gallery. 37 Employers and 135 job seekers attended the event. They also hosted 2 in-person recruiting events at the 100 College Avenue Career Center. Over the course of 2 weeks, 4 businesses attended and 23 job seekers met with these businesses. More events are scheduled for January, with the goal being these events will continue in the coming months of 2022.

RochesterWorks! will partner with Monroe County to host and promote a series of community-based in-person and virtual job fairs in 2022. Events will be held monthly in different towns across the County, as well as at MCC's Downtown Campus.

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

Joseph DiPiazza reported the following on behalf of Marisol Young:

#### **Employability Assessments:**

- Resumed on-site Assessments mid-August 2021.
- Continue to be equipped with necessary safeguards including masks, hand sanitizer, and plexiglass screens.
- Reverted to virtual (phone) Assessments December 17<sup>th</sup>. Customers will continue to be assessed over the phone and necessary paperwork will be collected/submitted with no changes in the process.

#### **Virtual Assessments:**

- These assessments will continue, noting there are challenges that go along with over-the-phone assessments, including reaching the customer and obtaining the necessary paperwork.
- On average, 66 assessments have been completed on a monthly basis.
- After meeting with clients in person, the Assessment completion rate dropped by roughly 50%.

#### **Available Programs:**

- Programs available to customers are slowly increasing, providing more options to customers, and making it easier for staff to present options. These include document scanning and job search.
- Programs have been modified to accommodate customers. OACES has modified their ESOL/GED program, for non-English speaking customers, without the GED class.

#### Previously Assessed Customers:

- Continue to reach out to formally assessed customers to provide support with job search assistance, interview preparation and resume building. This is being done via phone, email and regular mail.
- Continue to utilize available OJT funding to get customers into the jobs they want and keep them in a long-term employment.

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

Dave Seeley reported on the following items:

Dave began his presentation by noting that we have been able to secure over \$400K grant funding in our 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter from 3 sources, which include:

- Mother Cabrini Health Foundation Grant, \$200K, to support Enhanced Recovery Services, as a continuation of our Opioid Grant.
- ESL Charitable Foundation, \$186,209, of which \$48,659 will support Enhanced Recovery Services as a continuation of our Opioid Grant. \$137,550 will support the Youth Gun Violence Prevention Local Initiative.
- Monroe County Industrial Development Corporation, \$16K, will allow our Business Services Team to procure a virtual job fair software platform.

#### **Federal Good Jobs Challenge Update**

Dave shared that with working with the County, this is a Federal Economic Development Agency program that was created through the American Rescue Plan. This is a \$500M initiative that will look to invest in 25-50 regional workforce systems throughout the country and it is a very good opportunity to provide a transformational impact to the workforce system. Monroe County has convened a 9-county region and is the system lead entity for that application. RochesterWorks! is providing a lot of staff support for that effort. This focuses on sectoral partnerships, which basically are industry clusters. We have locked down 3 that we are really going to focus on, primarily based on need and the amount of demand that is out there. They will be Manufacturing, Construction, and Health Care. Rochester Technology Manufacturing Associates and Unicon will be participating in this effort.

#### **Monroe County American Rescue Plan - Bring Monroe Back**

Dave reported the County has received \$144M in American Rescue Plan funding. They have started a public process to solicit ideas how to allocate that money and the good thing about that is it initially identified Workforce Development as being one of the primary silos by which they want to funnel investments into the Community. Our goal is to put together a value proposition for the County in how we can really make those federal dollars work in the area of Workforce Development. In the new year, we will be convening with our workforce partners to solicit ideas and put together a concept for the County to consider, and hopefully we will be able to have some good programs in place, that will be multi-year as well, and will take us through 2026.



**Other:**

**Members Sharing & Feedback**

Dave Seeley thanked everyone for a very productive year. Although he has only been in this position for a short period of time, he shared his appreciation for staff and their work. He complimented the entire organization on how they performed admirably through Covid, and through the additional challenges that were created earlier in the year, including the loss of Peter Pecor. He acknowledged both our Board Members and our staff, because they together make up a fantastic organization.


**Adjournment 9:20AM**

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Michael Weed and seconded by Gary Rogers. The motion was passed unanimously.

**Meeting Schedule:**

March 15, 2022

Approved

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
David Seeley

3/15/22  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Submitted by: Mary McKeown

Reviewed by:

David Seeley: Approved, 1/11/2022, 11:44AM

Michael DeBole: Approved 1/11/22

Antwan Williams 1/11/22

Laura Seelman: Reviewed 1/11/22

Viatta Carter 1/12/22

Marisol Young 1/19/22