

*Tompkins County Workforce Development Board*  
**Services to Individuals with Disabilities Committee**

**MINUTES**

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**Tuesday, April 9, 2024 | *Workforce Development Board Conference Rm.***  
**119 E. Seneca Street, Suite 200B, Ithaca, NY 14850**

**Present:** A. Tunison, B. Flaherty, J. Slade, J. Lynch, B. Seeking

**Excused:** J. Beaumont, C. Stanley

**Staff:** D. Achilles

**Guest:** A. Adel

**Call To Order:**

Mr. Tunison called the meeting to order at 8:33 a.m.

**Approval of Minutes:** April 11, 2023  
June 13, 2023  
August 8, 2023  
December 13, 2023  
February 13, 2024

It was moved by Ms. Lynch, seconded by Ms. Slade, and unanimously adopted by voice vote of members present to approve the minutes of April 11, 2023.

It was moved by Ms. Lynch, seconded by Ms. Slade, and unanimously adopted by voice vote of members present to approve the minutes of March 13, 2024.

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## Discussion

### **New Committee Name and Duties Discussion and Vote**

Ms. Achilles reported to the Committee that Mr. Matteson when he was chair of the Committee started the process of changing the Committee name. Mr. Sponn sent a doodle poll to Committee members, and we are down to two names: Disabilities Workforce Committee or Disability Advisory Committee. Committee members discussed the two names and what they meant to what the committee does for the community.

Mr. Tunison to a vote of hands: Disabilities Workforce Committee was unanimously voted for by all committee members present.

The Committee reviewed the Committee duties and discussed changing wording and updating some bullet points.

Mr. Tunison asked for a motion to change the Committee name to Disabilities Workforce Committee and approval of duties with edits that were discussed.

It was moved by Mr. Seekins, seconded by Mr. Flaherty, and unanimously adopted by voice vote of members present to approve name change and duties with edits.

### **Wegmans - Serving Individuals with Disabilities**

Mr. Adelewitz, Service Manager at Ithaca Wegmans discussed hiring individuals with disabilities and Wegmans is open to any candidate pool to hire and be able to retain the individual in employment. Mr. Adelewitz reported that this is an untapped candidate pool who wants to work and just needs some accommodations. Employers need to meet candidates where they are at and what needs are required. Many individuals come in as dishwashers, maintenance or helping hands. There are job coaches with Challenge that bridge where coaching is needed to make the individual successful.

Mr. Adelewitz shared a success story of an individual that worked at Wegmans a long time and has just recently parted from his employment. The individual had a phone interview, an in-person interview which turned into an exploratory interview of what area the individual was interested in and what worked for him. The individual wanted to be cashier and Wegmans created a workstation that was accessible for his wheelchair. When this individual was at a cashier station many customers got to know him and would wait in line to go through his line.

Mr. Adelewitz shared that sometimes you have to think outside the box to work with individuals with disabilities. Employers need to understand what people are capable of doing. Wegmans tailor tasks in a job description to make individuals successful.

## **Committee Webpage and DRC Webpage Discussion**

Ms. Achilles reported that the DRC webpage has been updated and that we will also be updating our committee webpage. We have hired a Communication Specialist that can help us manage the website. Ms. Achilles inquired if the Committee members had any idea of what they would like to add to the webpage. Mr. Sponn will discuss this further at the June meeting and would like to hear any ideas you have.

## **Disability Resource Coordinator (DRC) Report**

Ms. Stanley did not report.

## **Director's Report**

### **Communications Specialist Position**

Ms. Achilles reported that a Communication Specialist has been hired and will start on Monday, April 15, 2024. Somethings the person will develop is our monthly newsletter that will go out to the County, brochures, maintain our website, do outreach to the community, and work on some long-term projects.

### **Youth Employment Resource Team (YERT)**

Ms. Achilles reported that the Youth Employment Resource Team went to The Learning Web last month and toured the facilities. The next YERT meeting will be April 18<sup>th</sup> at TC3 for a tour and discussion and May 16<sup>th</sup> meeting is at Ithaca ReUse. If any committee members would like to join, please let Chris or myself know and we will make sure you are on the calendar invite.

### **WIOA Legislation Updates**

Ms. Achilles reported that every decade or, so workforce legislation is revised. Currently that is occurring with WIOA. There are discussions in Congress and NYATEP to advocate on behalf of Workforce Development Boards. Mr. Sponn is asking that all Board and Committee members reach out and support WIOA legislation.

### **Application for NDWG for Opioid Crisis**

Ms. Achilles reported that Mr. Sponn has applied for NDWG funding for the Opioid Crisis. This is a grant that is not only for individuals with opioid issues, this is also for individuals that have any contact with someone that does. Mr. Sponn would like to use this funding for training in the medical field and create work experiences at partner sites.

## **Southern Tier Regional Business Services Team Meeting**

Ms. Achilles reported that Mr. Sponn attended the Southern Tier Regional Business Services Team meeting for the Southern Tier. They discussed the battery hub in Binghamton and next meeting Mr. Sponn will present on Micron since Tompkins is the most northern County in the group and the group wanted to learn more about it.

## **Pathways to Apprenticeship Visit at CNY Works**

Ms. Achilles reported that Mr. Sponn took a tour of the Pathways to Apprenticeships program which is part of Syracuse Build. We want to have a construction trades program next year. Currently Ms. Szabo, IAED is talking with trades unions and developing curriculum for the program. It will be modeled after Direct to Work, but longer (around 11 weeks).

## **CNY Build Monthly Meeting**

Ms. Achilles reported that Mr. Sponn is part of a group of regional WDB directors, economic development agencies, and Syracuse schools' leaders to develop the construction trades program since it has been successful build in Syracuse.

## **IdentoGO Fingerprinting in Tompkins County**

Ms. Achilles reported that Tompkins County at the current time does not have fingerprinting services. Mr. Sponn met with Greg at Ithaca Youth Bureau about IdentoGO and information that he received. Mr. Sponn and I met with a representative from IdentoGo to get information and communicate what is need to see if there is an ideal location within our community.

## **Tompkins County Transportation Equity Coalition**

### **Career Center Update**

Ms. Achilles reported that the Communication Specialist has been hired. Ms. Rusk from the Career Center will become the Workforce Development Specialist that will work with Adults and Dislocated Workers alongside of Ms. Sloan.

Ms. Achilles reported that NYSDOL has hired a business services representative that will work with local businesses. Mr. Sponn will share his contact information with Committee members.

Ms. Achilles reported that Adult/Dislocated Worker and Youth policies and procedures have been updated to align with fiscal reporting. The policies will need to be approved by appropriate Committees and full Board.

Ms. Achilles reported that Ms. Sloan will be developing more weekend webinars as we have found those have been popular and well attended.

Ms. Achilles reported that the Direct to Work info session had 22 people registered and ended up having 7 people went through the Career Center for funding. Mr. Sponn and Ms. Sloan were able to approve them. We have also been working with Aloja and have a transitional job experience going on.

### **Members Updates**

### **Adjournment:**

Mr. Tunison adjourned the meeting at 10:01 a.m.

# Tompkins County Workforce Development Board Services to Individuals with Disability Committee

## Committee Name Final Two

- Disabilities Workforce Committee
- Disability Advisory Committee

## Tompkins County Workforce Development Board Services to Individuals with Disability Committee Final Duties

The **Services to Individuals with Disability Committee** is responsible for advising the WDB on matters related to accessibility in the workforce along with the provision of disability services to Career Center customers with disabilities. The **Services to Individuals with Disabilities Committee** shall also provide policy guidance as it relates to services to individuals with disabilities.

*\*We will change Services to Individuals with Disability Committee to the new name\**

### **The Committee:**

- Advocates for customers with disabilities
- Raises awareness of disability as a civil rights and diversity issue
- Promotes collaboration between service providers
- Responsible to ensure that training for staff on providing supports for or accommodations to, finding employment opportunities for, individuals with disabilities
- Seeks ways to increase inclusive employment opportunities

### **Members of the committee shall include:**

- WDB members
- Self-advocates for individuals with disabilities
- Providers of employment services, including those who employ individuals with disabilities in competitive integrated employment
- Representatives of national disability advocacy organizations for adults with disabilities
- Experts with a background in academia or research and expertise in employment and wage policy issues for individuals with disabilities
- Representatives from the employer community or national employer, and
- Other individuals or representatives of organizations with expertise on increasing opportunities for competitive integrated employment for individuals with disabilities

### **Minimum Meeting Requirements:**

- Bi-monthly