

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD

FEBRUARY 24, 2004

8:30 A.M.

TOMPKINS COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY

PRESENT: P. Carey, D. Czerwonka, L. Dillon, A. Edelman, L. Leonard, J. Little, T. Mallinson, D. Marsh, D. McDonald, P. McKee, J. McPheeters, T. O'Neill, S. Pronti, J. Rossi, C. Sowards, M. Stamm, I. Stein, M. Turnbull, N. Zahler

EXCUSED: B. Blanchard, R. Bohman, P. Gardner, C. Haynes, D. Herath, N. Meacham, M. Opperman, A. Pedersen, J. Wesche

ABSENT: W. Cooke, B. Fortier, J. Maglione, K. Mann, R. Pass, L. Patz

GUESTS: D. Chodan, J. Flynn, J. Kozlowski, NYSDOL; J. Furey, Trumansburg School District; M. Hall, PFA Consulting; M. Curtis, Challenge Industries; G. Ferrari, Catholic Charities; L. Baum, The Computing Center, S. Hamilton, Cornell University; B. Heath, Tompkins Workforce NY; M. Armstrong, Tompkins County Area Development; T. Joseph, Tompkins County Legislature; J. Furman

STAFF: Debra Giordano, Jennifer Luu

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Turnbull called the meeting to order at 8:33 a.m.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Ms. Usefara announced that the Governor's budget does not include any funding for displaced homemakers. She asked Board members to sign a petition opposing this action.

Ms. Giordano announced she is leaving for Africa on March 1, 2004, as part of the Rotary Group Study Exchange. She will be visiting Ghana, Togo, Mali, and Benin and will live with host families during her visit.

APPROVAL OF ITEMS RESOLUTION(S) UNDER THE CONSENT AGENDA

It was Moved by Ms. McPheeters, seconded by Ms. Stein, and unanimously adopted by voice vote by members present, to approve the following items under the Consent Agenda:

- 1. Approval of January 27, 2004 Minutes**
- 2. Approval to RFP 2004-2005 WIA Youth Program**

Whereas, The Youth Employment Council has been advised by the Tompkins County Office of Employment & Training (OET) that it does not intend to continue to operate the WIA Youth Employment Program beyond its current commitment that lapses June 30, 2004.

Whereas, the Tompkins County Office of Employment and Training cites its reasons for this decision as the following:

- The present Youth Coordinator is vacating the position to operate a new youth initiative targeted to incarcerated and recently released juveniles per a contract between OET and the Lansing School District
- OET has determined that reductions in WIA Youth funding and increases in County personnel costs (salaries & fringe) has made it cost prohibitive for OET to operate the program
- OET has taken on a number of new responsibilities related to Adult program delivery and has determined that OET lacks the capacity to continue to successfully and efficiently operate the WIA Youth Program, particularly in light of the new requirements anticipated under the WIA legislation reauthorization

Therefore, it is hereby resolved, on recommendation of the Youth Employment Council (YEC) by action taken at its meeting of February 19, 2004, that a Request For Proposal be issued by the WIB for operation of the WIA Youth Program beginning July 1, 2004.

It is further resolved, that by this action the WIB hereby authorizes the Executive Director to issue an RFP for WIA Youth Services, conduct a bidders conferences, and accept appropriately submitted proposals for the YEC's review and recommendations to the WIB.

COMMITTEE UPDATES

JOINT PLANNING COMMITTEE

Mr. Hall provided the update on the behalf of the Joint Planning Committee. He reported that the “Save the Date” postcards have been mailed. The Workforce Summit will be held April 22, 2004, at the Statler Hotel from 8:30 to 4:30 p.m. The summit will act as the kick-off event to raise awareness of workforce issues within the greater community. Ed Barlow, a national futurist, will be the guest speaker. He will provide the global perspective and a panel will be discussing what is going on in Tompkins County. The goal is to energize and educate the community and a final report will be issued in August 2004 that will speak to what can be done in Tompkins County to further nurture the workforce community.

YOUTH EMPLOYMENT COUNCIL

Mr. Hamilton and Mr. Furey provided an overview of the worker readiness credential that is being proposed by the Youth Employment Council. Youth receiving the credential will have demonstrated that they have received exposure to the important skills that make them employment ready, and the credential is very similar to the five-hour driver safety course. The credential can be obtained in several ways, participation in Boys or Girl Scouts, 4-H, schools, and a variety of youth programs. The intent of the credential is to better prepare youth for employment and youth will be encouraged to obtain it. It does not however, discount those youth who choose not to. Mr. Furey stated a presentation was given at a meeting of the Society for Human Resource Managers and that group was asked for feedback on what skills they believe are necessary for employment. A presentation will also be given to school principals in April to launch the program.

FEATURED GUESTS: TCAD’S WORKING POOR COMMITTEE “THE BOTTOM LINE AND THE WORKING POOR”

Mr. Furman, Mr. Baum, and Ms. Armstrong presented for the Working Poor Committee. The Working Poor Committee was established in March 2003, because members in the business community were reacting to the livable wage issue in Tompkins County. There are currently 8,000 members in the community over the age of 17 who are considered working poor. Various programs have been reviewed that are available to employers that they may not know about. A pilot program was initiated with Wilcox Press, Inc. to raise employee awareness about childcare resources in the community, the Child Health Plus Insurance Program, and individual development accounts available through Alternatives Federal Credit Union. Two information fairs are also going to be held at Tompkins Cortland Community College for students and staff about these programs.

The next steps are to broaden the group and get more businesses involved so a better understanding can be gained of what employers are currently doing. Currently the Child Health Plus Program as well as the federally funded food stamps program are being underutilized in the County.

There was discussion about the Individual Development Accounts and the possibility of using these as an incentive for retention in low-income sectors that experience high turnover.

Ms. Dillon stated her agency serves the working poor and individuals need more help with actual signing-up, beyond just receiving a notice that a program is available. Employers also need to help remove the stigmas about these programs with their employees.

Ms. Armstrong will be convening a meeting and including those members who expressed interest in learning more about these programs. ***A meeting has been scheduled for May 24, 2004, at 11 a.m. at the Chamber of Commerce. Anyone interested in attending should contact Martha Armstrong at marthaa@lightlink.com.***

ADJOURNMENT

It was Moved by Ms. McPheeters, seconded by Ms. Zahler and unanimously adopted by voice vote of members present to adjourn the meeting at 9:57 a.m. The next meeting is scheduled for May 18, 2004, at 8:30 a.m. in the Borg-Warner Room at the Tompkins County Public Library.