

**Workforce Development Board
Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, December 20, 2022
8:00AM - 9:30AM
United Way Building - Conference Room #1
Board members also attended via Zoom**

Attendees: Dana Abramson, Zachary Arnold, Rachel Baranello, Bert Brinkerhoff, Bob Coyne, Sergio Esteban, Melissa Geska, Glen Jeter, Tyrone Reaves, Gary Rogers, George Scharr, Michael Weed, Joe Wesley, Randy Andre, Robin Cole, Rick Donovan, John Brach, Shawn Futch, Ana Liss, Grant Malone, Danielle Maloy, Roosevelt Mareus, Joseph Morelle, Angelica Perez-Delgado, Patricia Stovall-Lane

Absent: Mary Beth Artuso, Kyle Banks, Thomas Battley, Ann Kowal, Rodric Cox-Cooper, Corinda Crossdale, Shirley Green, Seanelle Hawkins, Mark Rogacki

Staff: David Seeley, Viatta Carter, Shawn Curran, Jeanine Frenz, Lee Koslow, Behiye Mansour, Mary McKeown, Laura Seelman, Antwan Williams, Marisol Young

Guests: Craig Stevens, Amanda Della Sala, John Brach

Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order by Sergio Esteban at 8:03AM.

Introductions:

Dave Seeley welcomed Jeanine Frenz, our new Director of Finance & Administration with RochesterWorks.

Approval of Meeting Minutes

A motion to approve the September 20, 2022 meeting minutes was made by Joseph Morelle and seconded by Ana Liss. The motion was passed unanimously.

Audit Committee:

Review of 2022 Audit - Bonadio Associates

Amanda Della Sala began the presentation by noting that she oversees the day-to-day field work and the audit process. She is the principal that signed the audit report this year. She also introduced Craig Stevens, who has been our Audit Partner for a number of years, who will be transitioning that responsibility as he nears retirement in the next few months.

Amanda presented their Report to the Workforce Development Board, 2022 Audit Results.

Amanda reviewed the Executive Summary which includes the following key outcomes of the audit process:

Key events and transactions affecting the year:

- Michael DeBole, Director of Finance and HR, retired in August 2022.

- There were no changes in the Organization's accounting policies and all policies are considered appropriate.
- New Statements on Auditing Standards (SAS) 134-140 were effective for the year ending June 30, 2022.

Internal Control Findings:

- No material weaknesses or significant deficiencies noted.

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

- The audit went smoothly. They had full cooperation from management throughout the process.
- They had no adjusting entries posted throughout the audit, the numbers seen throughout the year remained the final issue numbers at the end of the process, and at this point in time the financial statements, the Form 990, which is the informational return and the data collection form have all been successfully submitted and finalized.

Amanda noted they reviewed the Financial Statements in detail with the Executive, Finance and Audit Committee. They spent over an hour going through everything more detail than we will today. They also held an Executive Session at the end of that meeting, where management left the room, and the Executive Committee and Bonadio stayed and talked as needed.

Amanda thanked Behiye Mansour for all of her hard work during the transition within our organization this year, remarking the audit went very smoothly.

Amanda Della Sala - Bonadio Associates Provided an Overview of the Financial Statements

Amanda Della Sala reviewed the following highlights:

- There was a new Auditor's Report issued this year, which changed the Auditor's Report that they issue at the end of the process. If you compare it to previous Auditor's Reports, you will see that it is much longer. The actual audit opinion is now the very first thing readers will see, so they will see that we issued an Unmodified Opinion, which is the highest level of assurance. The intent of the change is that the audit process is trying to be more transparent to the readers of your Financial Statements about what our responsibilities are throughout the process, what management's responsibilities are, and then the ultimate opinion that we issue.
- There is a significant amount of Federal funding that the organization receives. On top of the Financial Audit that we perform, there is also a Single Audit, which is a specific audit over those Federal funds. The major program tested this year was WIOA, and in relation to that Single Audit, we had no noted Compliance Issues and no Internal Control Deficiencies noted as well, so appropriate use of those Federal funds, nothing noted in our audit that would suggest otherwise.

A motion to approve Bonadio & Co., LLP's Independent Auditor's Report and Single Audit Reports as presented was made by Joseph Morelle and seconded by Glen Jeter. The motion was passed unanimously.

Sergio Esteban and Dave Seeley also recognized Behiye Mansour, Nathan Maeske, and Jeanine Frenz for never missing a beat, both on the audit and as well as just managing our finances.

Finance Committee:

Financial Report - Update of Program Year 2022

Jeanine Frenz provided financials covering the Summary of Expenses July 1, 2022 - September 30, 2022.

Jeanine Frenz reported that our actual revenue is \$3.2M for the first quarter and we are currently on budget. Revenue included the following:

- The majority of WIOA spending was in the Youth category.
- The Emergency Recovery - National Dislocated Worker Grant (ERDW) was originally scheduled to sunset 09/30/22. The grant has been extended and will now sunset 09/30/23.
- The NY SCION Grant is a 3-year grant at \$100K per calendar year. This funding year ends on 12/31/22.
- TANF Revenue is the Summer Youth Employment Program. All vouchers have been submitted for this program. We have spent most of this funding.
- The Gun Violence Prevention (GVP) Program has been extended and will now sunset 03/31/23. This is difficult to spend down because we are drawing expenses from the Youth Navigator Program and using existing WIOA funding for this. We have heard that this has been a challenge statewide.

Program Expenses included the following:

Direct Expenses:

- Wage Subsidies are where they should be for the first quarter as this is the spending for the Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP).
- Individual Training Accounts (ITAs) are off to a good start for this quarter. Due to the timing of training, we will see this number increase substantially for the quarter October - December.

Service Provider Payments:

- These payments are on budget since these are Youth related expenses.

Total Program Expenses:

- These expenses are at 31.6% of budget, so we are on plan for the first quarter.

Operational Expenses are on budget for the quarter and include the following:

- Salaries and benefits are slightly under budget due to some open positions. Salary increases will be provided in the 3-5% range, effective January 1, 2023, which will increase our spending in this category.
- All other Operational Expenses are on budget for the first quarter except for Office Operations. A large part of this expenditure was related to the GVP Program.

2023 Health Care Renewal for RochesterWorks:

Jeanine reported our health care insurance renewal came in with a 13% increase. RochesterWorks has decided to absorb most of the premium increase, thereby increasing the company's share to 78%-89% depending on the plan. Total additional cost to the organization is approximately \$58K annually.

Other Insurance:

Jeanine noted that all of our other policies renewed at the beginning of December with no substantial premium increases. We have asked our broker to bind a cyber liability policy, which will cost approximately \$5,000 annually.

NYS DOL Audit:

Jeanine noted we are currently wrapping up our annual DOL audit. We do not expect any findings. She thanked her finance staff who carried the audit, since she was so new to RochesterWorks.

A motion to approve the Financial Report as presented was made by Bert Brinkerhoff and seconded by Ana Liss. The motion was passed unanimously.

Workforce Innovation and Performance Committee:

Matter for Board Approval: Adult-DW Follow Up Services Policy

Lee Koslow reported on a new policy for the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Adult/Dislocated Worker programs. WIOA Law requires us to provide follow-up services for up to 12 months for participants who obtain unsubsidized employment. A committee of managers and staff got together to share input and feedback on how we might craft this policy in a way to maximize the benefit and minimize staff burden. The committee came up with something that meets the minimum requirements, is flexible if a Career Center or department or other Service Provider wants to make changes in how they are carrying it out, and it will maximize outcomes in terms of retaining individuals in employment and increasing wages. WIOA Policy 107, as proposed, provides for the timing, responsibility, and special populations for Follow-Up Services.

A motion to approve the Adult/DW Follow-up Services Policy, WIOA Policy 107, as presented, was made by Joseph Morelle and seconded by Bob Coyne. The motion was passed unanimously.

Business Services:

Matter for Board Approval: Virtual Job Fair Platform Subscription

Laura Seelman began the discussion by noting that back in December 2021 we received approval from the Board to procure and utilize virtual job fair software for our job seekers and business customers. We selected Premier Virtual as our vendor, and we entered into a 1-year software license to utilize this service, and we were lucky enough to be awarded funding via Monroe County IDC to use this; thanks were extended to Ana Liss for her assistance in the past process. The goal for us was to be able to offer a remote or virtual alternative to in-person job fairs for our customers.

Starting in January 2022, we began utilizing a virtual job fair software to help increase its ability to connect job seekers with business. 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. Participating employers create a virtual “booth” with information on their company, culture, benefits, and job openings. Job seekers create a profile listing key skills, occupations of interest, and upload a copy of their resume. During the event, job seekers and employers chat via built-in text and video messaging.

Laura provided Virtual Job Fair Highlights, which included:

- 9 events held including those for businesses hiring across all occupations and skill levels; industry-specific events (Healthcare & Education); and events for single employers recruiting across multiple divisions (U of R Medical Center, RIT).
- 124 unique employers participated, and 44 attended multiple events. Some organizations attended as many as 4 different events.
- 732 job seekers participated.

Employer Survey Data (67 total responses) included:

- 392 candidates identified for follow-up by employers.
- 70 reported interviews.
- 58 reported offers of employment.

Participating business and job seekers were sent post-event surveys to gather feedback and determine the value of the event in the recruiting/job search efforts. Feedback included:

- 67% responses received by employers.
- 50% employers rate our virtual events as Excellent when compared to similar events.
- 45% give the event the top score when asked whether it was helpful to their recruitment events.

Under our procurement policy, we only had that 1-year award. In order for us to be able to use our WIOA funding for next year, we have to request approval from the Board to continue with this for another year.

The RWI Business Services Team requests approval from the Board to enter into an agreement with Premier Virtual for a term of one year at a cost of \$7,500, as well as approval to renew the agreement for an additional 1-year term if it is deemed to be of continued value to our service model. The subscription would be paid for by using Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) funding for Program Year 2022.

A motion to approve the request to enter into an agreement with Premier Virtual for a term of one year at a cost of \$7,500 and approval to renew the agreement for an additional 1-year term as presented was made by Bob Coyne and seconded by Joseph Morelle. The motion was passed unanimously.

Director's Report:

Program and Organization Updates

Business Services:

Dave Seeley reported we are doing a number of community-based job fairs this year, and it was a reboot of an initiative pre-covid. We have done 4 or 5 in a separate town, so it is branching out throughout the County. These are actually very successful, and it is good to get out there. It allows a lot of community-based businesses in the particular town to have participants there. We will continue to do this and the next one will be in a few weeks with the Irondequoit Chamber of Commerce. Our goal is to reach out to as many towns as possible, just to cast as wide a net as possible.

Youth:

Summer Youth Employment - We have an RFP out for Work Experience for our 14-15 year-olds. The goal is to have agencies provide work experience. The deadline for the RFP is January 31, 2023.

New Position Created - Aja Love was promoted to Youth Training & Workshop Specialist. In this role, Aja will utilize the Transfr VR (virtual reality) technology for career exploration/preparation to expose Youth to careers that do not require a 4-year degree. She will collaborate with the Navigator programs to bring career exposure to the Youth and will work closely with RSCD to engage those Youth who are graduating and/or dropping out, thus giving them another option to consider post-high school.

691 St. Paul Street Career Center:

The STEP Program (which replaces the WEP Program) will be up and running in the first or second month of next year. This program is a connection between those receiving public assistance and provides work experience for those public assistance recipients. The program had gone away during Covid, and we are happy that it has returned. We bid on the RFP the County sent out and were awarded it.

100 College Avenue Career Center:

This is our primary Career Center and our headcount of customers coming through the door will be approximately 6,500 by year's end. This is much more than last year and the Covid year. In 2019, our last Covid-free calendar year, the headcount was 27,000. The point of the virtual job fairs is that we need to find different ways to get out in the community, and that is why we have created the Community Outreach Specialist position that is developing relationships with Partners.

Enhanced Recovery Services Program:

At the annual NYATEP Conference in October, the ERS Program received the NYS Workforce Program Award. This award is given to a workforce program that exhibits promising practices in the field of education, training and employment. ERS provides individuals in recovery from substance abuse disorder with career advising services, as well as pathways to various training and employment opportunities.

Dedication of the Peter C. Pecor Career Center:

On October 7th, RochesterWorks dedicated the Peter C. Pecor Career Center, honoring our longtime Executive Director, who sadly passed away in 2021. We were happy to be joined at the ceremony by Peter's wife, Carole, as well as their two children and grandchildren. Thank you to all staff for their help in conducting this event.

Finger Lakes Workforce Strategic Plan:

Over the past several months, RochesterWorks has been integrally involved in the development of a Regional Workforce Strategy for the nine-county Finger Lakes region. This was part of a process established in concert with the formation of the new NYS Office of Strategic Workforce Development, which has been charged with improving the State's workforce development programs and practices to better align with the needs and priorities of today's employers.

The Finger Lakes Workforce and Talent workgroup worked with Empire State Development (ESD) and Camoin Associates to develop a strategic plan for the region. This included extensive stakeholder engagement, as well as comprehensive data analysis that identified workforce, training, and skills gaps within the 3 priority regional sectors: Advanced manufacturing, Agribusiness and Clean & Renewable Energy.

These strategic plans will help identify priority projects for the new \$150 million multi-year grant programs that will primarily support employer-driven, high skilled workforce training programs. This program includes available resources for capital needs within training programs, as well as a Pay-for-Performance program that provides operating capital and capacity building awards.

ROCSEEDS Partnership with YAMTEP:

RochesterWorks has submitted a grant application to the aforementioned Office of Strategic Workforce Development Pay for Performance program that would allow us to continue to grow our partnership with the Young Adults Manufacturing Training and Employment Program (YAMTEP). The brainchild of RochesterWorks Board Member Tyrone Reaves, YAMTEP provides employment readiness, basic manufacturing skill development, soft/essential skill development, and work experience, focusing on individuals from populations disconnected from the workforce.

The grant application would continue the ROCSEEDS concept, where RochesterWorks seeks to recruit and co-enroll participants in YAMTEP's 4-week program, providing career navigation and supportive services to complement the training. If funded, the grant would provide nearly \$1M to support additional capacity for training at YAMTEP, paid work experience for high school youth, and enhanced supportive services.

Career Exploration Using Virtual Reality:

RochesterWorks recently engaged in a partnership with Transfr-VR that will allow our staff to provide virtual reality (VR) simulations of various in-demand occupations. Transfr-VR's Career Exploration offering is a virtual environment where trainees can experience a variety of well-paying jobs in a safe, supportive setting, under the expert guidance of our digital coach. We have begun to train staff, and in 2023 will soon start making this service available to our Career Center customers. We will also use it as an avenue to engage with our in-school youth population, to help plant a seed of career exploration, especially those students who are on track to graduate but do not intend to enroll in a post-secondary education program.

Board Leadership Succession

At this time Sergio Esteban discussed the topic of transition. He has been on the Board for many years, including many years as Chairman of the Board. He has announced that he will be stepping down as Chairman and noted that today will be his last Board Meeting as Chairman. He will remain a Board Member for at least one more year. The March 21, 2023 Board Meeting will be run by the new Chairman. Recommendations have been made to the Board for the new Chairman and this will be the Board's Decision. What will happen now is that Sergio will preside over the next Executive, Finance and Audit Committee Meeting in February, because the Workforce Development Board needs to elect a new Chairman, not the Executive Committee. A recommendation for the new Chairman will be delivered to the entire Board and the first order of business at the next Board meeting in March will be to elect a new Chairman.

Dave Seeley also recognized that today is George Scharr's final meeting on the RochesterWorks Board.

An abundance of thank you's to Sergio and George for their many valuable years of service on the Board.

Adjournment 9:22AM

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

WDB Meeting Schedule:

March 21, 2023

June 20, 2023

Approved

David Seeley

Date

Submitted by: Mary McKeown

Reviewed by:

David Seeley 1/9/23

Jeanine Frenz: 1/10/23

Lee Koslow 1/9/2023

Laura Seelman 1/9/23

PENDING APPROVAL