

**Workforce Development Board
Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, March 19, 2024
8:00AM - 9:30AM
United Way Building - The Rochester Room
Board members also attended via Zoom**

Attendees: Zachary Arnold, Mary Beth Artuso, Rachel Baranello, Thomas Battley, Kaitlyn Bond, Bert Brinkerhoff, Robert Coyne, Melissa James-Geska, Janelle Harris, Glen Jeter, Tyrone Reaves, Maggie Rivera, Gary Rogers, Alma Vieru, Michael Weed, Randy Andre, Rodric Cox-Cooper, Rick Donovan, John Brach (Proxy for Mayor Malik Evans), Shawn Futch, Shirley Green, Ana Liss, Grant Malone, Roosevelt Mareus, Joseph Morelle, Tiffany Owens, Angelica Perez-Delgado, David Scott, Patricia Stovall-Lane

Absent: Dana Abramson, Marco Altieri, Sergio Esteban, Joe Wesley, Robin Cole, Lia Festenstein, Danielle Maloy

Staff: Viatta Carter, Jeanine Frenz, Lee Koslow, Mary McKeown, Dave Seeley, Laura Seelman, Marisol Young, Antwan Williams, Tricia Campbell, Joseph DiPiazza, Shawn Curran

Guests:

Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order by Glen Jeter at 8:01AM.

Approval of Meeting Minutes

A motion to approve the December 19, 2023 meeting minutes was made by Rodric Cox-Cooper and seconded by Gary Rogers. The motion was passed unanimously.

Dave Seeley provided a brief update regarding Community Resource Collaborative, a County federally ARPA funded program that aimed to assist a lot of smaller non-profit organizations and help them access government funds. Dave disclosed that we did have a financial relationship with CRC. We also shared the same building with them. They were located downstairs from our Career Center. They were a sub-recipient for our WIOA Youth funds and GVP funds. We have since severed ties with them for reasons that probably seem obvious, including they do not really have an operation and we were having challenges with them. We also had some outstanding contracts with them with our On-the-Job Training Grants, which we are not paying out. We did have one check that had been issued to them that we have now put a stop-payment on. Another area of concern was that CRC did have some Youth enrolled in their programming with us. Dave wanted to make sure that those Youth had a place to go. Antwan Williams and his staff reached out proactively to connect these Youth with one of our other Navigators, whether in-house or with one of our partner agencies. Our relationship with CRC is now officially severed.

Finance Committee:

Review of Program Year 2023, Quarter 2 Financials, October 2023 - December 2023

Jeanine Frenz began the discussion with the following updates:

- In February we requested a transfer of \$300K from DW to Adult funding, which was approved on February 29th. This is the second transfer request of this year. We will evaluate the need for another transfer request in late April or early May.
- We are also currently being audited by the Office of the Inspector General (OIG). This is a Federal audit, and the objective of the audit is to determine whether grant funds for Adult, DW and Youth were utilized for their intended purposes during the COVID-19 pandemic. The period they are auditing is 7/1/19 through 6/30/22.

Jeanine provided financials covering the Summary of Expenses October 2023 - December 2023.

Revenue

- Total WIOA funds for the second quarter were \$1.5M: 47% Adult, 13.5% Dislocated Worker, and 29% Youth.
- SCION: We came in on budget for this program year, which ended on December 31st. The third year of this program began on January 1, 2024. It has been extended through December 2026.
- Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF): This is the Summer Youth Employment Program. The State advanced 85% of the funds in the first quarter of our fiscal year, which is why there is no revenue shown in the second quarter, although there are associated expenses.
- In School Youth: This is new. There was no budget for this program; however, we did receive an advance of \$291K at the end of January.
- Monroe County: We are right on budget for both of these programs; Employment Assessments and STEP.
- Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA): Trade Assistance was very minimal for this period, and we are simply a pass through.
- ROC Seeds: We can bill this program every six months. We are still waiting for the executed agreement from Empire State Development before we can submit for reimbursement. The anticipated lag time for reimbursement is 6-14 weeks once we submit.
- Gun Violence Prevention Program: This program is set to end on March 31st. We have notified our subrecipients to send in their final vouchers by April 15th, so we can close out on time.

Program Expenses

Direct Expenses:

- Individual Training Accounts (ITAs): These are slightly under budget for the quarter; however, that is due primarily to the Trade Act (\$4,300 vs. \$10K budget) and GVP (\$4,300 vs. \$30K budget). For Adult and Dislocated Worker, we are on plan.
- OJTs: These are also under budget in this quarter. We hired another staff member in our Business Services department and the staff is working hard to bring in OJTs.
- Wage Subsidies: These are considerably under budget. Most of this is due to a shortfall in work experience opportunities for youth and no work experience opportunities that were originally budgeted for the GVP program.

Service Provider Payments:

- WIOA Youth payments are close to where they should be for the quarter.
- SYEP (TANF) payments are on budget for the quarter.

- GVP provider payments are not where they should be; some subrecipients owe us vouchers going back to December. At this point, the program closes in two weeks; it is unlikely that we will meet our budget of \$200K for GVP Service Providers.

Operational Expenses

- All operational expenses are on budget except for travel and meetings. This was due to the NYATEP conference participation in the fall.

A motion to approve the Review of Program Year 2023, Quarter 2 Financials as presented was made by Gary Rogers and seconded by Janelle Harris. The motion was passed unanimously.

Youth Committee:

Approve Summer Youth Employment Program Work Experience RFP Recommendations

Antwan Williams reported that back in November 2023, we issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) to seek out community partners to deliver structured employment-based paid summer work experiences for Youth. This is almost exclusively for 14 and 15 year-olds. This will provide exposure to employment-based learning opportunities, integrate work experience and work-based learning, or combine work-based and classroom-based learning activities, including e-learning that provides basic skills instruction, research, career exploration, and life-skills training that completes the work experience.

A review team consisting of RW staff, City staff, and committee members was brought together to review and rate the proposals. Eleven (11) proposals were received, and the Youth Committee is recommending eight (8) proposals for funding. RochesterWorks anticipates funding to support this purpose in the amount not to exceed \$459,350.00.

Recommendations for funding include:

- Action For A Better Community, Inc.
- Boys & Girls Clubs of Rochester, Inc.
- Community Place of Greater Rochester, Inc.
- New Born Christian Fellowship
- Pearl Resources, Inc.
- Planned Parenthood
- Starbridge Services, Inc.
- Taproot Collective, Inc.

Antwan also shared some good news: In collaboration with the City of Rochester, we are still working with ESL, looking to expand that partnership. We are offering a new non-custodial package for checking and savings. We are looking to expand that to not just direct placement, but also with the program level. We have also formed a relationship with CASH, so that young individuals have a place to go to file their taxes.

A motion to approve the eight (8) agencies, but not to exceed \$459,350.00, to serve 165 Youth, the 14 and 15 year-olds in the program was made by Melissa James-Geska and seconded by Zachary Arnold. The motion was passed unanimously.

Note: Gary Rogers and Glen Jeter abstained from this vote.

Workforce Innovation and Performance Committee:

Amend Priority of Service Policy (WIOA Policy 101)

Amend Supportive Services Policy (WIOA Policy 103)

Lee Koslow began the discussion by noting the Workforce Innovation and Performance Committee is advancing their recommendation to the Board to approve revisions to 2 of our local policies, Policy 101, Priority of Service and Policy 103, Supportive Services.

Purpose of the Revisions include:

1. To implement changes recommended through RochesterWorks' DEIA Committee.
2. To allow for supportive services for OJT participants.

Lee summarized the changes to the policies as follows:

Revisions to Policy 101, Priority of Service

- Explicitly add promoting DEIA to the policy's Purpose section.
- Add a requirement that Career Center managers ensure that their procedures for identifying Adult priority populations and dislocated workers achieve DEIA goals, and arrange for annual DEIA training to support this objective.
- Add a Measurement Section to quantify the application of DEIA practices to priority of service selection.
- Add assessments approved by NYSDOL to the list of assessments used to determine that an individual is basic skills deficient.
- Allow supportive services for non-covered persons outside the priority groups who are active recipients of OJT services.

Revision to Policy 103, Supportive Services

- Allow OJT participants to receive the following supportive services:
 - Bus Passes
 - Gas Cards
 - Parking
 - Child and Dependent Care
- Allow child and dependent care supportive services for non-covered persons outside the priority groups who are active recipients of OJT services.

A motion to approve Revisions to Policy 101, Priority of Service and Policy 103, Supportive Services as presented was made by Grant Malone and seconded by Patricia Stovall-Lane. The motion was passed unanimously.

Director's Report:

Organizational Updates

Dave Seeley provided updates on the following projects and programs:

Recompete Pilot Program

- RochesterWorks was awarded a \$453,000 Strategy Development Grant from the US Economic Development Administration (EDA).
- This was very competitive. There were over 500 applications nationally with less than 10% funded.
- We were the only NYS application funded, noting that we were one of only two WDB-led applications selected across the country.

- The focus is on prime-age employment gaps (25-54 year olds) in the City of Rochester.
- Our strategies will center on manufacturing and construction trades, and we will utilize the MyWayfinder platform spearheaded locally by Together Now.

Next Steps

- Two staff have been hired.
- We had a launch meeting last week, which reconvened our coalition partners.

School to Work Navigator Program

- Grant funds provided by Farash Foundation (\$420,000) and ESL (\$200,000).
- This will allow RochesterWorks to place four navigators in two RCSD schools (two in each). Schools include Edison Tech and Franklin.
- Not looking to create another layer of programming but provide for more bandwidth inside the school to connect students with career exploration and work experience opportunities.
- RW plans to utilize both in-house staff and issuing an RFP to outside agencies, preferably those already working in the City schools.
- Start Date: September 2024
- End Date: June 2026

MCC Career Center Project

Earlier in March, we received news that the Fiscal Year 2024 Congressional Appropriations bill has allocated \$1.6 Million towards our Career Center Project at the MCC Downtown campus. While this only represents about 15% of the total project cost, it is encouraging given we were uncertain that there would even be any Congressional Directed Spending. Our thanks to Rep. Morelle and Senate Majority Leader Schumer for their support in getting the project into the bill - the largest award in the Rochester area!

So where does that leave us? We know the estimated price tag of the project is \$10-12 Million. As Dave reported in December, the project was recommended for funding by the Regional Revitalization Partnership's (RRP) steering committee, and we have received good indications that our request of \$7.5 Million will be fully funded. This, however, is contingent on matching funds from Monroe County as part of the Capital Improvement Program and SUNY Capital Funds.

Our goal was to minimize the SUNY/County contribution, knowing the RRP was a major one-time opportunity. As such, and as Dave has reported previously, the County has expressed initial support for helping close the funding gap, as long as SUNY can, as well. At present, Dave is working with attorneys from MCC, SUNY, and the County to ensure there is a legal pathway towards allocating capital funds. We hope to hear back from SUNY in the coming weeks, which will hopefully be the last hurdle to overcome to finance the project.

WIOA Funding - Program Year 2024

Dave Seeley reported that our initial allocation for WIOA Funding for Program Year 2024 has us at a 10% reduction (-\$625,719). This would put us beneath our WIOA funding level from 2019.

Why has this happened, despite increasing demand for workforce development services, particularly for those with barriers to employment? The answer is two-fold.

- 1) NYS is receiving a smaller share of flat funding.
- 2) New York City is receiving a larger share due to more negative labor market conditions.

Dave added how we are bracing for impact, including:

- Looking to soften the blow by asking NYSDOL for flexibility in carrying over more of our PY23 dollars.

- As outlined in previous slides, we will continue to look to grant opportunities; however, WIOA is still the foundation of our programmatic funding.

A motion to approve the Director’s Report as presented was made by Patricia Stovall-Lane and seconded by Tiffany Owens. The motion was passed unanimously.

Adjournment: 8:51AM

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Rodric Cox-Cooper and seconded by Zachary Arnold. The motion was passed unanimously.

WDB Meeting Schedule:

June 18, 2024
September 17, 2024
December 17, 2024
March 18, 2025
June 17, 2025

Approved:

David Seeley

Date

Submitted by: Mary McKeown

Reviewed by:
David Seeley: 4/1/2024
Jeanine Frenz: 4/2/2024
Antwan Williams: 4/1/2024
Lee Koslow: 3/27/2024

