

WIB Executive Committee
Meeting Minutes

DATE: January 12, 2021

LOCATION/TIME: Zoom Meeting Platform

ATTENDEES: Fred Boenheim, Andrew Federick, Charles G. Jones, Jr., Michael Martin, Oswaldo Mestre, Jr., Brenda McDuffie, Robert Mootry, Jr., Patricia Riegler, and Myrna Young

ABSENT/EXCUSED:

STAFF ATTENDEES: Mark Cosgrove, David Kaczor, Francine Nicholas, Russell Sferlazza, Joseph Ricchiazzi, Anthony Scello, Lavon Stephens, Geoff Szymanski and Marty Taggart.

TOPIC	DISCUSSION	ACTION
Call to Order	Mr. Jones called the meeting to order at 9:02 a.m. Ms. Taggart and Mr. Kaczor, taking roll, verified a quorum. Mr. Jones thanked the group for their attendance.	
I. Executive Director's Report	<p>Mr. Szymanski covered the following:</p> <p>Continued COVID-19 Procedures: The WIB/WDC is continuing to alternate work days here at Exchange Street while following proper New York State guidelines of maintaining proper safe distancing and other preventive practices. Adjustments have been made throughout the pandemic and will continue to be adjusted in the future as circumstances demand.</p> <p>Trade & Economic Transition Grant (TET) The Trade and Economic Transition - National Dislocated Worker Grant (TET-NDWG) is awarded to the WDC by New York State Department of Labor (NYSDOL). This grant offers training and paid work experience to WIOA dislocated workers in demand occupations including advanced manufacturing and technology. Due to Covid-19 and the social effects thereof limiting the ability for people to complete training, \$380,000 will be de-obligated, leaving just over \$865,000 in funding. The program is set to expire in September of 2021.</p> <p>Board Appointment: Three new board appointments were nominated and signed off by both Mayor Brown and County Executive Poloncarz.</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;"><u>Cheryl Byrne</u> is the director of Human Resources for the West Herr Automotive Group. Prior to her time with West Herr, Cheryl served a combined fourteen years between Lawley Insurance and Multisorb Technologies as their Human Resource director. Cheryl is the secretary and development chair of Junior Achievement of Western New York, whose purpose is to inspire and prepare young people to succeed in a global economy by helping students realize that the education they are getting today will help them to have a bright future tomorrow. JA's unique, volunteer delivered programs, show students all of the possibilities that lay before them whether its through college or through a specific trade.</p>	

Steve Davis is the fifth generation Davis to lead the family business as president. The original company was Davis Bulletin Company, founded in 1919 and was ground breaking in the area of commercial advertising and marketing. Tapecon is a city based, family-owned and operated manufacturing company with a commitment to their team members and to the Western New York community and is considered an essential employer during the Covid-19 era.

Ted Walsh Jr. was the fourth generation chief executive officer of the family owned Walsh-Duffield insurance company, a company that was established in 1860. Ted began his insurance career in 1976 in a management training program with the Continental Insurance Company before joining Walsh Duffield in 1977. Philanthropy is important to Ted, and he has been an active community volunteer for over 35 years. Just recently, Walsh-Duffield has installed a new chief executive officer who will serve as the 5th generation leader of the business

HPOG

We will have a better understanding around March of this year whether HPOG will be extended by the federal government. Participation levels are slightly lower than where we would like them to be but this is almost entirely due to Covid-19 and the challenges of remote learning in a field that requires hands on training.

WIOA Spending Rate

We are currently operating at a lower rate of usage than our anticipated budgeted operating level. With a significant carryover in adult and youth funding from 2019 and 2020, we may have to prepare for recapturing from the state if areas are not opened up at a level that can create a better training environment. We will continue monitoring this ongoing financial situation, this is all based on the training levels to be utilized during this pandemic and how the state operates during these troubling times. The reduced spending rate is solely related to Covid-19.

WIOA Memorandum of Understanding:

NYS DOL has provided the local boards with MOU Template and Guidance for the 2020-2023 service delivery MOU with our system partners. We're preparing the infrastructure budgets based a cost allocation methodology based on square footage and agreed upon by our system partners. New York State has finally authorized digital signatures, which will expedite the process of approval once finalized.

Governor Cuomo's Workforce Development Challenge – Round 3-

The WIB/WDC discussed and initiated the pursuit of Round 3 of the Workforce Development Challenge. The WNY Workforce Development Challenge (WDC), a Buffalo Billion initiative, ensures the region's workforce pipeline is responding to industry demands by promoting and investing in scalable approaches to workforce training for underserved populations. The first round was set in 2017. In 2019, to further build on the program's success, the Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Foundation announced an additional \$1.5 million contribution, for a fund total of \$11.5 million.

The previous BECWIB director did not pursue the earlier rounds as it seemed to be based on entry level job training only. We recognized a different spin in which it's been foreseen that these funds parallel with our WIOA projects but were not restricted to federal WIOA

	<p>guidelines and rules, the team agreed and we submitted our project to the Community Foundation for a Greater Buffalo (the grant administrator) for a total of \$419,970 dollars, of which \$350,000 will be from the Challenge and the remaining \$72,000 will be matched from other resources.</p> <p>The main focus will be to train 36 individuals who are unemployed, underemployed or dislocated workers, with priority given to under-represented populations in our targeted industries, and who seek reskilling for demand jobs due to a changed economic landscape. Trainees will be adults 18 yrs. or older with a high school diploma, and little or no work experience in the targeted job training. Our recruitment efforts will include those unemployed due to business layoffs or disruptions caused by COVID. We will also reach out to WNY Opportunity Agenda's priority populations –unemployed individuals living in poverty (i.e. those with a family income that does not exceed the higher of (a) the poverty level or (b) 70% of the lower living standard income level. The training will be in advanced manufacturing and technology in priority sectors.</p> <p>WIOA Youth Services Program Year 2020/Program Year 2021</p> <p>Our current WIOA youth service providers (Buffalo Urban League, Catholic Charities of Buffalo and The Service Collaborative of WNY) continue to provide needed services while following all CDC safety protocols. New enrollments have been challenging but they continue to outreach to the community.</p> <p>These current providers were selected on a competitive basis in 2018. The original Request For Proposal (RFP) covered two program years and allowed for two, one-year extensions. An extension of these contracts for PY 2021 (starting July 1, 2021) will be the final extension should the WIB exercise this option. The other option is a new competitive process before the start of the new program year on July 1st.</p> <p>WIOA requires a minimum of 75% of youth funding be spent of services to Out-of-School youth. WIOA also requires 20% of overall WIOA youth funding be used for Work Experience-related expenses. Our local area exceeded those benchmarks last program year. Though it is still premature to say with certainty, it is expected that our local area will meet these benchmarks again for the current program year.</p> <p>WIB Podcast</p> <p>Board member Spencer Murray will be hosting a podcast highlighting Workforce and has twelve episodes scheduled to begin by the end of January. A wide range of topics and organizations have been identified for the broadcast with an option to extend for more episodes.</p>	
<p>II. Action Items</p> <p>a) Minutes from October 13, 2020 meeting.</p> <p>b) Board Resolution Adopting New York State Department of Labor Technical Advisory Policies</p>	<p>Ms. Nicholas began by saying that NYSDOL has requested that all Local Workforce Development Boards (LWDBs) acknowledge the induction of technical advisories that we are required to implement, but that do</p>	<p>Motion to approve the minutes from the January 14, 2020 meeting was made by Mr. Mestre, Jr., seconded by Ms. McDuffie. Roll call was taken. All were in favor. Motion carried.</p> <p>Motion to approve the Resolution adopting New York State Department of Labor Technical Advisory policy was made by Ms. Reigle, seconded by Mr.</p>

	<p>not require a local policy bulletin to do so. The attached list to our acknowledging resolution references those required TA's. Tom Mormile, who is our Workforce Programs Specialist, suggested that we provide a way to direct the reader to the location of those TA's and to the location of resources at the local level that document how these state policies are implemented. Ms. Nicholas indicated that she imbedded hyperlinks in blue on the attachment. Specifically, the phrase, "Technical Advisory", hyperlinks to the NYSDOL Policies and Procedures webpage, which provides a way for them to search for a particular TA. The terms that she hyperlinked to our Workforce Buffalo Resource Page include Equal Employment and Non-Discrimination Policy, Implementation of the EEND Policy, Self-Sufficiency Earnings Estimator, which is linked it to our local ITA Policy Bulletin, and references our \$25.00/ hour self-sufficiency wage; and, also hyperlinked, is the phrase, "Processing Non-Criminal Complaints and Grievances", so they can see who the contact people are. Ms. Nicholas concluded that this is a summary of what we are required to do.</p>	<p>Martin. Roll call was taken. All were in favor. Motion carried.</p>
<p>III. Budget Report/Spending Update</p>	<p>Mr. Ricchiazzi covered the following for Program Year (PY) 20 – 2nd Quarter Budget Report:</p> <p>A. Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)</p> <p>Total Salary & Fringes were \$1,713,672; Operating Expenses were \$415,849; Total Training & Support Expenses were \$845,877. Total Expenses for the 2nd Quarter were \$2,975,973. Our most underexpended area of WIOA is Training and Support field. Mr. Ricchiazzi continued by covering the break out of the Total Expenses by WIOA Segment for the 2nd Quarter. Admin Expenses were \$374,679, with 48% of budget remaining; Adult Expenses were \$961,620 with 62% remaining; Dislocated Worker Expenses were \$246,735, with 53% remaining; and Youth Expenses were \$1,392,364, with 59% remaining. WIOA Total Expenses for the 2nd Quarter totaled \$2,975,397, with 58% remaining.</p> <p>B. Health Profession Opportunity Grant (HPOG)</p> <p>The HPOG funding is going to end on September 29, 2021. The Total Expenses for the 2nd Quarter were \$508,856 out of the Total Budget of \$1,600,885. We are right in line in the fact that we do have another quarter in the next fiscal year. Again, the Training & Support Expenses have the majority of the funds remaining with 81% Percent of the Budget Remaining.</p> <p>C. Trade & Economic Transition Grant (TET)</p> <p>As Mr. Szymanski eluted to in his Executive Summary, \$380,000 will be de-obligated from the National Dislocated Worker Grant, leaving \$865,213 in funding to work with. Mr. Ricchiazzi indicated that we currently have 18% of the Budget Remaining, with Total Expenses at \$712,386. We have allocated monies into areas where we project to spend it by the end of the September 2021, when the program is set to expire.</p> <p>Mr. Ricchiazzi noted that the Worforce Investment Board applied for funding with NYSDOL Cares Act, and we were approved as the recipient of \$160,000 from the Employment Recovery National Dislocated Worker Grant (NDWG).</p>	

	<p>D. Other Grants</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The THRIVE program has been closed out and the grant has ended. It was extended until 10/31/20 and that is why you see the negative variance. The budget was never updated after that no cost extension was given. - The Consolidated Funding Application (CFA 8.0) We never received the extension from the program, so that grant has officially ended. There are no expenses to report at this time. - Training Costs: The support costs are down due to online trainings, we haven't been paying for child care or transportation costs. <p>E. Training/Youth Contracts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Individual Training Accounts are at 65% as of December 31st which are down, as Mr. Smith referred to, because of the pandemic. We will need to watch this area to avoid recapture. We would also like to see more training funds being utilized with the HPOG and WIOA Adult Programs. - Youth Costs: We have some flexibility with the Out of School Youth, Work Experience as long as we spend 20% on work experience, it should not be a concern. In School Youth is struggling to find participants based on the reimbursement requests. <p>F. WIOA Expenditures by Program Year.</p> <p>We had a high Carry-In this year, mainly for Adult and Youth Expenditures. We currently have \$8,964 from 2019, which we will need to spend before utilizing from PY20. Program Year 2020 Expenditures are as follows: WIOA Admin. is \$511,151; WIOA Adult is \$1,680,329; WIOA Youth is \$1,802,405; and WIOA Dislocated Worker is \$1,117,625 which represents the 80% of NOA we are required to spend during the current year. Right now in aggregate, we have approximately 77% of the budget remaining. We have the entire \$1.6 million balance in WIOA Adult for PY20 We do have the ability to move funds between Adult Programs, so we will watch these funds in the 3rd Quarter, to possibly obligate the PY20 Youth Funds to next year's contracts, as part of the RFP extension process. The Board did approve the Director of Finance to be able to transfer money between the Dislocated Worker and Adult. Admin expenditures can be utilized again specific funding sources. The Youth funds are going to have to be obligated to next year's contract.</p>	
<p>IV. Business Services</p>	<p>Ms. Braunscheidel gave the Board an update of the what Business Services is doing.</p> <p><u>Pathways Programming Update:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Pathways Programming is no longer specifically designating classes solely for dislocated workers or WIOA adults. Each class has now expanded to be inclusive of both dislocated workers and WIOA adults 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● We have four upcoming Pathways Programs; we are in active recruitment for three presently. See below: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Web Services with D'Youville, January 2021</i> ○ <i>Full Stack Web Development with ECC, February 2021</i> ○ <i>IT Jumpstart with Trocaire, February 2021</i> ○ <i>Building Trades SACRA Program with Assembly House 150, February / March 2021</i> ● We are partnering with Niagara County to designate five spaces in each of our three upcoming Tech Industry Pathways Programs for Niagara County customers. All work opportunities are focused on Erie County employers <p><u>On-The-Job Training Update:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● We have successfully completed three contracts with <i>Flat #12 Mushrooms</i> ● We will be successfully completing one contract with <i>Cypress North</i> in January 2021 ● <i>Southern Junction's</i> candidate was lost due to personal health and wellness opportunities. A new candidate has been successfully identified with a new target start date of January 25th, 2021. Completion date TBA ● We currently have 2 open applications with the following businesses, contract dates TBA: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Tapecon Inc.</i> ○ <i>Mold Tech Inc.</i> <p><u>Business Services Outreach Update:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● October 2020 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <u>Average businesses served:</u> 29 ○ <u>Average partners served:</u> 12 ● November 2020 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <u>Average businesses served:</u> 20 ○ <u>Average partners served:</u> 16 ● December 2020 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <u>Average businesses served:</u> 36 ○ <u>Average partners served:</u> 25 <p><u>General Team Updates:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Minesh Patel has transitioned out of his position as Pathways Navigator, supported by the TET grant and into a permanent position with the Business Services Team as Business Services Specialist, Project Manager as of November 2020. 	
<p>V. Career Center Updates</p> <p>A. SUNY Erie Career Center</p>	<p>Ms. Raymond opened by saying that SUNY Erie is highlighting Selected Successful Collaborations in their monthly newsletter to celebrate their customers. We are getting the releases signed, so we can put our applicants resumes on the website, in the event a potential employer searches, they will see all the customer's great skills. We are also embracing the technology for resumes and</p>	

tracking system. Ms. Raymond, next, discussed the center's customer traffic report. The numbers varied throughout the months of October, November, and December, anywhere from 99 to 238 constituents a day. Right now, SUNY Erie's Career Center has only six employees, who meet face-to-face with the customers.

SUNY Erie Food Pantry Partnership with Feedmore WNY

- Customers and staff are following safety protocols and are using the CampusClear phone app.
- Constituents do not have to be tested for COVID when they are scheduled to be on campus for under 60 minutes (SUNY rules).
- We have not had any failed screenings using the screening questions and infrared forehead scanner thermometer at the checkpoint sites since we reopened the pantries on 12/09/2020.
- The food pantry traffic has been light, even though we called constituents who use the pantries to let them know we are fully stocked and open.
- SUNY Erie Auxiliary Services donated a large amount of fresh fruits, produce and dairy in December, resulting in each household receiving extra food last month.

Walden Galleria & LinkedIn Partnerships

- We have been working with the Microsoft Office Walden Galleria Store and LinkedIn teams on strategies that can help us offer structured supports such as "how to" workshops. To that end, our Career Coaches completed a train-the-trainer series on LinkedIn.
- The LinkedIn staff has been very generous with their time and resources. They gave us their electronic PowerPoints, handouts, and teaching notes/materials.

WDC Business Services Partnership

We have been working with Jessica Braunscheidel, WDC Business Services Manager on industry-specific employers. The target areas for our most active and recent customer participants are:

- IT – all areas
- Administration – assistants, supervisors, comptrollers
- Management – operations, general, purchasing
- Engineering – manufacturing, construction

Virtual Workshops & Services

- Virtual career coaching and resume appointments are occurring 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday to Thursday and on Fridays 8 a.m. until 4:30 p.m.
- Employer recruitments are occurring as requested, via WebEx.
- 50-60 virtual workshops are provided reach month via WebEx. Customers can register on www.workforcebuffalo.org or at <https://elinks.ecc.edu/onestop/>.

<p>B. Buffalo Employment & Training Center</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New workshops are being added such as <i>How to Make Your Resume ATS Friendly, Getting Better Results with Applicant Tracking Systems (ATS), Personal Branding</i>, and more. <p>Ms. Raymond concluded by explaining that the ADA laws require people to mark tags on any graphics they have as decorative on their website, so that they are read correctly by the internet and you don't trip up screen readers. Ms. Raymond, also, indicated that our board members are allowed to join a workshop through the Career Center.</p> <p>Mr. Smith opened by saying, due to COVID, things are a little slower than usual at the center. They do have staff working in the center every day from 9 am – 5 pm. and are seeing up to 20 customers a day. Most of their customers come through the link on the City of Buffalo's website and the BETC will contact the customers and have a Zoom interview with them. The Center had to move some training funds back, because most of the training providers are back up an running. When the pandemic hit, CDL driver's became in high demand. BETC can train 8 customers at a time for CDL Training. At times, they have had to hold two classes to meet the demand. BETC has been working with Business Services for their assistance with CDL Training, as well as, with recruiting for three other programs. Mr. Smit is pleased with the strategy they colaberated on with Business Services. The Center will assess applicants and place them into training they can benefit from. Placements are not as high as they would like; however, a lot of jobs are starting to come back. A company from Boston who manugactures Web cameras, is setting up a call center in Buffalo, so they will be hiring from the area. In the upcoming weeks, BETC will be going through some restructuring, since things have changed with how employment services are delivered. The staff has been focusing on ways the Center can provide services through the internet and social media. BETC advertised on social media and were able to reach 18,000 people, 500 clicks on the post, and 700 engagements. Mr. Smith concluded that the staff will continue to develop these avenues to reach more customers.</p> <p>Mr. Mestre, Jr., commended Mr. Smith and the Center on their relationship they have built with M & T Bank and other companies who are hiring in the technology field. The Center is doing a great job connecting with the underrepresented groups; African American, Native American, Women, Veterans, etc., and assisting them with training in the technology field.</p>	
<p>VI. Other Business</p>	<p>Mr. Jones, Jr., had some good news to share with the Board. He referenced the article entitled, "Business First Launches Diversity Advisory Board," published by the Managing Editor of Business First., where one of our Board members, Brenda McDuffie, was featured and thanked for her assistance as we work toward making WNY A better and more equitable place.</p> <p>Mr. Szymanski indicated that NYSDOL has found a replacement for Carolyn Bright, who recently retired. Phyllis Damico will be joining the WIB Board going forward.</p>	
	<p>Meeting adjourned at 10:08 a.m.</p>	<p>Motion to adjourn was made by Mr. Martin, seconded by Ms. Riegel. All were in favor. Roll call was taken. Motion carried.</p>

