

WIB Meeting Minutes

DATE: October 27, 2020, 9 a.m.

LOCATION/TIME: ZOOM Meeting Platform

ATTENDEES: Julius Gregg Adams, Jomo Akono, Mary Margaret Aprile, Carolyn Bright, Fred Boenheim, Tracy Cardwell, John Cappellino, Silvia Fakler, Andrew Federick, Joseph Hanna, Charles G. Jones, Jr., Brian Manley, Michael Martin, Dennis Martinez, Brenda McDuffie, Oswaldo Mestre, Jr., Elizabeth Miller, Robert Mootry, Jr., Spencer Murray, Scott Pallotta, Douglas Parks, Patricia Riegle, April Sanders, David Sullivan and Myrna Young

EXCUSED
ABSENT/ Sylvester Dihaan, D. Cory Haqq, L. Nathan Hare, Bridget Russo, and Ralph Salerno

STAFF
ATTENDEES: Mark Cosgrove, David Kaczor, Francine Nicholas, Denise Raymond, Joseph Ricchiuzzi, Russell Sferlazza, John Slenker, Demone Smith, Lavon Stephens and Geoffrey Syzmanski.

GUESTS: Cheryl Fisher, Magavern, Magavern & Grimm and David Granville.

TOPIC	DISCUSSION	ACTION
Call to Order	Mr. Jones called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. and called attendance to ensure a quorum. Mr. Jones thanked the group for their attendance. Mr. Jones stated a roll call would be taken after every vote during the Zoom meeting.	
I. Executive Director's Report	<p>Mr. Syzmanski covered the following:</p> <p>Personnel Changes: Special Assistant to the Director; Barbara Schaus has retired and Martha "Marty" Taggart has seamlessly filled the position. There was a quality amount of time for training and we are moving forward. Christina Lopez was relieved of her duties as Business Services Director. Jessica Braunscheidel has been elevated to the position of Business Services Manager.</p> <p>HPOG EXTENSION: Health Profession Opportunity Grants (HPOG) has recently begun (September 30, 2020) its 6th year after receiving an extension until September 29, 2021. Congress is looking to have an RFP for additional 5 years sometime in 2021.</p> <p>THRIVE Buffalo Ending: THRIVE Buffalo has been authorized two extensions since April. The United Way and the WIB/WDC have agreed that the final date of this program will be October 29, 2020. The THRIVE staff have been informed of their termination date.</p> <p>COVID-19 Procedures: The WIB/WDC returned to Exchange Street while following proper New York State guidelines while maintaining proper safe distancing. Two teams were created that work on site on alternating days in order to have a proper physical presence while trying to reduce the spread of the deadly virus. Some minor adjustments have been made throughout and will continue to be adjusted in the future as circumstances demand.</p>	

	<p>RFP for IT Services: After two successful Request for Proposals (RFP) publishings (Buffalo News/Challenger newspapers), two companies placed their bid following our requested scope of work. WNYNetwork Solutions has once again won the bid for our business. There will no disruption in service as this company has been handling the WIB/WDC technology issues and concerns for many years. It was Mr. Galley who helped support our efforts to work from home when the pandemic struck in March 2020.</p> <p>Our WIOA One Stop System Coordinator, John Slenker, has had his contact extended for an additional year, ending June 2021.</p> <p>Board Appointment: Spencer G. Murray was appointed to the WIB Board. A highly energetic fellow, Mr. Murray currently serves on the Board of Directors for the National Association of Workforce Boards (NAWB) and serves as the Chair of their Audit Committee as well as on the Board of Directors for a non-profit music company Rock Autism which focuses on developing training and such for individuals with autism. Prior to being appointed to the Buffalo/Erie County WIB, Mr. Murray served as the Vice-Chair of the Cattaraugus-Allegany Workforce Board. Mr. Murray has been working with the Director and the financial team to figure out how he can generate a Buffalo/Erie County workforce podcast.</p> <p>Demand Occupation List In regard to the demand occupation list, we are beginning discussions on adding higher level occupations to the list that offer a higher wage and elevated growth in advancement. The current list offers, for the most part, entry-level positions and salary.</p> <p>WIOA Spending Rate We are currently operating at lower rate of usage than our anticipated budgeted operating level. On a normal, non-pandemic year, we would be operating around the 25% level at this same time.</p> <p>WIOA Compliance Activities: NYS DOL has provided the local boards with a draft of the TA template and guidance for the 2020-2023 service delivery MOU with our system partners.</p>	
<p>II. Action Items</p> <p>A) Minutes from June 23, 2020 meeting</p> <p>B) Election of Officers</p>	<p>Ms. Young stated the Nominating Committee met and after much discussion bring forth the slate of officers to the board:</p> <p>Chair: Chip Jones, Jr. 1st: Fred Boenheim 2nd: Brenda McDuffie Secretary: Patricia Riegle Treasurer: Robert Mootry</p>	<p>Motion to approve the minutes from the January 28, 2020 meeting was made by Mr. Boenheim, seconded by Ms. Miller. Roll call was taken. All were in favor. Motion carried.</p> <p>Motion to move this slate of officers was made by Ms. Young, seconded by Ms. McDuffie. Mr. Jones stated that there is an opportunity to make any nominations, if anybody choses to. Hearing none, we will vote on the slate that was presented. Roll call was taken. All were in favor. Motion carried.</p>

<p>C) WNY Networks IT Resolution</p>	<p>The Committee is asking that you approve this slate. We really appreciate that they all agree to serve again during this difficult time. Mr. Jones thanked the officers for their good work and for offering to serve again.</p> <p>Mr. Kaczor began by stating our IT Resolution was due to be renewed in the spring, but because of the COVID pandemic, this was unable to happen. We extended our agreement for three months with our current vendor, WNY Networks, so we could get through the period while we were asked to work from home. This period also allowed other vendors, who were interested, to come into our offices to see what our system entailed. In the month of September, WIB posted an RFP for IT Maintenance & Services on our website, as well as, publishing in the Buffalo News and Challenger. We received two responses by the deadline. One being our current provider, WNY Networks Inc., and another from a local company, Network Services LLC. Upon an intensive evaluation of the two, the review team decided to create a resolution to maintain the current services of WNY Networks. Our findings were as follows: WNY Networks Inc., provided us with a number of years of excellent service, at a competitive rate of \$95/hour, and they are substantially more cost effective than the other company at \$135/hour. The current vendor has a policy of being onsite for at least two days a week, which has been very beneficial in working with staff for training and assistance with troubleshooting issues with computers and equipment. The other vendor had an additional charge of \$18,000 for outside monitoring, plus a charge per server and workstation, which would have escalated their total cost even more. One last item worth mentioning is that WNY Networks has experience with our workforce website and developing software, Drupal; whereas, the other vendor does not. Mr. Kaczor stated that based on our assessment, we submitted a resolution to the Executive Committee to approve WNY Networks at \$95/hour. WDC has entered into a 9-month agreement from October 1, 2020 through June 30, 2021, with the vendor, WNY Networks, for the purposes of providing IT and Website support services to the WIB and WDC. Services will be billed at a flat rate of \$95/hour, in half hour increments. The executed agreement shall contain a provision for the extension of said agreement for up to three additional, one-year periods, based on a formal review and satisfactory performance, as we have done in the past. The total budgeted amount will not exceed \$90,500 during the 9-month period. The Executive Committee did review and recommend the resolution at the October 13, 2020 meeting.</p> <p>After the motion passed, Mr. Jones, Jr., commended Mr. Galley and WNY Networks staff for the excellent services they have provided.</p>	<p>Motion to approve the recommendation of the Executive Committee to contract with WNY Network was made by Ms. McDuffie, seconded by Tracy Cardwell. Roll call was taken. All were in favor. Motion taken.</p>
<p>D) Demand Occupations List</p>	<p>Mr. Cosgrove presented two new demand occupations to our list. The first being Human Resource Specialist. The Director of the ECC Career Center, Denise Raymond, brought this demand occupation to my attention. Ms. Raymond informed him that a great number of people are going to the center looking for training in the Human Resources area. The two types of training are (Professional in Human Resources (PHR) and Senior Professional in Human Resources (SPHR)). These are certifications and the most common requirements of H/R professionals. After some research and contact with Tim Glass, the Labor Market Analyst for WNY, we found that employment is favorable for this occupation in our area. Job titles</p>	<p>Motion to approve the two new demand occupations, Human Resource Specialist and Phlebotomist, be added to the Demand Occupations List was made by Ms. Bright and seconded by Mr. Federick. Roll call was taken. Ms. Riegle sustained. All others were in favor. Motion carried.</p>

	<p>included in this H/R area are: Corporate Recruiter, Employment Representatives, H/R Analyst, H/R Coordinator, H/R Representatives, Personnel Analyst and Personnel Officer and Recruiter. Currently there are close to 100 positions open in WNY in this field. The average entry wage for this is \$40,750/year, so this will benefit our organization with the people coming in. Our second addition is Phlebotomist. Our HPOG Business Representative, Mary Conboy, has received some interest from employers who need to hire Phlebotomists. The NYS DOL Forecaster for Phlebotomists is very favorable. In addition to Quest Diagnostics, there are currently openings at Kaleida Health, General Physicians PC, American Red Cross, ConnectLife and CSL Plasma. Mr. Cosgrove indicated that he recently visited CSL Plasma. He learned they have four offices in the area, and they would like to hire 3-4 people. Our goal is to work with Erie 1 BOCES and Trocaire College, who both have a program. The Erie 1 BOCES program starts December 1st and Trocaire College will start in January. We feel with these two programs, individuals will receive excellent training and placement with the mentioned employers for positions in the Phlebotomy area. Mr. Cosgrove asked the board for approval of the two occupations, so they can be included in our Demand Occupation List.</p> <p>Mr. Akono asked how many Phlebotomist positions need to be filled. Mr. Cosgrove responded that employers currently are in need of about 40 phlebotomists. The starting wage is \$29,650, \$14.25/hour and it is a step up from a Nursing Assistant. We are always looking for career pathways, and this falls in between a Nursing Assistant and an LPN. This is a step in the right direction, in making a commitment to help people get to a more self-sustaining wage.</p>	
<p>1. Reports</p> <p>A) Program Year (PY) 20 - 1st Quarter Budget Report Workforce</p>	<p>Mr. Sferlazza introduced Joe Ricchiazzi, Sr. Accountant, to review the 1st Quarter Budget Report. Mr. Ricchiazzi discussed the following:</p> <p>1. Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)</p> <p>The Total Salaries and Fringes costs so far are \$836,009, Total Operating Expenses are \$201,728 and Total Training & Support Expenses are \$490,876. WIOA is the largest portion of all our grant awards. \$7,039,522 is representative of 71% of our total budget expenses.</p> <p>Total Expenses by WIOA is \$1,528,614 is on track with the remaining budget for the 78% of the total allotted budgeted expenses for the fiscal year. Admin has 74% of the budget remaining, Adult has 83% remaining, Dislocated Worker has 77% remaining and Youth has 76% remaining for an average total of 78% remaining. There are no areas where we are under or over extended at this point.</p> <p>2. Health Profession Opportunity Grant (HPOG)</p> <p>Total Expenses for the first quarter is \$213,056 of the 1,600,885 budgeted. This grant was slated to end June 30, 2020, but was extend until September 29, 2021.</p>	

<p>B) Business Services Updates</p>	<p>3. Trade & Economic Transition Grant (TET)</p> <p>Total Expenses are \$107,497 of the \$842,389 budgeted annually. This grant was slated to end September 30, 2020, but was extended to September 30, 2021.</p> <p>4. Other Grants</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The THRIVE Program has a negative budget variance, but this should not be a concern. The adoptive budget we were granted a no cost extension until October 29, 2020. f. • NYSDOL Consolidated Funding Application (CFA 8.0) –This grant was not extended and has actually expired June 30, 2020. <p>5. Training/Youth Contracts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The total training expenses are \$93,329 of the 1,743,012 budgeted. It's a lagging indicator that we do not have as many participants. It's only 5% of the budget. We are going to have to watch in the future. The support costs generally correlate well with the training costs. The support costs are also low, mainly due to online classes. We aren't paying as much travel reimbursements or stipends. We are actually budgeting and spending in training costs for Youth Contracts, 42% of our total budgets expenses are in support costs and training. • The Planned Carry Out funds are unbudgeted funds used to smooth out expenses from year to year. Our awards are not always the same. The unemployment figures were taken into account and we are awarded on a state level, so, we are at the mercy of the State and Federal calculations for our award levels. Youth's Final Budgeted Carryout for Admin. is \$122,269, Youth is \$524,991, Adult is \$517,135 and Dislocated Worker is (\$7,688). <p>Mr. Ricchiuzzi concluded that we will continue to monitor the budget; as we need to obligate 80% of our funds for WIOA year to year, in order to avoid recapture.</p> <p>Mr. Jones introduced Jessica Braunscheidel as the new Business Services Leader. Ms. Braunscheidel began with an update on what her department is doing. Starting with the TET Grant Update, our Pathways Exec Leader, Minesh Patel, has been doing a great job working through the grant since he came on board a year and a half ago. Currently we have two pathways programs ending in October 2020: Information Technology Training with Trocaire College and Broadband Connectivity Training through C-Tech in partnership with Catholic Charities. The Catholic Charities program had 8 graduates and the Trocaire College program is currently wrapping up, but hope to have another 8 graduates there as well.</p> <p>Since we have the official extension through September of 2021, the Business Services team has been working closely to come up with a new calendar for Pathways Programming that we will be sharing with Mr. Szymanski in the near future. Right now we are tentatively looking for partnerships with:</p>	
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <u>Trocaire College</u> – IT Career Jumpstart ○ <u>D'Youville College</u> – Salesforce Administrator Training / Amazon Web Services Certification ○ <u>SUNY Erie</u> – Full Stack Web Development ○ <u>Assembly House 150</u> – SACRA Construction Skills Training <p>The TET Grant is currently supporting 3 On-The-Job Training Contracts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <u>Flat #12 Mushrooms</u> – Kitchen Manager and Grow Room Manager Positions Urban Agriculture Farm on Chandler Street in the City of Buffalo ○ <u>Cypress North</u> – Digital Marketing Coordinator Location: Moved from Exchange Street to Hertel Ave. Currently 100% of the employees are working remotely. <p>General Business Service Updates for On-The-Job Training:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 additional OJT Contracts currently supported <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Flat #12 Mushrooms – Spawn Propagation Manager (Total of 3 OJT contracts: 2 from TET Grant and 1 from Adult WIOA Funding). Location: 23 Chandler Street in Rocco Termini's renovated complex. ○ Southern Junction – Kitchen Manager Location: 27 Chandler Street • 2 upcoming OJT Contracts <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Tapecon Inc. – Advanced Manufacturing Press Operator positions, candidates TBA <p>Business Outreach and Support September 2020:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 26 businesses in 7 industries were assisted by our department • 16 organizations were serviced and/or partnered with by our team <p>Mr. Mestre asked where these businesses are located. Mrs. Braunscheidel responded accordingly and the information was added above.</p>	
<p>IV. Other Business</p> <p>A) Center Updates</p> <p>1) One Stop System Coord</p>	<p>Mr. Slenker began by indicating that at the last in-person WIB Meeting, Ms. Raymond presented some information on who we can serve. One of the alarming things that came out of that discussion was that over 200 people registered are Native American, and we learned that their information was not getting to the Native American Community Services. Because of COVID there have been many hurdles. What we found was that Albany is not able to run data based on Race for the purposes of the Employment, as to avoid any discrimination in employment. However, because we are using the data based on individuals requiring services, DOL has now given us access to this data. The system is completely automated, so we can send an email to everyone who is identified as Native American. Mr. Martin has drafted an email for us to send out, and these individuals will be referred to that Agency. It is possible to do this with other System Partners as well. We are going to be working with Job</p>	

<p>2) SUNY Erie Career Center</p>	<p>Corp., Youth Build, and Community Action Organization. The system works like a marketing tool. We plan to send an email out twice so people are aware of the services offered and this way no one will be missed.</p> <p>Mr. Martin added because the Native American Community Services get direct federal funding, separate from what comes through the allocation for the One Stop System, this caused the Native American population to be underfunded. By directing eligible clients to our services and utilizing our funds, it does help the allocation of resources for this segment of population of our clients. It's a great efficiency as a whole and he thanked Mr. Slenker for his assistance.</p> <p>Ms. Nicholas commended Mr. Slenker for his tenacity. He made this seem like an easy process, when it really was an uphill process to put this referral program in place.</p> <p>Mr. Slenker added that the Department of Labor has been under tremendous duress. They normally handle about 20,000 claimants, now it is over 100,000.</p> <p>Ms. Raymond agreed with Mr. Slenker, that it has been difficult getting a report from Albany right now. Nevertheless, we have been working around this issue by making sure all constituents get a follow-up as necessary. Ms. Raymond, then, began going over her centers' updates. As of 3/23/2020, both SUNY Erie Career Centers were closed to the public due to Covid-19. All services were virtual from 3/24/2020 – 8/15/2020. On 4/06/2020 SUNY Erie Career Centers' Healthy Food Pantries (funded by Feedmore WNY and staffed by non-WIOA College personnel) were closed. On 8/17/2020, SUNY Erie North Campus Career Center and food pantries reopened. Workshops and all group-based activities continue to be virtual to adhere to SUNY's social distancing rules.</p> <p>During the first week of April, the SUNY Erie Career Centers served 126 constituents and had verified 16 new job placements. That has been typical Center usage during the pandemic. Not every customer lets us know that they landed a job, so job placement is likely underreported. From April 2nd to October 22nd, we had 5,695 customer services, and we recorded 293 verified job placements.</p> <p>We have been back on campus since August, and during this time, we haven't seen an increase or noticeable decrease in business. It really fluctuates depending on what's going on with companies and what kind of workshops we are offering to our constituents. We currently have a one-week waiting list for new customers. If a constituent tells us it is urgent, however, we will do everything we can to get them served within a day or two by adding virtual appointments. Virtual appointments take more time, as we can't do individual assessments in a group-based setting. We are also directing individuals to BETC if they want an in-person visit. Our virtual services are much more popular with our constituents.</p> <p><u>Working Remotely and Extensive/Ongoing Staff Training:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New laptops and docking stations were issued to all SUNY Erie Career Center staff (at no cost to the 	
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- WIB or DOL) to meet the new requirements of hybrid/remote work.
- WebEx, MS Teams, and Cisco Jabber software applications were installed on each laptop in early March when we were preparing for the shutdown. Cisco Jabber allows Career Center staff to make and receive phone calls and/or video calls from our laptops using our office phone numbers in real-time.
- An aggressive training plan for staff was implemented beginning in March to ensure that staff felt comfortable teaching their workshops in a synchronous online format, which is inclusive and highly participatory. Professional development is ongoing.

New SUNY Erie Campus Entry/Screening Guidelines

We are committed to keeping customers and staff safe. Effective 10/26/2020, new guidelines for checkpoints were implemented on campus in anticipation of the change of weather in the WNY area.

- New NORTH Campus Checkpoint:
 - Gleasner Administration Building - Monday through Thursday 7AM-4PM, Friday 7AM-12PM. G building is where our Career Center is located.
- New SOUTH Campus Checkpoint location:
 - Building 6 (at the bus loop) - Monday through Saturday 7AM-7PM. Building 6 is where our Career Center is located.
- Anyone who enters campus buildings (staff, guests, students, etc.) will need to be screened or provide proof of screening at the checkpoint first before proceeding to their designated area within campus buildings.
- All staff and visitors are strongly encouraged to use the **#CampusClear** App prior to entering campus for fast clearance through the checkpoint. Individuals should select "Erie Community College" when setting-up the app.
- For individuals unable to use the app and prefer to participate in a call-in screening, they may still do so Monday through Friday 7AM-4PM by calling 716-270-4675. For after hours or weekend access, they must call Campus Safety at 716-270-6600. For more information on the #campusclear app please see our website at <https://www.ecc.edu/CampusClear/>.
- Random checks are conducted on campus to confirm that individuals within campus buildings have followed the procedure and have completed their health screening.

Virtual Services

- Virtual career coaching and resume appointments are offered 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday to Thursday and on Fridays 8 a.m. until 4:30 p.m.
- Employer recruitments are offered/provided via WebEx.
- 50-60 virtual workshops were/are provided reach month via WebEx.
- Robust virtual workshops and events include:
 - *Boost Your LinkedIn Profile:*
 - *Effective Strategies for Virtual Job Searching*
 - *Getting Better Results with Applicant Tracking Systems (ATS)*
 - *How to Make Your Resume ATS Friendly*
 - *LinkedIn Review*
 - *Networking Job Clubs*

<p>3) BETC</p> <p>B) Conflict of Interest Disclosure Forms</p> <p>C) Special Announcement</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Orientation to Career Center Services</i> - <i>Personal Branding</i> - <i>Resumes and Cover Letters</i> - <i>Tips for Video-Based Interviews</i> - <i>Virtual Networking Clubs</i> - <i>Virtual Employer Recruitments</i> <p><u>Partnerships</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Microsoft Office Team at the Walden Galleria taught monthly free computer and job search workshops for us, such as <i>Rock Your LinkedIn Profile</i> and <i>Resume Builder in Word</i>. • American Red Cross: taught monthly Stress Management and Relaxation Techniques virtually for us in May – August. • SUNY Erie Career Center Feedmore WNY Partnership: contactless service; by appointment (9/2020): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - North Campus Pantry 855 meals provided to constituents - City Campus Pantry 261 meals provided to constituents - South Campus Pantry 99 meals provided to constituents <p>Mr. Smith stated that BETC continued to push through COVID and seamlessly transitioned to online. We taught the staff how to use Zoom, so we could have face-to-face contact for counseling. The staff were equipped with remote access to emails, job referrals, case management systems, and video conferencing. BETC established a direct link on the City of Buffalo’s website for residents experiencing job loss, so that it would take them right to our Training Center’s website. Right now, hiring is up, as well as job announcements. We have approximately 270 placements that we can track. We are seeing a lot of interest in tech positions. M&T Bank, Lighthouse Technologies, and NERVVE Technologies are all looking for people with advance tech abilities. Our Entry Coordinator, who was out for an illness, has returned now; and Training is also back up. Mr. Smith concluded by letting everyone know that they allow up to a maximum of 12 constituents in their center at a time; however, on average, we see around 6 customers a day.</p> <p>Mr. Jones reminded the Board Members about the requirements to complete the Conflict of Interest Disclosure forms. He stated that if you have not done so, to please send yours in to Ms. Taggart.</p> <p>Mr. Jones announced that Carolyn Bright will be retiring. Ms. Bright has been on our board for a good number of years, and has brought to the Board tremendous knowledge and input. Ms. Bright indicated that tomorrow is her last day working for the Dept. of Labor after 42 years. She thanked everyone for the well wishes and said it has been a pleasure working with all of you. She said to continue to fight the fight, assisting the individuals get jobs and get the training they need to help them take care of their families. Ms. Bright thanked everyone so much. There was a round of applause in honor of Ms. Bright. Mr. Szymanski thanked Ms. Bright, for being our go to person during the COVID pandemic, from unemployment claims to any questions and help we needed. Thank you for all your long hard work hours..Ms. Bright said her staff is still working from home on unemployment from 7:30 am to 7:30 pm every</p>	<p>Mr. Martin made a motion to recognize Ms. Bright for her service and contribution, not only to our workforce system, but to our community as a whole. We wish her well in retirement. Seconded by Ms. McDuffie. All were in favor. Motion carried.</p>
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	<p>day except Sundays. She has never experienced anything like this in her years of work. The goal is to try and make everyone whole. Ms. Phyllis Damico is going to be her replacement contact. Ms. Bright wished everyone nothing but the best. Everyone wished her well in her retirement.</p> <p>Mr. Mestre thanked Ms. Bright, on behalf of the Mayor and the City of Buffalo for her service. Mr. Federick thanked Ms. Bright for her years of service to our community on behalf of the County Executive and Erie County. It has been a pleasure working with you.</p>	
<p>Adjournment</p>	<p>Mr. Szymanski motioned the meeting to adjourn at 10:10 a.m. in memory of Dr. Jerry Bright, Carolyn's husband who has passed away.</p>	<p>Mr. Jones made a motion to adjourn in memory of Dr. Jerry Bright. All were in favor. Motion carried.</p>