



## GOVERNOR'S WORKFORCE BOARD RHODE ISLAND

**BOARD MEETING MINUTES**  
**January 15, 2015**  
**RIDLT, Conference Room 73-1**  
**8:00 – 9:30 am**

### **ATTENDANCE**

#### **BOARD MEMBERS (\*DENOTES NOT PRESENT)**

Mario Bueno	John Gregory	Robert Nangle (S)
Timothy Byrne	Mike Grey*	George Nee
Channavy Chhay*	Juana Horton (S)	Jim Purcell
Robin Coia	Constance A. Howes, Chair	Bahjat Shariff
Monica Dzialo	Paul MacDonald	Martin Trueb
Scott Jensen (S)	Cheryl Merchant*	
Deborah Gist (S)*	Sharon Moylan (S)	

*(S) denotes State Workforce Investment Board (SWIB) only*

**GWB Staff:** Rick Brooks, Amelia Roberts, Sherri Carello, Robert Kalaskowski, Dan Brown

**DLT Staff:** Sean Fontes, Lisa D'Agostino, Sue Chomka, Hector Rivera, Mike Healey, Diane Gagne, David Tremblay

**Guests:** Janet Raymond, Providence Chamber of Commerce; Kathy Partington, Fred Santaniello, Bob Palumbo, NEIT; Cheryl Dacosta, Tech Collective; Jen Cornwell, RIMTA; Emmanuel Barada, Harry Hallgring, New England Boatworks; Ruth Gobeille, Polaris MEP; Holly Ashton, IYRS; Kathleen Kane, Saint Antoine; Robert Bromley, Senate Fiscal Office; Jill Holloway, PDC; Linda Kleineberg, Antone Cherry, VIBCO; Heather Hudson, Governor's Office; Josselyn Velasquez-Florian, Providence Housing Authority

### **Call to Order**

Chair Howes called the meeting to order at 8:01 am and welcomed everyone to the meeting.

### **Meeting Minutes**

Chair Howes asked if there was a motion to approve the minutes of the Governor's Workforce Board's meeting held on November 14, 2014.

**VOTE:** John Gregory moved to approve, seconded by Robin Coia. All were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

Per Chair Howes' request, Sean Fontes, Executive Counsel, asked for declarations on any of the voting matters before the board for conflicts of interest. He explained that board members should avoid the appearance of a conflict of interest according to the RI State Code of Ethics and Governor's Workforce Board By-Laws. He stated that board members who disclose a conflict should both abstain from the vote and recuse themselves from any discussion.

### **Chair's Comments**

Chair Howes presented a biography of Scott Jensen, the new Director of the RI Department of Labor and Training and asked him to speak about his vision for Rhode Island. S. Jensen noted the Governor's Workforce Board of Rhode Island is extremely engaged and has built a tremendous foundation that the Governor is excited to further build upon. He highlighted the focus on developing efforts to support a

demand-driven approach to workforce development. S. Jensen discussed the importance of fostering and continuing partnerships with colleges, non-profits, etc. to connect employers who are hiring, with people looking for jobs. Chair Howes highlighted agenda items to be presented later in the meeting including the Biennial Plan, a vote on JDF investments, and an update on the Comprehensive System Improvement Plan. She discussed the Board's focus on evaluating what is working to get people working; a theme that encompasses the assessment and evaluation of a number of programs including Industry Partnerships and Innovative Partnerships. Chair Howes referred to the FY14 Annual Report and commended those who helped compile the information. She noted, the FY14 report is the first report that includes both the State Workforce Investment Office and Governor's Workforce Board information and outcomes.

### **Executive Director's Report**

Chair Howes asked Rick Brooks to provide an update on GWB programs, policy, planning, and partnerships. R. Brooks reported a full quarterly report of activity through December 31, 2014 will be presented at the February Board meeting. He noted the GWB currently has 130 contracts with Rhode Island businesses through both the Incumbent Annual and Express Training Grant Program and 228 individuals and 91 businesses are currently participating in the Work Immersion Program. R. Brooks stated six of the Industry Partnership sectors will be providing training over the next six months in areas such as: production technician training, launch operator training for unemployed Rhode Islanders, and a hospitality training academy for incarcerated adults. He reported the GWB has received technical assistance support from the RhodeMap RI team that has created an opportunity for a third-party evaluation of the Innovative Partnership grantees. R. Brooks stated a complete report of the findings will be available next month. R. Brooks noted over the next couple of months, the GWB will begin to prepare the next round of RFPs for Incumbent Worker Training Grants, Innovative Partnerships, and possibly other initiatives.

Regarding policy and planning, the GWB has been working with the Governor's transition team and new administration to bring them up to speed on ways the GWB can support the goals of the new administration. R. Brooks indicated over the next couple of months, staff will focus on the transition of the Workforce Innovation Act to the Workforce Innovation and Opportunities Act which will involve significant reorganization of how workforce development services are planned and delivered throughout the state. He reported the GWB has been working closely with RIPEC and Career and Technical School directors to look at better ways to align with Rhode Island businesses and the needs of students in CTE programs. R. Brooks noted the GWB has been working with Commerce RI on an industry diversification project, which is funded by the Department of Defense's Office of Economic Adjustment that will aim to assist defense related businesses to prepare and respond to anticipated reductions in defense contracts over the coming years.

New partnerships include a meeting with Serve Rhode Island who are looking to expand their AmeriCorps program to support at-risk high school students in Pawtucket, a meeting with representatives from DCYF and DOC to discuss ways the workforce system can better support the needs of their clients, and involvement in the Department of Administration's Community Development Block Grant Program to review proposals from the City of Newport and the Nursery and Landscaping Associations to respond to disaster relief needs and workforce training opportunities around lean infrastructure.

### **Committee Chair Reports**

#### *Strategic Investments and Evaluation Committee*

In Mike Grey's absence, Chair Howes provided an overview of the items discussed at the December and January Strategic Investment and Evaluation Committee meetings. Chair Howes noted the committee has recently been reviewing the expenditures and outcomes of a specific program at each of the monthly meetings. The committee reviewed the Work Immersion Program at the December meeting and the Annual Incumbent Worker Training grants at the January meeting. Chair Howes noted the committee anticipates reviewing a different program at each of the monthly meetings going forward. She indicated the committee recommended allocating \$224,186 to fund additional Incumbent Worker Training grants for businesses that were not funded in the last round of grants due to an insufficiency in available funding. Chair Howes noted at the last three meetings, the committee has been discussing how to allocate \$1.4

million in additional funds made available at the end of the legislative session from the elimination of the indirect cost recovery. She asked Rick Brooks to review the consent agenda items and financial worksheet the Strategic Investments and Evaluation committee discussed at the last meeting. R. Brooks reviewed the financial statement through November 30, 2014, highlighting the \$1,394,848 in unallocated funds and an additional \$1,108,120 in projected carry-in funds for a total of \$2.5 million in unallocated and projected deobligated funds to be reallocated by the Board in FY2015 and FY2016. He further discussed the FY16 available funds and expenditures, and recommendations from the Strategic Investments and Evaluation Committee on where to reallocate the FY15 carry-in for both FY15 and FY16 over the next 18 months. R. Brooks stated, for the remainder of FY15, the SIC Committee is recommending to allocate \$100,000 for Incumbent Worker Training Grants and \$400,000 for the Work Immersion Program, in anticipation of the demand exceeding the supply of existing General Revenue funds.

He highlighted additional allocations for FY16 including \$250,000 for Capacity Building which will fund the CSIP, sector research, the annual meeting, Board Retreat, and employer engagement campaign. The Strategic Investments and Evaluation Committee recommended an additional \$500,000 for Youth Strategies to offset the likely loss of TANF funds, \$800,000 to fund new Youth initiatives, and \$400,000 for Work Immersion to cover the projected shortfall in General Revenue funds in FY16. Director Jensen noted the Governor is very interested in developing a program that would compliment many of the current initiatives of the Governor's Workforce Board and asked if there is time to utilize the unallocated funds to create this new program. R. Brooks noted that the recommendations presented in the financial worksheet are placeholders until the funds are actually contracted. Chair Howes noted a balance of \$586,145 could be utilized as well. R. Brooks stated he and R. Kalaskowski previously met with Heather Hudson and Kevin Gallagher and had a similar conversation about other opportunities to create a new innovative program in conjunction with the Governor's Office. J. Purcell asked if the Consent Agenda vote needs to be tabled. Chair Howes recommended taking a vote, noting many of the line items are flexible and are likely to be in alignment with the Governor's focus on workforce development. George Nee inquired about allocations for the non-trade apprenticeship program and possible using surplus funds if the General Assembly does not allocate funds for that program in FY16. Director Jensen discussed the opportunity of other funding sources such as the USDOL Apprenticeship Grant which focuses on registered non-traditional areas. George Nee recommended partnering with Commerce RI for the sector research to eliminate any overlapping efforts. J. Gregory discussed the need to increase the focus on Career and Technical Education and encouraged the Board to support efforts that strengthen linkages between businesses and Career and Technical schools. The Board further discussed the importance of supporting Career and Technical Education and developing possible initiatives to leverage CTE schools as resources for other programs.

#### *Consent Agenda*

Chair Howes asked if there was a motion to approve a total of \$224,186 to fund additional Incumbent Worker Training Grant companies for a 6-month grant period ending June 30, 2015 and the recommended allocations of unobligated FY15 JDF funds and anticipated FY2016 JDF revenue.

**VOTE:** George Nee moved to approve, seconded by John Gregory. All were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

Chair Howes announced, effective February 1, 2015, the Secretary of Commerce will serve as the Vice Chair of the Governor's Workforce Board. She thanked Robin Coia for her service as the current Vice Chair of the GWB.

#### *Career Pathways Advisory Committee*

Chair Howes asked Monica Dzialo, Chair of the Career Pathways Advisory Committee, to provide an overview of the past committee meetings. M. Dzialo distributed a workplan of priorities the committee has been developing and is currently working on to establish roles and responsibilities of aligned partners. The committee will be attending a workshop at the end of the month to discuss articulation agreements and has been developing a career pathways outline mirroring the design of the state's highway system.

### *Adult Education and Literacy Committee*

Chair Howes asked Robert Nangle to provide an overview of the Adult Education and Literacy Committee. R. Nangle noted Philip Less presented changes and updates to the Workforce Innovation and Opportunities Act, GED testing waivers, and demographics of current Adult Education participants. R. Nangle presented employment data, education functioning level information, and age, race, and ethnicity data for current adult learners.

### *Employer Committee*

Martin Trueb discussed the feedback from the December Employer Advisory Group meeting which focused on diversity in the workplace. He noted at the next Employer Committee meeting, the discussion will focus on themes for the Employer Advisory group for the year and ways to generate renewed interest within the business community. M. Trueb raised the issue of the disconnection between employers and job seekers and how to elicit employer feedback and concerns to continue the theme of connecting employers who are hiring with individuals looking for employment.

### *Executive Committee*

Chair Howes reported at the last meeting, the Executive Committee received an update on the Workforce Innovation and Opportunities Act and how the changes will affect the role of the Governor's Workforce Board, discussed the Comprehensive System Improvement Plan, and review the draft GWB By-Laws. Chair Howes asked if there was a motion to approve the revised GWB By-Laws as previously distributed to the Board members.

**VOTE:** George Nee moved to approve, seconded by John Gregory. All were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

### **Comprehensive System Improvement Plan**

Chair Howes asked Robert Kalaskowski to provide an overview of the CSIP and the progress of the development of the plan. R. Kalaskowski presented the statutory language pertaining to the CSIP and feedback from a wide range of partners on areas of focus, analysis, and themes. He provided a summary of the feedback categories including: Workforce System Design, Integrated Intake System, Responsive Employer Services, Data/Performance Analysis, and Serving Target Populations. R. Kalaskowski noted the feedback he received has been used to develop the RFP that is currently being reviewed by the GWB staff and has been distributed to the Governor's staff. He highlighted the Rhode Island Foundation has expressed interest to help fund a portion of the study and it is anticipated that the complete RFP will be released by early February. G. Nee asked if the plan is required to be produced more than once. R. Kalaskowski noted the plan is only required to be produced this year as part of the Unified Workforce Development Expenditure and Program Report.

### **Biennial Plan Scorecard**

R. Kalaskowski noted the Board is still operating under the FY14-FY15 Biennial Employment and Training Plan. Referring to the scorecard, R. Kalaskowski reviewed the data scorecard reflective of the Priorities set forth in the FY14-FY15 plan. He noted the FY14 year-to-date totals are not measured against any targets but will be used as baselines for the FY16-FY17 figures. R. Kalaskowski noted the staff will reconvene the Biennial Plan Advisory Group to determine what should be measured and establish feasible goals. He added the Office of Management and Budget has offered technical assistance to help develop a system to accurately measure the progress and success of the Biennial Plan Priorities. R. Kalaskowski demonstrated how a user-friendly web-based reporting system will be utilized to provide the Board with quarterly data on the progress of each priority. Referring to the scorecard, J. Purcell recommended adding the RI Employment Participation Rate.

### **Innovative Partnership Presentations**

#### *Rhode Island Marine Trades Association*

Chair Howes asked representatives from the Rhode Island Marine Trades Association Pre-Apprenticeship Training Program to provide and an overview and discuss highlights of the program. Jen

Cornwell, RIMTA Director of Programs, highlighted the various employer partners involved in the program and shared some of the major outcomes of the program from June 2014 – present. She noted a total of 29 students have been trained and have graduated from the program and 92% of those graduates have been placed in jobs. Currently, RIMTA is working with Career and Technical Schools such as the Chariho Area Career and Tech Center and Warwick Area Career and Tech Center to develop articulation agreements. Harry Hallgring from New England Boatworks and Emmanuel Barrada, a program graduate, discussed their experience working with RIMTA and how the program has prepared Emmanuel for a career at New England Boatworks.

*New England Institute of Technology (SAMI)*

Chair Howes asked representatives from the NEIT to provide an overview and discuss highlights of the program. Fred Santaniello discussed the leveraged resources, program design, and employer partners of the program. He reviewed the application requirements and outcomes of the recent cohort. Linda Ikeinberg, marketing and Business Strategist for VIBCO, and Antone Cherry, a recent SAMI participant, discussed their experience working with New England Tech, noting how the program has changed Antone's life and has provided a career that will help him to support his family.

**Adjournment**

With no further business, Chair Howes asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting.

**VOTE:** George Nee moved to adjourn, seconded by Sharon Moylan. All were in favor, the motion passed unanimously

The meeting adjourned at 9:31 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Amelia-Anne Roberts