



## GOVERNOR'S WORKFORCE BOARD RHODE ISLAND

### BOARD MEETING MINUTES November 19, 2015 Tri-Town Community Center 33 Maple Avenue, North Providence, RI 8:00 – 9:30 am

#### ATTENDANCE

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

Suzanna Alba\*, Mario Bueno\*, Timothy Byrne\*, Channavy Chhay, Robin Coia, Monica Dzialo, Constance A. Howes, *Chair\**, John Gregory\*, Mike Grey, Stefan Pryor, *Vice Chair*, Scott Jensen, Steve Kitchin, Paul MacDonald, Cheryl Merchant, George Nee, Janet Raymond, Nina Pande, Susan Rittscher\*, Bahjat Shariff, Martin Trueb, Ken Wagner\*

**GWB Staff:** Rick Brooks, David Tremblay, Amelia Roberts, Sherri Carello, Dan Brown,

**DLT Staff:** Joseph Agresti, Sue Chomka, Diane Gagne and Robert Kalaskowski, Mary Ellen McQueeney-Lally, Mallory McMahon, Michael Martins, Nancy Olson, Sarah Blusiewicz.

**Guests:** Alexis Stern, UWRI, Malcolm Baxter, BIS; Ruth Gobeille, Polaris MEP; Philip Less, RIDE; Kathleen Kane, St Antione HCTC; Robert Ricci, Providence Cranston; Katuska Perez, Senate Policy Office; Jill Holloway, PDC; Richard Palmiere; Doug Tingle, OPC; Cheryl DeCosta, Tech Collective; Karen Bradbury, Senator Whitehouse office; Stephen Osborn, RIDE; Linda Kane, Amos House; Anthony Thigpen, Amos House; Michelle Pugh, Amos House; Tim Harrigan, Providence Plan

#### Call to Order

Vice Chair Stefan Pryor called the meeting to order at 8:12 a.m. and welcomed everyone to the meeting.

#### Meeting Minutes

Vice Chair Stefan Pryor asked if there was a motion to approve the minutes from September 2015 and October 2015 Governor's Workforce Board meetings.

**VOTE:** Paul MacDonald moved to approve, seconded by Cheryl Merchant. All were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

#### Welcome and Presentation – North Providence Youth Center

Vice Chair Stefan Pryor asked Joseph DeSantis, CEO from Tri-Town Community Action Agency to provide an overview of the Center. Joseph stated he has been with Tri-Town since 1973, and it has become a \$20 Million dollar organization. He noted the location of the Center was previously the Providence Boys Club. Tri-Town is committed to providing disadvantaged individuals and families with quality, comprehensive services designed to meet their individual needs. Joseph noted that he and the staff at Tri Town Community Action understand that no one chooses to live in poverty. They treat every client with dignity and respect they deserve, as they strive to improve the lives of their children and families. Each year Tri-Town provides a helping hand to over 15,000 individuals across Rhode Island with programs funded through federal, state and local grants. He noted that they blend the public funds they received with numerous donations from private organizations to ensure that those scarce public dollars are leveraged to their maximum potential and are available to do the most good for the most number of people. Joseph mentioned the various services that they offer to meet the full spectrum of individual and family needs from prenatal parents to elderly and disabled adults. Their services include primary health

and dental care, behavioral health and substance abuse prevention, education and employment, youth and family development, housing and energy assistance, nutrition counseling, emergency services, financial literacy, tax assistance and crisis management. They currently run the YouthLinks program in the South County area. Joseph noted YouthLinks is a partnership of Tri-Town and South County Community Action Agencies and is funded by the Workforce Partnership of Greater Rhode Island. YouthLinks is a program linking youth between the ages of 14 and 24 with employers, schools, colleges, technical schools, trade associations and other community based organizations. He stated that employers look to Youth Links for reliable young workers with social and job skills needed to be dependable and successful on the job. They provide training, job coaching, screening and placement services to fill the need for quality, young workers. Joseph thanked the Governor's Workforce Board for its support.

### **Vice Chair's Comments**

Vice Chair Stefan Pryor noted he was pleased with the Real Jobs RI program and its partnership with CommerceRI. Vice Chair Pryor mentioned several new CommerceRI tax credit and incentive programs that will be used to support business development, innovation, expansion, and job creation. Vice Chair Pryor mentioned the new Industry Cluster Grant program, which will be coordinated with Real Jobs RI, but will support the needs of industry sectors beyond workforce issues. Vice Chair Pryor thanked Director Jensen for his assistance and support of the Industry Cluster grant program.

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

Vice Chair Stefan Pryor asked Executive Director Rick Brooks to provide an update on GWB programs. Rick highlighted the GWB Board Retreat. He noted that Governor Raimondo set the tone for the Retreat by emphasizing the trail blazing role that the GWB has played in developing sector strategies through its Industry Partnerships, and calling for taking this effort to scale through Real Jobs RI, which will soon announce its grant awards. Rick mentioned he is working closely with Director Jensen to discuss how the GWB can best support Real Jobs RI. Rick discussed the CSIP timeline. Rick noted that the GWB and Public Works (CSIP consultants) have received many recommendations for the CSIP. The GWB has reached out to the Governor's office and the General Assembly to extend the deadline for submitting the CSIP until early January 2016. Janet Raymond raised two concerns regarding the recommendation related to the local WIB's, and asked that the final draft of the CSIP be shared with GWB Board members before it is submitted. Rick noted that the CSIP is laying an important foundation for the WIOA State plan, which must be submitted to the US Department of Labor in March. Rick highlighted the GWB Program Updates. He noted that the GWB launched the (Rolling) Incumbent Worker Training Grants this year, which can be requested and awarded at any time. In the first quarter of FY2016, 62 companies were funded and \$725,323 was awarded for IWTGs. Rick noted the RI Work Immersion Program has continued to have a high rate of RI employers taking advantage of the subsidized temporary work experiences offered. GWB Workforce Innovation Grants have 148 enrolled, 33 NCRC credentials, 61 Work experiences, and 16 Job placements. Tim Byrne asked, regarding Adult Education, why there were no GEDs obtained, while 454 Adult learners were served. Rick stated this was only the first quarter, and more positive outcomes would be expected in the next quarter. Rick noted the collaboration with the RI Office of the Post-Secondary Commissioner office, GWB organized and implemented a full-day Retreat for faculty and staff of CCRI on October 23, 2015. The purpose for the Retreat was to prepare CCRI faculty and staff for developing Career Pathways design and implementation. Jobs for the Future (JFF) and the Council for Adult Experimental Learning (CAEL) facilitated the training with GWB Career Pathways Manager Kristen McKenna. Over 50 CCRI staff attended as well as some faculty from RI College and the University of RI, employer organization Stepping UP, and the RIDE RI Adult Education Professional Development Center. The two main focuses of the Retreat were building stackable credentials to career pathways and employer engagement. Rick noted that specific topics covered were prior learning assessment (PLA), career development, counseling, career pathways best practices, and how supply side educational providers can connect with demand side employers. The GWB and OPC will work together to help CCRI continue this momentum and progress to the next steps of implementing a career pathways system.

## **Committee Chair Reports**

### *Youth Development*

Vice Chair Pryor asked Chair Coia to provide an update on Youth Development. Chair Coia noted the GWB has been working with the two local Workforce Boards to develop relationships between the youth centers and the Career and Technical schools, particularly after hours so out-of-school youth who are not working and not attending school can attain skills training, experiential learning, and connections to jobs. Chair Coia noted 1,059 youth were served this past summer, 278 through Workforce Solutions and 781 by Workforce Partnership of Greater RI. Chair Coia noted the workforce system's disconnect with youth ages 17-24 years old. She would like to see these out-of-school, out-of-work youth be served by the Youth Centers and be trained for a trade with a job at the end. Chair Coia would also like to connect the Youth Centers to the Real Jobs RI program.

### *Strategic Investments and Evaluation Committee*

Vice Chair Pryor asked Chair Grey to provide an update for the Strategic Investments and Evaluation Committee. Chair Grey highlighted the upcoming issues that the Committee will spend some time on over the next few months, including the next fiscal year budget, current GWB grant programs, new directions for the GWB, alignment with Real Jobs RI, and program evaluation and accountability. He noted that it will be a very interesting few months.

### *Career Pathways Advisory Committee*

Vice Chair Pryor asked Monica Dzialo to provide an update from the Career Pathways Advisory Committee. Chair Dzialo noted the committee last met on October 19, 2015. The Career Pathways committee is working with Heather Hudson from the Governor's office on how to develop metrics. Vanessa Cooley RIDE did a presentation on the Career Technical Education system in the state. Jill Holloway provided a presentation on the RI Resource Hub. The Next CPAC meeting will be held on December 7, 2016.

### *Adult Education & Literacy Committee*

Vice Chair Pryor asked Rick Brooks to provide an update on behalf of Chair Susan Rittscher. Rick noted the Adult Education Committee last meeting was on September 30, 2016. Rick reported that the Committee reviewed the United Way Adult Education report, and also reviewed FY15 adult ed outcomes, and GED data. The next scheduled will be on December 15, 2015.

### *Employer Committee*

Vice Chair Pryor asked Martin Trueb to provide an update. Martin noted there have been no committee meetings, and that the December 4, 2015 Employer Advisory Group meeting will be rescheduled. Martin mentioned the importance of the Employer Committee and expressed a desire to review the focus, outreach, and role of the Employer Committee at the December meeting.

## **Workforce Innovation Grant Presentation: Amos House Culinary Education Program**

Vice Chair Pryor asked Michelle Pugh, Director of Amos House Culinary Education to update the Board. Michelle introduced Anthony Thigpen, Recent ACE Graduate and Linda Kane, Food Business Coordinator, for More than a Meal Catering. Michelle noted this was a 16-week training program. They currently have 18 active internships at the site. The Amos house provides training programs such as financial readiness, work readiness, and work experience in full-service catering. Anthony joined the Amos House Culinary Education Program because of his love for cooking, and he has three friends currently in the program. Anthony completed the program and is now currently employed by the Salvation Army as Food Safety Manager. Michelle noted that Amos House is relocating to a new building in March 2016. This will allow them to serve more people in the community and provide more services. Chair Grey asked how Amos House handles barriers, such as transportation issues, criminal records, and social skills. Michelle noted they identify and support employers that will accept and work with their population. They don't turn anyone away, and work very hard to get clients into the right program that best fits them.

### **Real Jobs RI**

Vice Chair Pryor asked Director Scott Jensen to provide an update on Real Jobs RI. Scott mentioned the Channel 12, "Program aims to close skills gap. Get RI Islanders back to work" piece. Scott noted there are barriers and challenges going forward. He noted the employment rate is going in the right direction in RI. Scott noted we need new talent, a need to do a much better job. The Real Jobs RI grant announcement will be on Monday November 23, 2015. They received lots of excellent proposals. Scott noted that the program will rely on data to see what is working. The Real Jobs RI program is trying to connect all workforce services. Scott noted the importance of the Comprehensive System Improvement Plan (CSIP) and how it will better serve job seekers and businesses in RI. He stated that the CSIP and WIOA will give us a vision and specific plans to improve workforce development services. Scott introduced Mallory McMahon and Sarah Blusiewicz from his Real Jobs RI team. Scott noted Sue Chomka will also be working with Real Jobs RI team, regarding the Network RI One stops and business services to evaluate and improve services. Janet Raymond noted she would like to see more information about Real Jobs get to the local level in the City of Providence.

### **Adjournment**

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

**VOTE:** Scott Jensen moved to approve, seconded by Tim Bryne. All were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 9:25 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Dan Brown