

**GOVERNOR'S WORKFORCE BOARD-RI  
STRATEGIC INVESTMENTS COMMITTEE MEETING  
APRIL 25, 2006**

**MINUTES**

Members Present: Joseph MarcAurele, Armeather Gibbs, William McGowan, Brandon Melton, Lorna Ricci, Martin Trueb

Members Absent: George Nee, Deborah Wilson

Staff Present: Mike Koback, Mavis McGetrick, Lori DelRossi, John O'Hare, Nancy Olson, Dottie Miller, Marsha McDowell

Others Present: Paul Harden, Rick Reed/EDC

With a quorum present, Chair J. MarcAurele called the meeting to order at 11:10 AM.

A motion was entered to approve the Strategic Investments Committee Meeting Minutes of March 16, 2006.

**VOTE:** M. Trueb moved to approve, seconded by W. McGowan. All approved.

Chair MarcAurele introduced the funding request from the Economic Development Corporation from Henry Birks and Sons US, Inc. which is a high end jewelry manufacturer. The company plans on hiring 10 employees at a pay rate of \$12-\$13 an hour. Training will be done primarily at the RI facility with some training at Corporate Headquarters in Montreal, Canada and at Mayors Jewelers in Tamarac, Florida. Their grant request is for \$50,000. EDC staff recommendation is for \$30,000.

A motion was entered to approve funding at \$30,000 as recommended by staff.

**VOTE:** L. Ricci moved to approve, seconded by Armeather Gibbs. All approved.

The next voting agenda item was for the Workforce Improvement Grant Program Round I Proposals. 142 proposals were received with 56 proposals being recommended for funding in the amount of \$1,118,112. Chair MarcAurele directed the committee's attention to the list of companies that included both recommended and non-recommended for funding. He noted that 44 of the companies are high wage industries and 25 of the companies are new applicants. Proposals that scored 80 points or more were recommended for funding. M. Koback indicated that four companies included on the recommended had some administrative or legal issues which had to be cleared up before they could be funded and therefore would be funded conditional upon resolution. They were: Bradford Soap Works, Gen Management, Gem Mechanical Services, and Justice For All, LLP.

A motion was entered to approve the 56 companies recommended for funding in the amount of \$1,118,112.

**VOTE:** W. McGowan moved to approve, seconded by A. Gibbs. All approved, except for M. Trueb who recused.

Committee members were reminded that the Round 2 Request for Proposals was issued April 4, 2006 with the proposal due date of May 16, 2006.

Chair MarcAurele introduced the We-Can-2 Summer Program and described the Kick Off Breakfast, attended by the Governor noting the excellent presentation given by Lifespan. B. Melton explained that the We-Can-2 Summer Youth Employment is for youth ages 14-15 with the focus on activities that prepare youth for future employment opportunities. The youth program activity must be a minimum of 20 hours per week, and take place between a seven-week period commencing July 10 and ending no later than August 25, 2006. Applicants were encouraged to partner with other youth serving agencies. Out of the 34 proposals received 11 proposals that scored 85 points or above have been recommended for funding for a total of \$601,091.50. Approximately 327 youth will be served.

A motion was entered to fund the 11 organizations for the We-Can-2 Summer Youth Employment Program in the amount of \$601,091.50.

**VOTE:** B. Melton moved to approve, seconded by W. McGowan. All approved.

The Industry Sector Partnership Grants was the next agenda item to be discussed. M. Koback explained that the purpose of the Industry Sector Partnerships is to use these as a catalyst to drive workforce development initiatives. A Request For Proposal was prepared by the State Workforce Investment Office and offered publicly by the Division of State Purchasing. State Purchasing received four proposals in response to the RFP; two in the Health Care sector and one each from the Advanced Manufacturing and Technology sectors. The proposals are now in the review process to ensure compliance with the RFP and purchasing guidelines.

A second solicitation will be issued in May 2006 with priority on other high growth sectors of our economy including Financial Services, Hospitality, Biotechnology and Construction.

A motion was entered that the GWBRI award the \$850,000 currently allocated under the "Partnerships" funding category to the Department of Labor and Training, in order to complete the current procurement and facilitate the award of contracts to Industry Partnerships developed as a result of the current and pending solicitations.

**VOTE:** M. Trueb moved to approve, seconded by Lorna Ricci. All approved.

The last item on the agenda to be discussed was the Rhode Island Economic Development Corporation Administrative Overhead request of \$100,000 retroactive to July 2005. Chair MarcAurele reported that after discussion with legal counsel and

accounting departments, the only amount of funds that could be approved today would be \$16,666 to cover the months of May and June in view of the fact that retroactive awards are not permissible. He added that the issue has to do with the timing of the funding request and the formation of the Governor's Workforce Board-RI.

R. Reed's comment was that the lack of these funds would negatively impact the Economic Development Corporation's 2006 cash flow position and budget.

A motion was entered to fund the Economic Development Corporation Administrative Overhead in the amount of \$16,666 for months of May and June of 2006.

**VOTE:** W. McGowan moved to approve, seconded by B. Melton. All approved.

The meeting adjourned at 12:00 Noon.

Respectfully submitted,

Marsha McDowell