

Governor's Workforce Board RI
Rhode Island Employment Security Advisory Council (ESAC)
December 9, 2009

Meeting Minutes

Committee Members present: Roland Benjamin, William McGowan, Sandra Powell, Nancy Roderick, The Honorable Arthur J. Corvese

Committee Members absent: The Honorable Paul W. Fogarty, J. Michael Saul, Paul MacDonald

Others Present: Phil D'Ambra, Raymond Filippone, Robert Langlais, Janet Raymond, Paul Harden, Russ Dannecker, Michael Hayes, Diane Gagne, Robert C. Bromley, David Tremblay, Lisa D'Agostino, Neil Downing

Call to Order

Chair McGowan called the meeting to order at 4:05 p.m. and welcomed everyone to the meeting. He mentioned that this meeting is being held at the State House in order to accommodate the schedules of the council members in the legislature. Chair McGowan emphasized the importance of the work of the ESAC and welcomed Representative Corvese.

Representative Corvese inquired if a member of the House Finance Committee participated in the ESAC and about the role of the Council.

Director Powell responded that the Council's membership is prescribed by law to include Labor Committee chairs and reported that she has briefed Michael O'Keefe and Senate President Teresa Paiva-Weed of the work of the Council.

Minutes of ESAC meeting

Chair McGowan asked for a review of the meeting minutes of the 11/24/09 ESAC. He asked for a motion to approve the meeting minutes.

Vote: R. Benjamin motioned to approve the minutes of the 11/24/09 ESAC meeting as presented. N. Roderick seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous; the motion passed.

UI Modernization Options

Ray Filippone provided a review of the UI Modernization incentive payments noting that the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) of 2009 authorized a special transfer of \$7 billion to states if certain conditions were met. He indicated that the money would come from the Federal Unemployment Account and that RI could be eligible for up to \$23.5 million. R. Filippone noted the distribution and eligibility requirements for incentive payments and reviewed the provisions needed for RI to qualify. (These items are noted in the booklet previously distributed to Council members at the October 20, 2009 meeting. The Booklet is entitled: ESAC UI Modernization Incentive Payments).

Interest Payment Options

Ray Filippone and Robert Langlais provided an overview of the Federal UI Title XII Loans, balances of these loans and the interest payment options available. It was noted that RI's first interest payment is due on September 30, 2011 and that the interest due is estimated at \$9-\$10 million. It was noted that interest repayment options include a new interest assessment tax, state general revenues, other non-federal sources or a combination of these. It was also noted legislation needs to be passed in the General Assembly session to address the source of interest payments.

Representative Corvese asked if the RI Congressional delegation was actively aware of these issues. R. Filippone indicated that the Department of Labor and Training (DLT) has a strong relationship with Senator Reed's Office and that he is kept well informed.

Recommendations for Legislation

Chair McGowan asked for any questions or comments regarding recommendations for legislation. Representative Corvese asked if there were any commonalities or specific areas from the last 4 meetings that the Council wants addressed by legislation, specifically those items that have no controversy or need further analysis.

Chair McGowan proposed that the Council needs to become more familiar with the issues before making any recommendations for legislation.

Other Business

Director Powell reported on the impact of recently passed legislation for the extension of federal Unemployment Insurance benefits and its impact on DLT Call Center activity.

Adjournment

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

VOTE: S. Powell moved to approve. N. Roderick seconded the motion.
The vote was unanimous, the motion passed.

The meeting adjourned at 5:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Maureen Mooney