

Governor's Workforce Board
Strategic Investments and Evaluation Committee Meeting
October 1, 2013

Meeting Minutes

Committee Members Present: Mike Grey, Chair, Constance Howes, Martin Trueb, George Nee
Committee Members Absent: Mario Bueno
GWB Board Members Present: Robin Coia, Charles Fogarty
GWB Staff Present: Rick Brooks, Elizabeth Jardine, Dan Brown, Sherri Carello, Amelia Roberts, Hillary Feeney
DLT Staff Present: Valentino Lombardi, Sue Chomka, Carlos Ribiero
Others Present: Malcolm Baxter, BIS; Philip Less, RIDE; Cheryl Dacosta, Tech Collective; Jill Holloway, PDC; Kathy Therieau; RIEDC

Call to Order

Chair Grey called the meeting to order at 8:32 a.m. and welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Minutes

Chair Grey asked for a review of the meeting minutes of the September 3, 2013 Strategic Investments & Evaluation Committee meeting. Chair Grey asked if there was a motion to approve the meeting minutes.

VOTE: M. Trueb moved to approve, seconded by C. Howes. All were in favor, the motion passed.

Discussion of Voting Guidelines on Individual Contracts by the Strategic Investments & Evaluation Committee

Chair Grey asked Rick Brooks to discuss the proposed guidelines for determining expenditures that should be brought to the Strategic Investments & Evaluation Committee (SIC) and/or the full Board for a vote. R. Brooks referred to the handout and reviewed the updated guidelines recommended by the committee at the September 3, 2013 meeting.

C. Howes asked for examples of the competitive expenditures. Chair Grey referred to the September 3rd meeting minutes and gave examples such as: Annual Incumbent Worker Training grants, Innovative Partnership grants, and Industry Partnership Grants. G. Nee inquired about Industry Partnership Grants of less than \$100,000. Chair Grey asked if there was a motion to approve the Strategic Investments and Evaluation Committee voting guidelines on investments.

VOTE: C. Howes moved to approve, seconded by G. Nee. All were in favor, the motion passed.

Adult Education Funding Request: Shift of Funding to Support Professional Development Center

Chair Grey asked Elizabeth Jardine to summarize the funding request to support the Professional Development Center (PDC). E. Jardine referred to the handout and discussed the shift of funding. She noted that due to the decrease in federal allocations and general revenue funds, RIDE does not have sufficient funds to fully support the PDC. E. Jardine stated that RIDE has allocated \$100,000 of federal leadership funds to support the PDC and is requesting to use \$200,000 in Job Development Funds to fully fund the center. She noted that the Adult Education Committee approved the allocation of funds subject to the approval from the Strategic Investments and Evaluation Committee

and full board. M. Trueb inquired about the type of measures that are in place to evaluate the PDC. J. Holloway of the PDC explained that over the years, the PDC has been developing a policy to evaluate the effectiveness of the center. Dr. Philip Less reported that RIDE and the DLT have been awarded a WIA Incentive Grant in the amount of \$668,000 as a result of students meeting and exceeding all performance measure goals. G. Nee asked if the incentive grant could be used to fund the PDC, and if not, would the shift in funds take money away from other programs. C. Fogarty explained that spending plan for the incentive grant is already in place. Dr. Less added that funds will be used to support technology infrastructure and digital literacy. C. Howes noted the overwhelming frustration of adults who want to learn but are unable to find classes. Chair Grey asked if there was a motion to approve the funding request to support the Professional Development Center.

VOTE: C. Howes moved to approve the request to shift \$200,000 of Job Development Funds to support the Professional Development Center. G. Nee seconded the motion. All were in favor, the motion passed.

Export Training

Chair Grey asked Dan Brown to provide an update on the Export Management Training contract. D. Brown discussed the background information of the program, highlighting the allocated funds and contract extensions. He noted that the Governor's Workforce Board has funded the program since its inception in 1997. D. Brown stated that \$47,000 of the \$80,000 allocated by the Board has been spent to date. He added that the GWB has approved an extension for the remaining \$33,000 through December 31, 2013. D. Brown noted that the Economic Development Corporation (EDC) will start a new contract effective January 1, 2014 through June 30, 2014, which will align with the Incumbent Worker Training Grant Program. E. Jardine discussed the export management training in more detail, further explaining the funding expenditures and additional allocations for FY2012 – FY2014. She stated that contract extension will allow for the remaining \$36,098 to be spent. R. Brooks explained that due to the anticipated carry-over, the Board only allocated \$40,000 for FY14. K. Therieau mentioned some of the training funded by the program, including compliance training, CE certification, and foreign product standards and regulations training. C. Howes noted the concern with utilizing all of the allocated funds. She recommended revisiting the discussion in January. The committee agreed to further discuss the export training allocations in January 2014.

Bryant University Chafee Center Proposal

Chair Grey asked Rick Brooks to report on the Bryant University Chafee Center for International Business Proposal. R. Brooks referred to the proposal handout and stated the unsolicited funding request was for the Governor's Workforce Board to directly fund the Chafee Center to provide training programs to eligible RI businesses. He noted that the funds would be administered directly by the Chafee Center for the sole purpose of export training. R. Brooks noted that a meeting was held with Bryant to discuss the proposal. He recommended that the committee decline the proposal, stating that the GWB is currently funding export training through the RIEDC and it would be inconsistent with the GWB funding procedures to support a specific training provider. The committee agreed with R. Brooks' recommendation. G. Nee mentioned that companies who are seeking funding for training can also apply for Express Grants.

Incumbent Worker Training

Express Grants

Chair Grey asked S. Carello to provide an update on the Express Grants. S. Carello noted a change in the program: companies can now apply more than once for up to \$5,000. She referred to the spreadsheet of September 2013 grant awards and noted that all of the companies chose to forgo the youth bonus funding incentive. S. Carello mentioned 10 applications were submitted for the month of October and will be reviewed by the GWB staff for approval. Chair Grey recommended adding the training providers to the spreadsheet. S. Carello noted that she will add that information to review at

the next committee meeting. C. Howes inquired about the marketing strategy. S. Carello stated that post cards will be sent to notify businesses of the opportunity. She also explained that an email was sent out highlighting the new parameters. R. Brooks added that the postcards will be sent to 14,000 businesses and should be ready to send out by October 20th.

New RFP for Incumbent Worker Training Grants

Chair Grey asked R. Brooks to discuss the option of a new RFP for Incumbent Worker Training Grants. R. Brooks stated that the Board allocated \$1,200,000 for the annual Incumbent Worker Training Program. He noted of the 63 businesses that applied, a total \$800,000 in grants were awarded to 48 businesses, which left a balance of \$400,000. R. Brooks stated that \$250,000 of allocated funds were de-obligated, leaving a total of \$650,000 in unobligated Incumbent Worker Training Grant funds. He recommended the options of shifting the surplus of funds to other programs or submitting another RFP for a second round of grants. The committee discussed the market demand and whether a new RFP would make sense. G. Nee suggested shifting \$250,000 of the available funds to support the Express Grant Program and using the remaining \$400,000 for another round of Incumbent Worker Training Grants. R. Brooks proposed working with the 14 or 15 companies who did not meet the funding requirements. D. Brown informed the committee that companies who did not score high enough do receive feedback on the portions of their applications that need adjustment. M. Trueb recommended examining the current policy and criteria of the grant process. G. Nee inquired if there were companies that could have used more than the \$40,000 award limit. G. Nee agreed that in addition to working with the companies who were not funded, the committee should review and revise the policy. C. Fogarty recommended holding an open session or prep-course for the unfunded companies to discuss ways to strengthen their applications. The committee agreed to further discuss the topic at the next committee meeting.

\$75,000 Allocation to Industry Partners to Support Workforce On-Ramps

Chair Grey asked Elizabeth Jardine to discuss the GWB allocated funds to support the On-Ramps to Career Pathways Program. E. Jardine explained that as a part of the Workforce On-Ramps grant, the GWB along with other state and local agencies such as RIDE, DHS, DLT, and the two local WIBs, have committed to be active partners in both the systems and pilot portions of the program. She stated that the total GWB investment for FY14 and FY15 is proposed to be \$100,000, which is equivalent to the other agency commitments. The \$75,000 in GWB committed funds for FY14 and a quarter of FY15 will be used as incentive funds for participating Industry Partners who successfully place an On-Ramps participant in a work experience as well as support career coaching by the Rhode Island Hospitality Association. The committee discussed the anticipated success of the pilot program and how the collaboration between federal and state workforce programs will be used to incorporate the systems change and further enhance the workforce development system. Chair Grey asked if there was a motion to approve the allocation of \$75,000 for incentive funds and career coaching to support the On-Ramps to Career Pathways Program.

VOTE: C. Howes moved to approve, seconded by M. Trueb. All were in favor, the motion passed.

Adjournment

Chair Grey asked if there was a motion to adjourn.

VOTE: M. Trueb moved to approve, seconded by C. Howes. All were in favor, the motion passed.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:53 am

Respectfully submitted,

Amelia-Anne Roberts