



Governor's Workforce Board Strategic Investments and Evaluation Committee

November 6, 2014
Meeting Minutes

Today's Vision... Tomorrow's Opportunity.

Committee Members Present: Mike Grey, Chair, Constance Howes, George Nee, Mario Bueno, Channavy Chhay, Cheryl Merchant, Martin Trueb
GWB Board Members Present: Charles Fogarty
GWB Staff Present: Rick Brooks, Sherri Carello, Robert Kalaskowski, Amelia Roberts, Dan Brown
DLT Staff Present: Sean Fontes, Diane Gagne, David Tremblay, Lisa D'Agostino, Sue Chomka, Mavis McGetrick, Nancy Olson,
Others Present: Cheryl Dacosta, Tech Collective; Malcolm Baxter, BIS; Dr. Philip Less, RIDE; Mark Perrotti, Anne Walsh, WSPC
Location: Department of Labor and Training, Conference Room 73-2

Call to Order

Chair Grey called the meeting to order at 8:33 a.m. and welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Minutes

Chair Grey asked for a review of the September 2, 2014 Strategic Investments & Evaluation Committee meeting minutes. Chair Grey asked if there was a motion to approve the meeting minutes.

VOTE: Martin Trueb moved to approve, seconded by Constance Howes. All were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

Program Reports – FY2015 Q1

Chair Grey asked Rick Brooks to provide a FY2015 Q1 update of GWB Programs. Referring to the Program Update handout reflecting performance data from July 1 – September 30, 2014, R. Brooks discussed the progress for each program and asked committee members to provide feedback about what other data points might be of interest to the committee moving forward. R. Brooks highlighted the key outcomes of each program, including number of companies who received grants, workers trained, new employer partners, work experiences, and job placements. C. Fogarty inquired about the number of workers trained through the Incumbent Worker Training Program in comparison to FY2014 outcomes. M. Trueb noted it would be helpful, in terms of presentation, to provide baseline numbers to effectively evaluate the progress of each program. C. Merchant agreed comparative data would be useful to know how well a program is doing. The committee further discussed how to measure success, continual outreach to businesses, and setting goals and targets for grants that are awarded annually or on a rolling basis. Referring to the list of performance outcomes, R. Brooks asked the committee to review the additional targets and provide feedback on what outcomes would accurately measure success. The committee discussed reporting challenges, including definitional challenges and measures that are tracked in accordance with WIA reporting requirements.

WIA “state set-aside” Funds

Chair Grey asked David Tremblay to provide an overview of the Governor's Set-Aside under the Workforce Investment Act. Referring to the Governor's State Set-Aside handout, D. Tremblay discussed the purpose of the set-aside, noting the fund which was conceived of in 1998, enabled the Governor to act responsively to the unique labor market demands in RI by reserving a percentage of each of the three core program allocations to conduct statewide workforce investment act activities to support system improvement, and ensure accountability and overall administration of WIA. D. Tremblay reviewed the list of required and allowable activities, noting state administration listed under allowable activities is actually

a required activity. D. Tremblay discussed how the Governor's set-aside is capitalized through the state's WIA appropriation and how it is currently being utilized with the emphasis primarily on state administration, planning, and performance. D. Tremblay highlighted the allowable activities similar to the programs funded through JDF and discussed the clarifications and changes to the set-aside resulting from the recently enacted Workforce Innovation and Opportunities Act (WIOA).

Discussion of additional JDF investments

Per Chair Grey's request, Sean Fontes, Executive Counsel, asked for declarations on any of the voting matters before the committee for conflicts of interest. He explained that committee 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 committee members who disclose a conflict should both abstain from the vote and recuse themselves from any discussion.

In response to the changing political landscape in Rhode Island, Chair Grey asked Constance Howes, as Chair of the Governor's Workforce Board, to discuss the collaborative role of the Board in alignment with economic development policies of the state. Constance Howes reported Governor-elect Gina Raimondo is planning to appoint a transition team very shortly and encouraged the committee to make recommendations and refrain from taking any votes to allow for input from the incoming administration.

Following the Board Retreat investment discussion, Chair Grey asked R. Brooks to provide an overview of proposed allocations of the \$1.4 million in additional JDF funds. Referring to the spreadsheet of proposed allocations R. Brooks discussed the current investment categories, approximate annual allocations for FY2014 and FY2015, and proposed allocation of additional FY2015 revenue. In regards to the Incumbent Worker Training Program, G. Nee noted the program is one of the core functions of the GWB and supports businesses who contribute to the Job Development Fund. R. Brooks noted 11 companies were not funded in FY15 because priority was given to companies that had not received a grant in FY2014 (approx. \$250,000). He stated seven Innovative Partnership applicants were not funded in FY2015 due to insufficient funds (approx. \$1.15 M) and an additional \$500,000 is recommended to be allocated for FY2016.

M. Trueb asked about the rationale for allocating funding for FY2016 as opposed to funding the current demand for Work Immersion that would be spent in FY2015. R. Brooks noted there are Jobs Initiatives funds in the budget that are not currently obligated and could be used to fund the Work Immersion Program. In stead of allocating funds for FY2016, G. Nee recommended funding the 11 Incumbent Worker Training Grant companies in FY2015 if they are still interested in the training funds. C. Howes inquired about the possibility of funding the seven FY15 Innovative Partnerships who were not originally funded. R. Brooks noted Innovative Partnerships are projects that take significant start up time. If the Board chose to do an off-cycle contract, it would become challenging when tracking funds and performance. M. Bueno highlighted the South Carolina German model-based apprenticeship program, which gives a business \$1,000 per year for four years. He noted they started with 60 apprenticeships and currently have 11,000 as a result of this innovative program.

Chair Grey highlighted the purpose of the Retreat, noting the intended alignment with other resources in the state to create a cohesive planning process. C. Merchant noted the response from the Retreat was that all needs were met in regards to the Incumbent Worker Training Grants. M. Trueb highlighted the importance of spending the additional funding effectively. M. Bueno inquired about a contract extension for Innovative Partnerships that are doing well. To clarify, Chair Grey noted the additional funding, as a result of the elimination of the Indirect Cost Recovery, will be available to spend annually.

G. Nee discussed the need to distribute the additional funds out into the community as quickly and efficiently as possible. C. Fogarty noted the original estimates of the JDF funds for this year and next year are conservative and will likely be higher than originally reported. S. Carello asked if the 11 businesses would be given the seven months left in the fiscal year to do their training. G. Nee suggested going back to the companies and asking if they are still interested in the funding. C. Merchant recommended following up with both the 11 Incumbent Worker Training Grant companies and 7 Innovative Partnerships organizations to see if they are still interested in the funds if they were made available. C. Chhay

cautioned the committee that organizations may not turn down the funding, and may likely not spend the funds based on their original budget. C. Howes discussed the possibility of organizations becoming dependent on these programs which may keep the Board from creating truly innovative programs. She highlighted the opportunity to do something different that may take more time to develop. G. Nee noted the Board is spending more on Innovative Partnerships than Incumbent Worker and Express Training Grants.

The committee further discussed the current focus on creating new jobs, spending the additional funds as quickly as possible, and the prior discussion of unsolicited proposals. C. Merchant inquired about the other proposed allocation of additional funding such as GED fee waivers and various System Improvement/Capacity Building line items. S. Fontes noted the State procurement laws still need to be taken into consideration when contacting previous applicants. G. Nee and M. Trueb asked for additional information and analysis of what is currently being done for outreach and marketing. C. Fogarty highlighted the outstanding issue of the Summer Youth Program and the \$460,000 absorbed internally that will cause adjustments in other line items such as Work Immersion and Non-Trade Apprenticeships. The committee recommended contacting the 11 unfunded Incumbent Worker Training Grant companies to see if they are still interested in the training funds if they become available, and looking into the possibility of express Innovative Partnerships as it relates to the state procurement process.

Industry Partnership Wild Card

Based on the “wild card” presentations and previous discussions with the committee, Chair Grey refrained from taking a vote to fund a “wild card” Industry Partner. Constance Howes noted one of the line items of the proposed allocation of additional JDF funds worksheet was to conduct further research and development of emerging industry sectors.

Adjournment

With no further business, Chair Grey asked if there was a motion to adjourn the meeting.

VOTE: Martin Trueb moved to approve, seconded by Cheryl Merchant. All were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:03 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Amelia-Anne Roberts