



Governor's Workforce Board Strategic Investments and Evaluation Committee

April 9, 2015
Meeting Minutes

Committee Members Present: Mike Grey, Chair, Constance Howes, Mario Bueno, Channavy Chhay, Scott Jensen, George Nee
Committee Members Absent: Cheryl Merchant, Janet Raymond
GWB Board Members Present: Robin Coia
GWB Staff Present: Rick Brooks, Sherri Carello, Dan Brown, Amelia Roberts
DLT Staff Present: Sean Fontes, Robert Kalaskowski, Carlos Ribeiro, Diane Gagne, David Tremblay, Sue Chomka, Nancy Olson
Others Present: Malcolm Baxter, BIS; JoAnn Johnson, Tech Collective; Anne Walsh, WSPC
Location: Department of Labor and Training, Conference Room 73-2

Call to Order

Chair Grey called the meeting to order at 9:05 am and welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Minutes

Chair Grey asked for a review of the March 3, 2015 Strategic Investments & Evaluation Committee meeting minutes. Chair Grey asked if there was a motion to approve the meeting minutes.

VOTE: George Nee moved to approve, seconded by Mario Bueno. All were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

Real Jobs RI

Chair Grey asked Scott Jensen to present on the Real Jobs Rhode Island initiative. Referring to the program handout, S. Jensen provided an overview of the Real Jobs RI program, described the differences between the GWB Industry Partnerships and Real Jobs Partnerships, and the overall goal of bringing GWB efforts and sector strategies to scale. S. Jensen highlighted the distinct advantage Rhode Island has over other states due to the size of the state and the opportunity to leverage work that has already been done. He noted Real Jobs RI builds on the GWB Industry Partnership Program by elevating them from *participants* in the workforce system to the *drivers* of it. R. Kalaskowski described the structure of the program and how it will look in year one and year two. He noted the first year of Real Jobs RI will look like a hybrid of the GWB's Industry Partnership Program and Workforce Innovation Grant program that will organize employer partners to identify common industry-wide workforce challenges and develop solutions. R. Kalaskowski stated year two and beyond, Real Jobs RI will evolve from a program to a platform as increasing amounts of state and federal workforce development resources can be leveraged. S. Jensen described the critical components of the program and staged roll-out of Real Jobs RI. He highlighted the importance of outreach during the planning grant stage. S. Jensen provided an overview of the internal process that would be transparent and more responsive to business needs. S. Jensen reviewed the request to the Governor's Workforce Board to support Real Jobs Rhode Island:

- I. Initial funding of \$1.3 million from the JDF
- II. Supplemental funding as necessary to augment Real Jobs RI grants with unobligated funds
- III. Program flexibility to convert a limited number of existing programs into Real Jobs RI approved partnerships, if warranted

C. Howes asked if one employer could be a Real Jobs RI partner. S. Jensen said it would depend on the size of the company. C. Howes described the need for coders recognized by Care New England and how the organization is partnering with an educational provider to train people in response to the demand for the specific coder occupation. The committee discussed the importance of continuing to serve populations that are most in need. G. Nee commented on Jobs Initiatives funds and asked if Real Jobs RI will be structured similarly to that program, providing incentives to companies such as Tunstall to hire unemployed adults. S. Jensen indicated that the Business Workforce Center serves in that capacity by connecting companies with current job seekers. R. Brooks discussed the roles of the Industry Partnerships as intermediaries to connect all parts of the system by being the liaison for key sectors. He inquired as to how the Real Jobs RI partnerships, as subsets of certain sectors, will reach a broader sector representation. Mario Bueno expressed his concern about role confusions regarding the similarities between Industry Partnerships and Real Jobs RI partnerships. The committee further discussed sustainability, the projected timeline, and the breakdown of what the \$1.3 million will be used for. R. Kalaskowski stated the 3-month planning grants are up to \$25,000 and will provide further clarification on the breakdown of funding and what a potential partnership will look like.

Proposed Revisions to FY16 JDF Allocations

Chair Grey asked Rick Brooks to provide an overview of the proposed revisions to the FY16 JDF allocations. R. Brooks referred to the JDF allocations worksheet and highlighted the \$2,502,968 unallocated and projected deobligated funds for FY15, the additional Board-approved FY15 allocations of \$500,000 to support Work Immersion and Incumbent Worker Training Grants, and the revised FY15 carry-in of \$2,002,968 that was added to the FY16 budget. He reviewed the FY16 allocations approved in January 2015 and discussed the proposed changes to support the Real Jobs RI initiatives (\$1,300,000). Changes to the budget include reallocating \$586,145 of FY16 unobligated funds, reducing the youth strategies allocation to \$400,000, and discontinue funding Industry Partnership Pre-Employment Training in light of the new Real Jobs RI partnership roles. With the creation of Real Jobs RI, R. Brooks raised the question of what the future role of Industry Partnerships will look like, seeing as some of them may apply to be a Real Jobs RI partner. C. Howes expressed her support of the proposed changes to the FY16 budget, noting the creation of a new youth initiative may take some additional time to develop and those allocated funds may not be used in FY16. The committee discussed the CTE Work Immersion Program that was recently created to support paid internships for youth. Committee members expressed the need to further discuss the Real Jobs RI partnerships and the role of Industry Partnerships moving forward. Chair Grey asked for a motion to approve the reallocation of \$1.3 million to support Real Jobs RI, subject to further discussion on the program's structure and how it relates to existing GWB programs.

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

Updates: Rolling Incumbent Worker Training Grants and Workforce Innovation Grants

Chair Grey asked R. Brooks to provide an update on the Rolling Incumbent Worker Training Grants. R. Brooks noted final approval has not been given by the Department of Administration,

but he is confident approval will be given very shortly. He stated numerous companies have called to inquire about the release date of the RFP and the staff has been notifying them that the GWB is pursuing a new process and hopefully will have an update on the program soon. Chair Grey asked if the news has generated positive feedback. R. Brooks stated the announcement has generated enthusiasm on the new approach and companies are eager to start the process.

Program Focus: Youth Development

Referring to the Youth Program Report, S. Carello discussed the expenditures and outcomes for summer and year-round activities through December 31, 2014. She noted the Local Workforce Investments Boards are in the process of awarding contracts for the next fiscal year. A. Walsh discussed the additional returns on investments for RI and the Department of Human Services (DHS) as a result of additional funding provided by DHS for TANF-Eligible Youth. N. Olson noted it is highly likely DHS will provide \$300,000 for the summer program this year.

Work Immersion for CTE Students

Sherri Carello stated, in coordination with CTE Program Directors and School-Based Coordinators, a Work Immersion program for CTE students has been developed for any student currently enrolled in a Career and Technical Education program, including programs at comprehensive high schools. Students are required to be 16 years or older and the internship has to be related to their program of study. She noted, starting May 1, 2015, employers will work directly with the school to design the internships ranging between 45 and 400 hours. S. Carello stated the additional 25% hiring incentive will not be offered, as the primary purpose of the program is to provide work experience for students in their field. C. Howes inquired about the employer outreach and marketing efforts. S. Carello noted, each Career and Technical Program has an advisory group consisting of employers and each of the schools will be handling their own outreach. The committee discussed the RFP to enlist a marketing firm to assist the GWB in outreach and communication.

Youth Internship Bonuses for Incumbent Worker Training Grants

Sherri Carello reported the bonus incentives piece may be removed from the annual Incumbent Worker Training grants. She noted, after discussion with the Local Workforce Investments Boards, the goal to get employers involved with taking on youth interns has been accomplished and businesses can now go directly to the youth centers to hire youth interns. She noted bonus incentives have already been removed from Express Grants, stating it wasn't benefiting employers funded to train employees over a short period of time.

Adjournment

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

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

The meeting was adjourned at 10:35 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Amelia Roberts