

**Workforce Development Board
Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, June 20, 2023
8:00AM - 9:30AM
United Way Building - Rochester Room
Board members also attended via Zoom**

Attendees: Dana Abramson, Marco Altieri, Zachary Arnold, Kaitlyn Bond, Bert Brinkerhoff, Bob Coyne, Janelle Harris, Glen Jeter, Tyrone Reaves, Gary Rogers, Alma Vieru, Michael Weed, Joe Wesley, Robin Cole, Rodric Cox-Cooper, Shawn Futch, Shirley Green, Danielle Maloy, Roosevelt Mareus, Tiffany Owens, Angelica Perez-Delgado, Patricia Stovall-Lane

Absent: Mary Beth Artuso, Rachel Baranello, Thomas Battley, Sergio Esteban, Melissa James-Geska, Maggie Rivera, Randy Andre, Rick Donovan, John Brach, Ana Liss, Grant Malone, Joseph Morelle, Mark Rogacki, David Scott

Staff: David Seeley, Viatta Carter, Jeanine Frenz, Lee Koslow, Mary McKeown, Laura Seelman, Antwan Williams, Shawn Curran, Theodore Jordan

Guests:

Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order by Glen Jeter at 8:01AM.

Introductions:

Glen Jeter welcomed our two new Board Members:

- Tiffany Owens, Urban League of Rochester
Senior Vice President of Entrepreneurship & Wealth Building
- David Scott, Monroe County
Chief Diversity Officer/Director of Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

Approval of Meeting Minutes

A motion to approve the March 21, 2023, meeting minutes was made by Bob Coyne and seconded by Gary Rogers. The motion was passed unanimously.

Finance Committee:

Financial Report - PY 2022, 3rd Quarter

Jeanine Frenz provided financials covering the Summary of Expenses January 2023 - March 2023.

Revenue

- WIOA is on track through March. The annual budget figure includes the carry-over from the prior program year. Year-to-date expenditures are at approximately 72% of our current program year allocation. Through March, we have spent \$1.4M in Adult, just over \$1M in Dislocated Worker and \$1.5M in Youth.

- The Emergency Recovery - National Dislocated Worker Grant (NDWG) ends in September; however, we are no longer allocating any resources to this program.
- NY Systems Change and Inclusive Opportunities Network (SCION) funding is on track as well. Funding is on a calendar year basis at \$100K/year.
- Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) funding is the Summer Youth Employment Program. These are the funds from last summer's program. \$1.57M was budgeted, but we were only awarded \$1.34M. We spent just over \$1M.
- Welfare to Work (WTW) is our two contracts with Monroe County. The Skills Training and Experience Program contract was not executed until November, so we got a late start.
- Year to date grant revenue is approximately \$335K. In this quarter, we received \$30K from ESL for the Workforce System Scan project.
- The Gun Violence Prevention Program had previously wrapped up in March; however, we were notified in mid-May that the funding has been extended through 03/31/24. We will have additional expenses related to this program in Q4.

Program Expenses

Direct Expenses:

- Wage Subsidies for this quarter were at \$134K, down from the prior quarter of \$149K.
- Individual Training Accounts were up considerably for this quarter at \$191K. The prior quarter was \$119K.
- OJTs are down for this quarter. There is a large budget variance in this category because \$180K was included in this budget year for the Gun Violence Prevention program.
- Service Provider Payments are where they should be for this point in the program year.

Total Program Expenses

- These expenses are under budget, largely attributable to the Gun Violence Prevention Program projected expenditures.

RWI Operational Expenses

- Both Salaries and Benefits are under budget.
- Rent & Utilities, Travel, Professional Fees, and Insurance are all on budget.
- Office Operations includes \$71K attributable to the ESL grant. \$10K of the subscription amount overbudgeted was from the Virtual Reality product.

The large variances in the remaining revenue and expense lines are due to the Gun Violence Prevention Program.

Dave Seeley added that we will request a waiver on our 80% WIOA requirement spend down. Many other areas in the State requested a waiver to require an 80% spend down. Our biggest challenge is in the Dislocated Worker category; there is less in this population of job seekers right now and the profile of the person who would qualify for these services. On the Adult side, we are spending down very quickly, and the Youth side is near where it needs to be.

A motion to approve the Financial Report, Program Year 2022, 3rd Quarter as presented was made by Shawn Futch and seconded by Bob Coyne. The motion was passed unanimously.

Ratify Transfer of WIOA Funds

Dave Seeley reported that we are asking the Full Board to authorize the transfers of \$500,000 in WIOA funding from Dislocated Worker (DW) to Adult and \$175,000 in WIOA funding from Administration to Adult. Justification for the request includes the following:

- This reflects the profile of the customers we are seeing, with lower unemployment resulting in less Dislocated Workers. A new allocation methodology, implemented in February, reflects a more accurate representation of how our staff is allocating their time.
- This will ensure that our carryover of Adult funds is sufficient for the first quarter of the 2023 Program Year.
- The Executive Committee approved the transfer of \$400,000 from DW to Adult in April, and \$100,000 from DW to Adult and \$175,000 from Administration to Adult in June. This vote is to ratify the Executive Committee's approval.

A motion to authorize the transfers of \$500,000 in WIOA funding from Dislocated Worker (DW) to Adult and \$175,000 in WIOA funding from Administration to Adult was made by Joe Wesley and seconded by Bert Brinkerhoff. The motion was passed unanimously.

Review and Approval of Program Year 2023 Budget

Jeanine Frenz provided the following for the proposed budget for PY 2023.

Revenue

- WIOA funding has increased by \$240,847 overall: Adult has decreased by \$77,405; Dislocated Worker has increased by \$405,628 and Youth has decreased by \$87,377.
- WIOA Carry-Over amounts are primarily in Youth, which is \$796K and Adult at \$608K, after the most recent Dislocated Worker to Adult transfers.
- NY SCION funding is \$100K per calendar year. We are currently in the second year of a three-year program.
- Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) funding has been increased by \$274K for this year.
- Welfare to Work (WTW) funds are through Monroe County to provide employability assessments and a skills, training and experience program (STEP) to individuals receiving public assistance.
- Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) funds are an estimate of any remaining available funds for individuals who would still be certified and eligible through this program, which ended June 30, 2022.
- Grant Revenue is anticipated as a match for the ROC SEEDS program. As of the end of the current fiscal year, we have approximately \$300K in unexpended grant funding that we hope to request either no cost extensions or spend in full prior to the end of the grant period. Most of this funding is from the Mother Cabrini Health Foundation.
- Other Revenue includes Ticket to Work Revenue, as well as the opportunity for sponsorships through our Business Services Division.
- The Gun Violence Prevention Program has been extended through 3/31/24. We have put together a realistic budget for the program to spend down a large part of the funds by partnering with other providers and outsourcing some navigators.

Program Expenses

Direct Expenses:

- Wage subsidies have been budgeted flat for the upcoming year with \$415K for Youth, \$812K for TANF, \$91K through the remaining Mother Cabrini Health Foundation funds, \$308K for GVP and \$20K for Adults.
- Individual Training Accounts, overall, the ITA budget remains relatively flat: Adult \$479K, Dislocated Worker \$65K, Youth \$40K, and GVP \$90K. Last year's budget included \$200K for Trade Act, \$89K for ER NDWG, and \$180K for GVP.
- On the Job Trainings (OJT) have increased by \$261K, by increasing the Business Services budget. There is an additional \$271K for OJTs for the ROC SEEDS program. This is offset by

the loss of \$180K in OJTs that was budgeted in the prior year for the Gun Violence Prevention Program.

Service Provider Payments:

- Summer Youth Employment Program payments have increased this year by \$106K, as we are funding more Providers this year.

Total Program Expenses are projected to be \$4.9M for the upcoming year.

RWI Operational Expenses

- Overall, these have decreased when compared with last year's approved budget, with most of this in the Salaries and Benefits related lines.
- With this year's budget, we have added the following positions: .5 FTE to Youth, 2.5 FTEs to the Career Center, and 1 FTE (effective 1/1/24) to Business Services. The 2.5 FTEs for the Career Center are existing positions that have not been filled. The Youth FTE is being upgraded from a part-time to a full-time position. The Business Services position is a new position designed to enhance the depth and outreach of the program.

Total Operational Expenses are budgeted at \$5.6M and Total Expenses are budgeted at \$10.4M.

A motion to approve the Program Year 2023 Budget as presented was made by Rodric Cox-Cooper and seconded by Robin Cole. The motion was passed unanimously.

Authorize Blanket Transfers Between WIOA Funds for PY 2023

Dave Seeley explained this is allowed under WIOA and pursuant to a NYSDOL Technical Advisory. This blanket transfer authorization would be in effect for the 2023 Program Year and would need to be reauthorized every year. Prior to requesting a transfer to the State, RWI staff will provide notice to the Board of the transfer, including the amount and the justification for doing so.

A motion to approve blanket transfer authorization between WIOA Adult and Dislocated Worker Program funds and transfer authorization of Administration funds back to the originating Program funds for the 2023 Program Year as presented was made by Joe Wesley and seconded by Bert Brinkerhoff. The motion was passed unanimously.

Authorize Purchase of Carpet for 100 College Avenue

Jeanine Frenz reported that RWI is requesting expenditure of funding in the amount of \$6,500 for carpeting.

RochesterWorks fiscal staff solicited bids from five vendors for carpeting for the lower-level conference space at 100 College Avenue. The space is approximately 1,835 square feet. Two quotes were received:

Messner Flooring: \$6,500
GP Flooring Solutions: \$11,132

The Executive, Finance and Audit Committee approved this expenditure at the May 2023 meeting. Per RWI's procurement policy, the expenditure must be sent to the full Board for approval. Once approved by the WDB, the request will be sent to NYSDOL for approval.

A motion to authorize the purchase of carpeting for conference space in the lower-level of the Career Center at 100 College Avenue as presented was made by Rodric Cox-Cooper and seconded by Zachary Arnold. The motion was passed unanimously.

Youth Committee:

WIOA Youth Navigator Program Recommendations

Antwan Williams began the discussion by noting the Summer Youth Employment Program has commenced positively, with encouraging results regarding application follow-through and the number of eligible candidates for referral. The application process for the program has seen significant improvement, returning to pre-pandemic levels; 2,102 youth have applied, and we are at 950+ who are deemed eligible and ready for employment.

Regarding WIOA funding for 2023, Antwan reported that RochesterWorks hosted a Bidder's Conference on March 22, 2023. Fourteen agencies were represented and seven of the agencies submitted proposals.

A review panel was created that consisted of six evaluators assigned to read and evaluate all seven proposals. The RFP recommendations include:

- RochesterWorks is projecting to fund: 6 Agencies
- Total Navigators: 14
- Total Cost: \$980,000
- Youth Served: No less than 350, annually

Agencies/Navigator Recommendations include:

- Greentopia/Green Visions: 1
- The Community Place of Greater Rochester, Inc.: 4
- Starbridge Services, Inc.: 2
- The Center for Youth Services: 4
- Community Resource Collaborative, Inc.: 2
- Urban League of Rochester: 1

RochesterWorks is currently funding four of the agencies that have submitted proposals. These agencies are The Community Place of Greater Rochester, Inc., The Center for Youth Services, Urban League of Rochester, and Starbridge Services, Inc. As a result of bringing Greentopia/Green Visions and Community Resource Collaborative, Inc. to the table, we are bringing in programs that have representation in the LGBTQ+ community, green jobs, rapid relocation, and many other services.

A motion to approve the WIOA Youth Navigator Program Recommendations as presented was made by Bob Coyne and seconded by Rodric Cox-Cooper. The motion was passed unanimously.

Workforce Innovation and Performance Committee:

Authorize Subscription to Labor Market Information Service

Lee Koslow began the discussion noting that one of the things we have not had the ability to do in the past, is to access data on local area employment statistics, jobs projections, both on the occupation and industry side, real time job posting information, and information about skills needed in the area. Some of this information is available on the NYSDOL website, but there is a lag, so we are looking at old data, and it is not everything or at the level that we might want. Over the years we have been discussing, like some of our neighboring workforce development areas, whether we should subscribe to a service that will allow us to pull that data. This will save staff time because what we must do now is very time intensive. We did a procurement, received three different quotes, and chose the lowest quote that met our specifications for what we needed, which is a company called Lightcast.

RochesterWorks staff seeks to purchase a one-year Local Labor Market Data Analytics Subscription from Lightcast at a cost of \$12,500 with an option for two one-year renewals at an annual cost not to exceed 10% over the first-year cost.

A motion to approve the Local Labor Market Data Analytics Subscription as presented was made by Zachary Arnold and seconded by Tiffany Owens. The motion was passed unanimously.

Business Services Update:

Laura Seelman provided a refresher on the Business Services Team, including the programs and activities they offer. Their goal is to provide free services to businesses in the City of Rochester and Monroe County to help them meet their recruiting and hiring needs. They work with any business, any size, and any industry. Services they offer include Posting Jobs, On-site Recruiting Events, Community Job Fairs, Virtual Job Fairs, Recruiting Support, Hiring Incentive Grants, and Referrals to Partner Resources. Laura provided examples of these services, which include:

Job Board: The goal of this is to offer additional ways for businesses to promote their job opportunities to candidates. We have our version of Indeed that we offer in-house. Any business can work with us to get their positions posted on our job board, which is there to be a connector for any company that is looking to hire or promote their opportunities. We will work with them to get their job listed on this job board, which includes all the application information and all the necessary skills, qualifications, and training. Anyone, whether they are someone out in the community who is not working with us, or someone who is working with one of our advisors, can go through, take a look at the job board, and apply directly. The job board is current and kept up to date. The number of jobs posted include:

- PY20 - 3,424 jobs
- PY21 - 3,360 jobs
- PY22 - Posting 2,127 jobs (through 3rd Quarter)

Virtual Job Fairs: The goal of this is to offer a virtual way to connect businesses and “passive” job seekers in increasingly online job search in the marketplace. We have launched virtual job fairs in partnership with the County, and we were able to purchase a license for a software program called Premier Virtual, which allows us to offer virtual job fairs to businesses. In the virtual job fair, a business can create a virtual booth, where they can post information about their company and a list of their job postings. The job seeker can create a virtual profile, where they can upload items such as their resume, a picture, and a list of their skills and qualifications. During the actual event time, the business and the job seeker are able to connect virtually, so they can chat via text or initiate video chats. Business Services launched this service in January 2022. To date, we have hosted 11 events, and have served over 900 job seekers and 130+ businesses.

Weekly Recruiting Events: The goal of this is to offer an opportunity, on a weekly basis, for businesses and job seekers to connect on-site at our 100 College Avenue Career Center. This is a mini, on-site recruiting event for any business that is recruiting and hiring. We have space for two to three businesses to come in, where they can sit for two hours and actively recruit and interview candidates for the open positions they have. This program has been in existence for a long time, and after Covid, in January 2022, we brought the program back on a slightly smaller scale, with just two to three businesses at a time. This provides a great opportunity for job seekers to come in and have more conversation and connection with businesses. We have had over 130 businesses and almost 800 job seekers come in since we relaunched in early 2022. Numbers include:

- PY21 - 42 businesses and 283 job seekers
- PY22 - 89 businesses and 513 job seekers

We survey all the job seekers and businesses that come to these events. Survey results that were received include:

Job Seekers:

- 99% of job seekers found the event helpful
- 67% had follow-up activities planned; online application, phone screen/interview, onboarding

Businesses:

- Reported 232 confirmed interviews and 40+ offers of employment
- 91% likely or very likely to hire a candidate from the event
- 100% said they would attend an event like this again

Community Job Fairs: The goal of this is to diversify the ways job seekers and employers can connect by bringing events to familiar locations within towns and communities. These events are held closer to home, such as at a library or Town Hall, and some job seekers may be more comfortable going to these locations, as well as having an opportunity to make a connection with businesses in their community. To date, Community Job Fairs have been held in Henrietta, Webster, Brighton, Gates, Irondequoit, Greece, and the MCC Downtown Campus. 387 Businesses and 2,000 job seekers have attended. Numbers include:

- PY21 - 168 businesses and 839 job seekers
- PY22 - 219 businesses and 1,159 job seekers

Business feedback included the following:

- 353 scheduled interviews
- 244 employment offers
- 83% of companies surveyed reported they expected to hire from these events

Hiring Incentive Grants: The goal of these grants is to offset the cost of hiring and training new employees with limited skills and/or work experience. We have two grant programs available to help with these costs, which include:

- Work Experience Tryout Program - This is a short-term, four week on-site work opportunity, 100% subsidized by RochesterWorks, to allow businesses to assess if job seeker skills and work habits are a long-term fit.
- On-the-Job (OJT) Training Grant Program - This is a wage reimbursement program where an employer will hire and train unemployed candidates with some, but not all, skills needed for a full-time job. This grant will reimburse the employer 50% of the new hire's wages during their first 1-4 months of work, up to a maximum of \$5,000.00.

In the last year, we have awarded over \$150,000 to train 33 individuals across both programs. Over \$600,000 has been awarded to train 153 individuals over the past five years, with a 75% completion rate.

Amend On-the-Job Training Grant Policy

Dave Seeley noted the following justification for amending this policy:

- RWI has not increased the OJT reimbursement amount since 2013, when it increased from \$3,000 to \$5000
- Benchmarking against OJT grant amounts in surrounding local workforce development areas (LWDA), as established by the local workforce development board (WDB):
 - Finger Lakes LWDA (Yates, Seneca, Ontario, Wayne) - \$6,000
 - GLOW LWDA (Genesee, Livingston, Orleans, Wyoming) - \$5,000
 - Erie-Buffalo LWDA - \$7,000

- NYS Minimum Wage Increases: Current minimum wage is \$14.20 and is scheduled to go up to \$15.00 in 2024 and \$16.00 by 2026, with additional future increases indexed to inflation
- Increase in Average Hourly Rate Based on Previous RochesterWorks Business Grant Awards

A motion to amend the On-the-Job Training Grant Policy to increase the maximum award to \$7,500 was made by Joe Wesley and seconded by Janelle Harris. The motion passed unanimously.

Director's Report:

Personal Identifiable Information (PII) Policy

Dave Seeley explained that we are required to have a Personal Identifiable Information (PII) Policy. In the past year, we have done a lot regarding data security. We completed an extensive Shield Act audit. The Shield Act is a State Law that helps govern best practices for how agencies handle sensitive data and internal controls. In many ways, this cements into place a lot of our existing policy, but we wanted to have a policy that really spells out how we are handling personal information that we collect from our customers and ensuring that our employees, third party vendors, and contractors of RochesterWorks are held accountable. The Handling Personally Identifiable Information (PII) Data and Document Classification Policy Framework was included in today's meeting materials.

A motion to approve the Handling Personally Identifiable Information (PII) Policy as presented was made by Rodric Cox-Cooper and seconded by Zachary Arnold. The motion passed unanimously.

One-Stop Operator Contract

Dave Seeley reported our One-Stop Operator Contract does an important function. On a quarterly basis, and with some interim action items, it convenes our one-stop partners that are required under Federal WIOA Law. The goal of that is to really make all the partners communicate better with one another and determine as a system how we can work more effectively. We have utilized Action Collaboration since PY 2021. Overall, we are very happy with their ability to communicate with the one-stop partners. They passed their annual monitoring review and staff are recommending a one-year renewal of their contract for \$8,000.00.

A motion to approve the One-Stop Operator Contract Renewal as presented was made by Joe Wesley and seconded by Bob Coyne. The motion passed unanimously.

WIOA Performance Review

Dave Seeley reported that we received our performance metrics for the second quarter. We are meeting the performance goals that NYSDOL establishes for us, and they have no concerns with our performance. WIOA Performance Metrics were included in today's meeting materials.

Update: Career Center Relocation Project

Dave Seeley provided an update on the Career Center Relocation Project, which is a \$10 million project at the Monroe Community College Downtown Campus.

- \$2.5 million from House/Senate Community Project Funding Awards (recommended by Rep Morelle, Sens Schumer & Gillibrand).
- \$7.5 million request from NYS Regional Revitalization Partnership (under review). We will know more about this in another month or so.

- We have also started to have conversations with Monroe County regarding the redevelopment of the space. While this is part of the downtown campus of MCC, it is owned by the County and thus would fall into their capital project portfolio, if funded.

NYS Office of Strategic Workforce Development Grant

Dave Seeley shared that since receiving an award of \$862,000 in March from the New York State Office of Strategic Workforce Development, RochesterWorks staff has finalized an incentive proposal with New York State Empire State Development. We are working on developing program operating procedures with our training partner, YAMTEP. The grant will help fund 270 individuals in YAMTEP's basic manufacturing skills/job readiness program, including 70 high school students, over the next two years. We will have a public launch of the program next week.

RochesterWorks Staff Mini-Retreat: June 2nd

Dave Seeley shared that RochesterWorks held its first ever staff retreat on June 2nd. We took an afternoon to travel off campus to receive program updates from various divisions at RochesterWorks, as well as an update on strategic goals for the organization. Prior to the retreat, a survey was circulated and completed by 90% of RWI team members, looking to gauge frontline workers' perspectives on critical issues facing RochesterWorks and our community-wide effort to connect all residents with opportunities for sustainable employment. Some common themes that emerged:

- Childcare and transportation remain the most significant barriers to workforce participation.
- A lack of basic job readiness is evident for many emergent workers.
- RochesterWorks needs to do a better job in marketing its services and getting out into the community.

Rochester City Schools Career Readiness

Dave Seeley reported that we held our second stakeholder roundtable in late March to discuss coordination of efforts to increase the collective career exploration and career readiness in the City Schools, including both the RCSD and the Charter Schools.

Out of this conversation came a concept of a School to Work Navigator program, which will work to build career readiness skills, provide more focused and extensive career exploration, and help students and families navigate the many resources in the community that exist to connect youth to career pathways, especially those from marginalized communities that are historically underrepresented in the workforce.

RochesterWorks has advanced a proposal to the Regional Revitalization Partnership to fund up to four School-to-Work Navigators that would be physically in the high schools in the City. This concept, as endorsed by the stakeholder roundtable, envisions utilizing the organizations that already have a presence in the City Schools to administer the program (i.e.: Encompass, Hillside Work Scholarship).

Like the capital funding request for the career center, we hope to hear an update on this grant request in the coming months. Feedback thus far has been positive.

Adjournment 9:42AM

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Bob Coyne and seconded by Tiffany Owens. The motion was passed unanimously.

WDB Meeting Schedule:

September 19, 2023

December 19, 2023

March 19, 2024

June 18, 2024

Approved

David Seeley

Date

Submitted by: Mary McKeown

Reviewed by:

David Seeley: June 26, 2023

Jeanine Frenz: June 26, 2023

Antwan Williams: June 26, 2023

Lee Koslow: June 26, 2023

Laura Seelman: June 27, 2023

PENDING APPROVAL