

**Workforce Development Board  
Meeting Minutes  
Tuesday, June 15, 2021  
8:00AM - 9:30AM  
Meeting Scheduled via Zoom**

**Attendees:** Dana Abramson, Mary Beth Artuso, Kyle Banks, Rachel Baranello, Thomas Battley, Bert Brinkerhoff, Bob Coyne, Sergio Esteban, Melissa Geska, Adrian Hale, Glen Jeter, Kathy Miner, Gary Rogers, George Scharr, Michael Weed, Joe Wesley, Randy Andre, Romanda Gibson-Stevenson, Joseph Leone, Ana Liss, Danielle Maloy, Roosevelt Mareus, Todd Oldham, Angelica Perez-Delgado, Mark Rogacki, Ann Kowal

**Absent:** Corinda Crossdale, Seanelle Hawkins, Daniele Lyman-Torres, Dan Maloney, Patricia Stovall-Lane

**Staff:** Viatta Carter, Shawn Curran, Michael DeBole, Theodore Jordan, Lee Koslow, Behiye Mansour, John Premo, Antwan Williams, Kathy Ziegler, Mary McKeown

**Guest:** Joseph Hamm, Andrew Zalikowski

**Call to Order:**

The meeting was called to order by Sergio Esteban at 8:04 AM.

**Introductions**

Sergio Esteban welcomed RochesterWorks! staff and Board Members to the meeting today.

**Approval of Meeting Minutes**

A motion to approve the March 16, 2021, meeting minutes was made by Joe Wesley and seconded by George Scharr. The motion was passed unanimously.

**Executive Director Selection and Approval:**

Sergio Esteban reported that at the last Board Meeting, we outlined the process and steps that would be followed in the selection and approval of our next Executive Director. Sergio included that he is very appreciative of the effort by the entire Selection Committee. It was a lot of work, and the committee members were very committed. Sergio asked Lee Koslow to outline the process and explain what we agreed to do and how we have proceeded since the last Board Meeting, up until now.

Lee reported that at the March meeting, the Board voted to establish a Qualifications and Selection Committee comprised of 7 members; 5 Board Members and 2 individuals who are not Board Members, but were selected by the County Executive, the reason being, the role of Executive Director is a dual role. The Executive Director is both Director of the Workforce Development Board (the authority for the hire of that portion of the position coming from the Board) and Executive Director of the nonprofit corporation RochesterWorks, Inc., of which the County Executive is the member. The agreement has to be between both the County Executive and the Workforce Development Board to make the selection. The committee was comprised of Board Members Sergio Esteban, George Scharr, Ana Liss, Romanda Gibson-Stevenson and Seanelle Hawkins and non-Board Members Jeff McCann, Deputy County Executive and Tyrone Reaves, owner of Truform Manufacturing.

The committee's first work was to come up with a job description, a set of qualifications against which the candidates would be measured and what we want to see in an Executive Director for them to be successful. The job description was created and was posted in a lot of different places. We got 50 different responses from people of all different backgrounds and many with impressive qualifications. The

committee reviewed those resumes and selected 8 candidates to pre-screen with 15-minute pre-screening interviews over Zoom. Based on the results of the interviews, the committee selected 4 finalists for lengthier interviews. The committee interviewed those 4 finalists and then based on how they rated the 4 finalists, have chosen 1 recommendation for Executive Director to put before the Board.

Sergio continued that the Selection Committee unanimously makes the recommendation presented here today for candidate David Seeley, who is the Supervisor for the Town of Irondequoit. David's qualifications, experience and also his vision were in line with what we are looking for, and the Selection Committee unanimously selected him.

Romanda Gibson-Stevenson added that the committee did their due diligence in making sure they asked crucial questions of one another and of the candidates, to make sure that we did come before everyone confident and assured that the candidate we selected was going to be someone we could all be proud of and feel that this person could take the organization to the next level.

Sergio added that Lee Koslow was instrumental in helping the committee with the process of complying with WIOA regulations, by-laws, and rules. Lee was extremely available to the committee for anything required for the workflow to continue. Lee also communicated internally to the employees where the process was at, as obviously a big, important element of the selection of the Executive Director was to select somebody not only good for the outside, but also good for the inside, and the committee wanted to make sure this person would be a good leader for the staff.

A motion to approve the recommendation by the Qualifications and Selection Committee to select David Seeley as the next Executive Director of RochesterWorks! was made by Joseph Leone and seconded by Rachel Baranello. The motion was passed unanimously.

Sergio continued that the next step will be sitting down with the candidate and developing a contract. The committee has submitted a draft contract that is being reviewed by the County attorney, to make sure that we cover all the aspects of the contract.

A motion to authorize Sergio and the committee to negotiate a contract with David Seeley was made by Michael Weed and seconded by Joseph Leone. The motion was passed unanimously.

### **Approval Recommendations:**

#### **One-Stop System Operator Selection Approval**

Lee Koslow reported that in March, the Board approved RochesterWorks! to release a competitive bid, an RFP, for a One-Stop System Operator to cover a term of the next 4 years, starting July 1<sup>st</sup>. The One-Stop System Operator is not a big role. It is not a large amount of money, it's an \$8K per year budget or contract. It is kind of a small role with a large impact because the One-Stop System Operator convenes the whole big group of One-Stop System partners. There are 12 to 15 different organizations that are actually required One-Stop System partners, plus some Community partners that join us. They do this in 4 annual meetings and help us stick to what we said we were going to do in the big umbrella MOU, Memorandum of Understanding, that we have among one another. For the first term of 4 years, Genesee Finger Lakes Regional Planning Council had been selected as the One-Stop System Operator. The law requires us to competitively bid this One-Stop Operator at least every 4 years. The proposal went out statewide and maybe even a little bit further, and we got 2 qualified respondents: Genesee Finger Lakes Regional Planning Council and a One-Stop System Operator, Action Collaboration, that has been providing services in 6 of the counties between Syracuse and Albany. They were both pretty solid proposals, they both met the minimum qualifications to be considered, and they were responsive. We had a committee of 4 of our management team staff that reviewed the proposals against the criteria set forth in the RFP and scored them. The results came out with the non-incumbent, Action Collaboration with a score of 70.8 out of a possible 75 points and Genesee Finger Lakes Regional Planning Council, the incumbent with 66.1 out of a possible 75 points. The staff is recommending the submission with the higher points for funding, because without a good reason to recommend a lower scoring proposal, we would not be able to do that. They said Action Collaboration has a strong recommendation from 2 other Local Workforce Development Boards that it has served in another part of New York State. Action Collaboration did describe a stronger continuous improvement approach in their response and included creative recommendations to address the needs of the Workforce Development Board. What is being

recommended to the Board is that the Board resolve to approve a One-Stop System Operator Contract with Action Collaboration for a term beginning July 1, 2021, and ending June 30, 2022, with an \$8K annual budget and an option for up to 3 1-year renewals through June 30, 2025.

Please note that Ana Liss stated she is a Council Member and has declared this a conflict and will abstain from the vote.

A motion to accept the recommendation for the new One-Stop System Operator as explained was made by Danielle Maloy and seconded by Adrian Hale. The motion was passed unanimously.

### **WIOA Local Plan Approval**

Lee Koslow reported that we had sent by email, a series of 2 survey links to the Board Members over the last couple of months, starting in late April. We are taking the 4-year Local Plan that we previously had, and we have to update it. In the survey, we were trying to get some ideas for: should we keep all of the same language, should we change some of it, should we change a lot of it and how should we change it? There are some things in the plan that by law or just by matter of fact, we have to keep the same. For example, all of the questions are prescribed in the law and the Federal regulations. By New York State Department of Labor policy, they give us a template that we have to use. Many of the answers are factual, just reflective of what we are currently doing, so we do not have a lot of discretion there. When it comes to policy strategies, that is where we have the discretion. There were 10 responses submitted to the initial survey. We took the suggestions and we placed them as options in a 2<sup>nd</sup> survey, of which there were 6 responses to vote on the choices. Where we had a clear majority on an option for wording, we went with the majority. Where there was not a clear majority, we tended to keep the language the same, unless due to changing circumstances there was an overwhelming reason to go with 1 of the choices that had been put forth. None of these are really major changes. We have the final Local Plan which Lee sent out to everyone yesterday. There is a 2-page Executive Summary that is a lot easier to get through than the 50-some odd page Local Plan, but at this point we are presenting it to the Board for a recommendation for approval and a vote on the Local Plan.

A motion to approve the WIOA Local Plan as submitted with changes as described was made by Randy Andre and seconded by Bob Coyne. The motion was passed unanimously.

### **Finance Committee:**

#### **Michael DeBole Provided a Packet Covering the Summary of Expenses July 1, 2020 – March 31, 2021**

Michael DeBole began his presentation noting the WIOA allocation of funding is on track to spend down our 80% allocation of funds for this fiscal year 2020. However, statewide a technical advisory was sent to all LWDB to allow us a waiver of 80% obligation, because of the Covid epidemic. They found statewide a lot of the LWDB's like us were having difficulty spending their 80% allocation of funds. As a precaution, we opted to sign a waiver for our Adult and Dislocated Worker funds. I am confident we will be spending our 80% WIOA allocations for our Adult and Dislocated Worker funds. I am also, requesting a transfer of funds in the amount of \$250K from Admin of which 150K will be transferred to Adult funds, and then 100K will be transferred to Dislocated Worker funds. Then, I request a transfer of 150K from Adult funds to Dislocated Worker funds. This is to prepare us for the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter of the new fiscal year, which begins July 1, 2021.

A motion to approve a transfer of \$250K from admin. funds to Adult and Dislocated Worker; then 150K from Adult funds to Dislocated Worker funds was made by Romanda Gibson-Stevenson and seconded by Gary Rogers. The motion was passed unanimously.

Mike requested a second approval for the Summer Youth Employment Program, which is a time sensitive program. They are Federal funds which we receive from the Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance (OTDA). The program is an 8-week program, and our Youth Team has requested a software upgrade for the online application. To use the funds for the Summer Youth Program, being it is just an 8-week program the spending must be between June 15<sup>th</sup> to the end of August. The amount requested for approval for the upgrade will be \$23K.

A motion to approve \$23K for the software upgrade online application for the Summer Youth Employment Program as explained was made by Michael Weed and seconded by George Scharr. The motion was passed unanimously.

Michael requested a third approval for the workshop room at the 100 College Avenue Career Center. Our initial RFP, we had initially 9,200 square feet, because we were sub-letting the square footage with another tenant. The lease states once the other tenant moves out, we would assume the remainder of the 12,750 square footage. On September 1, 2020, the other tenant had relocated to another location, and we assumed the remainder of the square footage. We are looking to enhance some of the other rooms which are vacant, and we do have a need for a workshop room for the participants. The room is approximately 1,000 square feet and the furniture being requested are armchair desks and a podium, which will be approximately \$7K. We do need approval from the WIB, because the request is over 5K and per our procurement policy an approval is required by the WIB. Also, the quote is a State procured contract by the vendor.

A motion to approve the expenditure of \$7K for additional equipment for a workshop room at 100 College Avenue was made by Melissa Geska and seconded by Romanda Gibson-Stevenson. The motion was passed unanimously.

### **Budget Proposal PY2021 and Approval**

Michael DeBole reported on the PY 2021 budget proposal which is July 2021 through June 2022. Our Revenues decreased approximately by \$1.2M. The Department of Health and Human Services located at 691 St. Paul Street have been suspended since January 2021, per Governor Cuomo letter for all those funds across the State. Our WIOA funding this year decreased by approximately \$75K. The Adult funds decreased approximately \$182K and the Dislocated Worker funding increased by \$329K, the net effect of \$147K; however, the Youth funding decreased by \$225K, thus the allotment of funds decreased by \$75K along with our carry over from the prior year. Currently our funding consists of WIOA funds and our Opioid Grant, which is approximately \$121K. Our Summer Youth Program this year has increased approximately \$10K, compared to prior year.

The St. Paul Career Center at the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) we have 8 employees currently for the location. The DHHS refers participants to RochesterWorks for the Employability Assessment Program and those referrals are accessed and, dual enrolled with our WIOA funds as well. Currently the Employability Assessment Program we are accessing approximately 60 to low 80 of participants coming through. The Work Experience Program and the OJT program are currently suspended, and this is how we are operating the facility. Thus, the decrease of \$1.2M is due to the suspension of WEP Program \$650K annually, the OJTs are \$200K annually and the EAP funds were reduced by 150K. When the State releases the suspended funds, we will begin by re-establishing the St. Paul Career Center based on workflow as needed.

Michael said, our Salaries include the 8 staff members for the Career Center at the Department of Health and Human Services. We also have 8 open positions for our Career Center at 100 College Avenue. We are looking to fill 3 of the 8 positions immediately, 1 of which is the Executive Director, and 2 are Initial Assessment positions. When the State waiver is released, we are hoping to re-establish the other open positions for this Career Center to have them fully staffed to accommodate the reopening of our Career Centers. Also, an internal Youth Navigator will be stepping down at the end of this fiscal year. This is our status with our wages and includes the Fringe Benefits too. As far as the other Operational Costs, the Rent increased by approximately \$42K, which is for the new Youth Career Center at 57 St. Paul Street and the Youth hotspots.

Our Provider Payments have a decreased by \$153K and is due to the 2 Navigators have been released because of funding. We reviewed the service providers performance before the decision was made. The job readiness training was suspended at DHHS thus the decrease in our Provider Payments.

Direct Services expenditures for the Individual Training Accounts had a big decrease of \$300K for our WIOA Adult and Dislocated Worker, the Youth \$100K decreased. We have the Trade Act which is 100% pass through, so we do not expect Trade Act to be as active this year. The Business Training Grants remain the same as prior year, however the OJT's, at DHHS for the St Paul CC right now are suspended. The Wage Subsidies decreased by \$113K and that is mainly the Summer Youth Program. The Direct

Services we do not anticipate as many participants going through as prior year. We have Opioid of \$32K and WIOA Youth increased by \$10K.

A motion to approve the Budget Proposal PY2021 was made by Glen Jeter and seconded by George Scharr. The motion was passed unanimously.

#### **Youth Committee:**

##### **Youth Services Update**

Antwan Williams began his presentation by reporting that back in November 2020, the Youth Team was able to secure funds from the ESL Charitable Foundation for \$49,480.00 to purchase 92 laptops and 84 Wi-Fi hotspots for our Youth. It was decided to give these items to the young people who are either in school or need the technology to stay in contact with their providers. As of last week, we were able to give out all of the hot spots and we were left with 5 remaining laptops, which will be given out within the next 2 weeks. Also, realizing that we were facing the deficits for the upcoming program Year, Antwan reached back out to ESL and was able to secure \$155K to be able to restore back some of the line items that we would have lost, such as Supportive Services, ITA Training Account dollars and even money for the internet for the hot spots. He was also able to secure money for the saving of a position. He added that the Youth Team is moving forward and are in the process of executing contracts for the year-round programs and the Summer Employment. At this time, a little over 2,000 Youth have applied, but only 400 Youth have followed through. The Youth Team is working diligently in terms of getting young people to apply and follow through, to get our numbers up so that we can have a good summer employing the young people of our community.

#### **Workforce Innovation Committee:**

##### **Career Center Report**

Viatta Carter reported on some highlights of what they have done in the Career Center since the pandemic began. Staff continue to work with customers virtually and over the phone. From January 2021 through May 2021, Career Center staff saw 286 new customers, of which 144 are repeat customers and out of that, they have worked with 5 Veterans. Career center staff continue to get referrals from and work with various agencies throughout the community, including ACCES-VR and Delphi. The Career Center began offering virtual workshops in March 2020. As of January 2021, over 3,000 individuals have attended the virtual workshops. Attendees have included individuals not just from the Rochester community, but from all over the world. The Career Center offers 34 E-Learning courses. Over 3,000 students participated in these courses and over 3,000 certificates were awarded to students who completed the courses. In addition to this, the Career Center continues to partner with various agencies in our community. In January, they began a partnership with the Monroe County Library System to do workshops for patrons of the library. To date, they have delivered 7 workshops, of which 36 patrons have attended these workshops. Career Center staff were also very successful in facilitating 3 train-the-trainer sessions for the library staff. Approximately 40 library staff attended these sessions. Viatta also included they are in the process of developing a job readiness workshop for Spanish speakers. The Career Center did partner with Ibero a while ago to see what more can be done for Spanish speakers and have decided to create some E-Learning workshops for Spanish speakers. In addition to that, they will also be facilitating train-the-trainer sessions for Ibero staff.

##### **Business Services Update**

John Premo reported on some highlights of what has been going on as a result of the pandemic and how we have navigated through it. We are posting 3-4 times the typical number of job postings. We are seeing a broader range of jobs, which is really good and interesting. We have had a significant bump in companies hosting their own recruitment events, that we in turn help promote. In the absence of in-person/on-site recruitment, we have implemented Spotlight Events, where essentially we are taking a typical group of 10-15 businesses, within an industry or that have like occupations, and we host a weekly event where we promote it, do all sorts of engagement, find out all sorts of information on the business, and try to educate and inform job seekers about it. The job seekers will submit resumes and the businesses that we work with agree that if the person meets the criteria, they will provide them with an interview. This has worked very well, and we are seeing some decent results. We will continue growing

and doing these types of events, at least in the near term, and we could very easily mix this into our menu of services when we open back up to the public. We are also seeing more engagement, more referrals from Monroe County, GRE, and other partners. It is exciting to see that people are engaging us to address labor needs earlier in the process. John added that RochesterWorks! is engaged in a survey, to try to get feedback from those that are not working, to try to get a real sense as to what the pulse is, what are the true reasons that they are not working. This will help, as we capture this information, to direct and guide us in how we navigate moving forward and how we can best help both business and job seekers.

### **St. Paul Career Center Report**

Kathy Ziegler reported that the Work Experience Program is still suspended. This is a State funded program that will be coming back but will remain suspended until the State lifts this suspension. This has resulted in the lay-off of half of Kathy's staff. The remaining staff are doing Individual Employability Assessments, which are a paid per service fee from Monroe County. One of these assessments can take anywhere from 1-3 hours, depending on how many times staff have to call the individuals back. Although very time consuming, Kathy feels this is worth it in the end because it is an extra fee that we are able to bill for. In addition, they are also calling the individuals back and are enrolling them in RochesterWorks! services. This gives us a great opportunity, as we are then able to get an additional rapport established with these individuals and each month, staff will send at least 3 job postings that are specific to what these individuals are looking for. Kathy added they are averaging between 60-100 new customers each month, and of those new customers, they are just following them along and continuously sending them job leads as well. Each month, the assessments are increasing, and so far, the initial assessments that are for WIOA are increasing, so they are dual enrolling in both programs, which is beneficial.

### **Other:**

### **Members Sharing & Feedback**

Sergio Esteban began this discussion by reminding folks that last year, about this time, we had talked about it being time to select a new Board Chairman. Timothy Shortsleeve was going to be the new Board Chairman. Timothy has sent an email/letter of his resignation from the Board. Based on this, and with having a new Executive Director in this position, Sergio stated that he will continue to see through the transition of the new Executive Director. As this is a critical time right now and for continuity proposes, Sergio does not feel good about stepping down from his position as Board Chairman at this time. Sergio intends on making sure that we have a good transition and at some point in the 2022 fiscal year, he will identify someone to be the next Board Chairman. Sergio, along with the help of George Scharr, will continue to help get the new Executive Director up to speed and will make sure he has the support that he needs. He added, considering all that needs to be taken care of beforehand, a good target date for the new Executive Director to start would be August 1<sup>st</sup>, or shortly after. Sergio asked everyone to keep this discussion on the new Executive Director confidential at this time.

### **Adjournment 9:32AM**

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Michael Weed and seconded by Gary Rogers. The motion was passed unanimously.

**Meeting Schedule:**  
September 21, 2021

Approved

  
Michael DeBole

  
Date

Submitted by: Mary McKeown

Reviewed by:  
Michael DeBole 6/30/2021  
Antwan Williams 7/12/21  
Lee Koslow 6/29/2021  
Viatta Carter 7/7/21  
John Premo 6/29/21  
Kathy Ziegler