



PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING

Thursday, March 22, 2007

8:00 a.m.

Merrimack Valley Workforce Investment Board

Lawrence, MA 01840

Members Present: Peter Matthews, Chair
Donna Gambon, Charles LoPiano, Shirley Callan, Pedro Arce

Members Absent: Sal Lupoli, Karen Sawyer-Faust

Staff Present: Betty Kirk, Mary Kivell

Guests Present: Arthur Chilingirian, Amy Weatherbee

1. **Approval of Minutes of 2/22/07**

Mr. Matthews called the meeting to order at 8:05 a.m. and called for a motion on the minutes of the 2/22/07 meeting.

Motion Shirley Callan seconded by Donna Gambon to approve the minutes of the February 22, 2007 meeting as submitted. Motion passed.

2. **Review of Career Center Charter**

Betty Kirk explained that after the last Planning Committee meeting she had prepared this second draft which was reviewed by Fred Carberry. She met with Arthur Chilingirian and staff who suggested some minor changes.

Arthur Chilingirian said that the biggest change is the suggestion to include the Annual Plan which is voted by the board and eliminate the Business Plan. He said that they are basically the same thing and the Annual Plan has all the performance requirements. He said that in addition to the state requirements the MVWIB can add things. Chili continued stating that without WIA reauthorization the Annual Plan will be for one year but once WIA is reauthorized there will be a five year plan, noting that the Charter is a five year charter.

Peter Matthews asked if the Charter will be a standing document and Chili said that the board may wish to modify it but it would remain basically the same. Betty Kirk said that it is a general document and we can add specificity to the Annual Plan.

Betty began by saying the Charter begins with a table of contents and on Page 3 are the mission, vision and values which are changing. On Page 4 Betty said we are adding partners Operation ABLE and Job Corps and taking out DGA as a principal partner. On Page 7 we are adding the word "oversight" under 1. Policy and Program Development, paragraph one and paragraph 4 and adding "collaboratively working together." Amy also said that to be consistent the "MVWIB" should be used throughout the document.

Betty continued on Page 8 the first paragraph, there was discussion on the "integrated management structure" and Amy Weatherbee questioned whether this is operational. She also questioned Page 2. Chartering and Monitoring, paragraph 2 suggesting deleting the words "lead operator."

Also, on Page 8 Peter Matthews noticed B. Mayor of Lawrence – Chief Elected Official and wondered whether it should just read Chief Elected Official (CEO). Discussion followed and it was agreed in keeping with the wording of the law the document should read throughout "CEO of Lower Merrimack Valley Workforce Investment Area."

Betty said that on Page 10, after discussion, the language would change to "expanding services to the employer with particular attention toward improving services to youth." Also on Page 10, under 1. Operations, paragraph one, change business plan to "Annual Plan" and WIB to "state."

Chili raised the question of whether there is an Executive Committee and if there would be one. Discussion followed including the fact that the bylaws call for the various committee chairs, appointed by the Chairman, to serve as the Executive Committee. Pedro said that in the interest of moving things forward, for the time being, he was designating the Planning Committee to also act as the Executive Committee.

Betty continued on Page 11 with the deletion under B. Business Plan to be changed to "Annual Plan" deleting Mayor of Lawrence to conform with the wording "CEO" throughout the document. Moving on to Page 12, Chili asked if quantitative measures could be included in the Charter as an attachment. Regarding training related placements a lengthy discussion followed on how to identify benchmarks and the need to define how they are measured. It was also noted that vendors also need to be held responsible for training related placements. Amy Weatherbee said that there is a need to hold vendor meetings regarding the number of slots, funding and subsequent eligibility/training related placements.

Betty said that on Page 13 under MVWIB outcomes, #4 the wording be changed to "companies who have two or more service dates." On Page 15 under VIII. #2 add "DGA." On Page 16 under C., third paragraph there is a need to define what is a reasonable time and on Page 17 to clarify a reasonable time period.

On Page 18 third paragraph add the wording "an appeal process will be considered upon notification." Under G. Appeal Process it was agreed that the first paragraph state an appeal process will be considered and to define the notice period.

With the changes discussed above, it was agreed that a revised draft would be available for the next Planning Committee meeting on April 19th.

3. Update on Little Sprouts

Planning Committee Chairman Peter Matthews said that at the request of Betty Kirk, we are adding an update on Little Sprouts to the agenda.

Amy Weatherbee explained that the Youth Council has reviewed and voted their recommendation to fund this program. As in the past, the Planning Committee needs to approve the recommendation. Amy explained that she has worked with Little Sprouts to strengthen staff support in this program by having a single point person (Project Strive Facilitator) to conduct Leadership Workshops, Occupational Skills Training, coordinate worksites, and counsel customers as necessary. They needed to tighten the outreach and enrollment period. The program is nine months long with a placement period to follow. Amy explained that they also reduced funding from 25 to 12 slots for a cost per of \$4,295.

Motion by Pedro Arce seconded by Donna Gambon to approve the recommendation of the Youth Council for funding for Little Sprouts as presented. Motion passed.

4. Update on Blueprint & Workforce Competitiveness Grant

Betty Kirk then reported on the Blueprint informing the committee that Mt. Auburn Associates was the low bidder and awarded the contract which she expects to be finished by June 1, 2007.

Betty said that we have hired a consultant, Barbara Zeimetz, to assist with the Workforce Competitiveness Grant that is due April 2, 2007. Barbara has designed a survey to employers for input regarding training needs for this custom manufacturing training initiative. Several companies have been contacted and agreed to participate including General Electric and Raytheon among others. There will be an MOU for the partners and we are working with the North Shore and Lowell WIBs on this initiative.

Regarding the planning grant, Chili said that he hasn't had time to work on this but has asked Amy to take a look. Amy said that there will only be five planning grants awarded and she needed to meet with Tom Casey because there hasn't been a very favorable response from contractors.

5. Review of Response & Recommendations of the Quality Assurance

Committee members have received copies of the responses to recommendations made by the Division of Career Services (DCS) monitors during the FY'2007 Quality Assurance Review of the Merrimack Valley Workforce Investment Area conducted October 2006 through November 20, 2006.

Arthur Chilingirian said that some of the recommendations have already been implemented. Amy Weatherbee said that they are working on the ITAs and are concerned that there is \$80,000 underutilized and we need to get to 80% for youth money or face losing some of it.

Betty spoke about some of the reports that are used and are attached to the package.

6. Monthly Performance for February

Betty then said that the monthly performance information for February has been distributed and Amy Weatherbee said that MOSES only allows her to put planning information in three places and is basically not designed for reporting out. She said that they have Joe Eid in IT and he is able of capturing information for them in Crystal reports. There was discussion on the MOSES system which is state-wide with Chili saying that MOSES is not time sensitive. He also said that there are groups that meet periodically and bring to the state suggestions from job seekers and employers with little response. He said that it is a good tool when you can access information in any career center statewide.

Chili then talked about Lucent and some upcoming reductions in workforce as well as the numbers from Smith and Nephew.

7. Adjournment

Having no further business Chick LoPiano made a motion to adjourn seconded by Pedro Arce. Motion passed.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Kivell
Recorder