



Amesbury Sports Park
12 South Hunt Road
Amesbury, MA 01913

Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, April 27, 2010
7:30 AM

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Howard Allen, Joseph Bevilacqua, Thomas Casey, Leonard Degnan, Paul Durant, Leanne Eastman, Gary Hale, Susan Jepson, Jeff Linehan, Michael Munday, Ann Ormond, Kevin Page, Cindy Phelan, Fred Shaheen, Stefanie McCowan, Peter Matthews, Donna Rivera, Cal Williams, Ray Wrobel, Juan Yepez

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Kimberly Abare, Pedro Arce, Patrick Blanchette, Wayne Capolupo, Dr. Ronald Champagne, Michael Collins, Thomas Connors, Ron Contrado, Supt. William DeRosa, James Driscoll, Howard Flagler, Julie Gadziala, Mark Forman, Julie Gadziala, Joe Gangi, Jr., David Hartleb, Robert Ingala, Barbara Grant, Robert Halpin, Atty. Robert LeBlanc, Charles LoPiano, Sal Lupoli, Maria Miles, John Olenio, Jason Pimentel, Jean Perrigo, Margaret O'Neill, Steve Salvo, Jeff Sheehy, Lester Schindel, Michael Strem, Stanley Usovicz, Len Wilson

GUESTS PRESENT:

Robert Lavoie for Mayor Thatcher Kezer, Terry Allen for Dr. Champagne, Arthur Chilingirian, Edward Bartkiewicz

STAFF PRESENT:

Fred Carberry, Elizabeth Kirk, Mary Kivell, Deborah Andrews, Corina Ossers, Odanis Hernandez, Ruth Marrero

1. Call to Order

A quorum being present, Chairman Joseph Bevilacqua called the meeting to order at 7:55 am. He welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced Robert Lavoie who was representing Amesbury in Mayor Kezer's absence. Attorney Lavoie said that he is acting mayor while Mayor Kezer is on military exercise. He said that the Amesbury Sports Park is a popular site and thanked the board for all the work they do.

2. Report of Chair

Joe Bevilacqua said that one thing we have done is be more cognizant of the role of the Mayors. When we hold the board meetings in the various communities in our region, we have asked the Mayors to give greetings. Joe said that he has formed an Executive Committee consisting of the chairs of all the committees at the request of the state in reference to the High Performing WIB Initiative. Another thing he said is, although unemployment figures have declined, there is still work

to be done with those who are underemployed and looking to help workers with career ladders. We are starting to see a turn in the economy and need to look where to add jobs in the future tying economic development and workforce development together.

Joe continued saying that this is Fred Carberry's last meeting. Although we encouraged him to stay, he decided to retire to spend more time with his family. Joe announced that we will have a new interim director, Mr. Ralph Abislaiman. Joe said that he also met with Mayor Lantigua who is committed to working with the WIB and understands the regional role. He wants to put people to work and will be at the next board meeting as he is attending to urgent city business today.

3. Approval of Minutes of January 26, 2010

Joe then called for a motion on the minutes of January 26, 2010 meeting.

Motion by Fred Shaheen seconded by Peter Mathews to approve the minutes of the January 26, 2010 meeting as submitted. Motion passed.

4. Reports of Committee Chairs ***Planning Committee***

Peter Matthews reported that at the end of the third quarter, career center performance numbers continue to reflect the struggling economy. However, the good news is that unemployment trends over the past month have shown some improvement. Overall, the unemployment rate for the Merrimack Valley and the individual cities and towns we serve, has declined by almost one percentage point. As of March 31st, the Career Center served 11,527 job seekers, which is right on plan, and 1,680 employers, which is 122% of plan. Total entered employment, however, is at 65% of plan, 10 points below the third quarter goal of 75%.

There are 243 participants enrolled in the Title I Adult Program, which is 70% of plan. We have exited 52 participants, which is only 29% of plan and our total entered employments stand at 31% of plan. These numbers are indicative of the difficulty we are having in finding employment for these individuals. Additionally, some of the participants have been out of work for so long that they have moved from the Dislocated Worker Program to the Adult Program because they are now income eligible.

Enrollees in the Dislocated Worker Program are also struggling, even though there is a substantial increase in the education levels of these individuals from last year. We have enrolled 474 participants in this program, but have only exited 126 and found employment for 108. Total exiters are at 46% of plan and total entered employments are at 48%. Last year, we stood at 82 & 84% of plan, respectively.

Performance numbers for the Title I Youth Program have improved over last year, but are still below plan in most categories. Total entered employments are at 53% of plan, a significant improvement over last year, when entered employments stood at only 28% of plan.

The Lucent/Alcatel/Haverhill Paperboard NEG has enrolled a total of 245 participants, with 152 still active, and 45 in training under the TRADE Act. We have exited 134 participants and 96 have obtained employment. This NEG ends on June 30, 2010. Active participants will be enrolled in the Dislocated Worker Program at that time.

The Planning Committee voted to approve funding for the following ARRA Group Training Proposals pending successful contract negotiations:

1. Clean Edison, LLC.; Green Job Skills Training with Next Step Living, resulting in a credential of BPI Energy Auditor. (30 slots for \$47,604)
2. Custom Group Center for Manufacturing Technology; Intro to General Machine Shop Practices, resulting in a credential of a NIMS (National Institute of Metalworking Skills) level Certification. (24 slots for \$94,800)
3. International Institute of Greater Lawrence; Green Handyman Training, resulting in a NABCEP (North American Board of Certified Energy Practitioners) certification. (15 slots for \$70,341)
4. LARE Training Center; Automotive Technologies & Certified Automotive Appraisal, resulting in ASE certifications provided by the National Automotive Technicians Education Foundation. (12 slots for \$89,554)
5. LARE Training Center; Certified Pharmacy Technician. (30 slots for \$128,463)
6. LARE Training Center; Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) Basic Training. (30 slots for \$106,366)

Peter said that the Planning Committee also voted to approve funding for the following out-of-school youth group training programs pending successful contract negotiations:

1. LARE Training Center; Education & Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) Basic Training. (10 slots for \$59,681)
2. LARE Training Center; Education & Food Service Training (24 slots for \$136,951)

Peter concluded his report stating that after a meeting with Undersecretary Jennifer James and receiving clarification on specific issues in our original plan, the resubmission for High Performing WIB Certification was sent to the Division of Career Services on Wednesday, April 21st. We are very optimistic that our resubmission will be successful. There is a one-time award of \$100,000 upon certification.

Youth Council

Cal Williams, Youth Council Chair, reported on youth programming. He said that the last of the extended Summer Jobs for Youth programs wrapped up at the end of March with the final report in the meeting packets. Highlights include: Total number of youth served -801, Total wages earned by youth - \$1,209,966, and Number of worksites with youth – 165.

Cal said that last year we received \$397,000 from the state for YouthWorks summer jobs. This year we will receive \$223,000. With this reduction in funding, we can only serve up to 160 youth rather than approximately 200 in typical years. In addition, YouthWorks funding is limited geographically and is required to be used in Lawrence and Haverhill, with only 10% allowed to be used in other communities.

There are two ARRA bills passed by the House that are now pending in the Senate that include funding for summer jobs. We are watching to see what happens with them. If one or both of them is funded, we will have money to serve more youth in more communities throughout the Valley.

Cal continued his report stating that our out-of-school youth training RFP was released in November. We received 6 responses, two of which were recommended for funding by the Youth Council and approved by a vote of the Planning Committee. We are funding two group programs that are exciting because they are new to us and they fulfill our need for more training programs that lead to

a career that attracts males. We serve 85% females and 15% males in our youth programs. The programs also include the required educational components that address the lack of a GED or Basic Skills Deficiency. LARE is the vendor for both new programs. The first program is the Out-of-School Youth Education and Emergency Medical Technician Training program and the second is Out-of-School Youth Education and Culinary Training program.

Construction Career Day will take place on May 6th in Hopkington this year and we have filled 63 slots with youth from 10 Merrimack Valley Schools. This is a wonderful opportunity for youth to have a hands-on experience with construction tools and equipment while asking questions of construction professionals.

Cal said that Howard Allen is facilitating our teacher externship program this year. He is well qualified through his own business experience as well as through his extensive work at the college level developing and teaching business management programs. The externships are focused on curriculum development, orienting teachers to the workplace, visiting businesses and developing follow-up curricula for them and other teachers to use in the classroom. We have two teachers this year, one from Haverhill High School and one from Lawrence High School. Our own MVWIB member, Mike Strem from Strem Chemicals has an extern and the other is at Stanley Bostick. These are superior externs with exciting placements in STEM fields, which are Science, Technology, Engineering and Math. We are planning to offer more extensive externships next year and are soliciting members interested in serving on the STEM Externship Advisory Council.

He said that the Youth Council welcomed Heidi Riccio, from Greater Lawrence Technical School and Beverly DeSalvo from Whittier Technical School to our Youth Council. They both bring a lot of energy, expertise, and innovation to the Council.

Nominating Committee

Ann Ormond, Chair of the Nominating Committee, reported that the Nominating Committee met on Thursday, April 15th, 2010 at 11:00am at the MVWIB offices. We are pleased to be working with our new Chief Elected Official, Mayor William Lantigua on our process for nominating members to our Board. The Mayor has taken an active and committed interest and is in the process of reviewing the current membership. The Mayor is in agreement with the committee that Board membership should reflect our region geographically and demographically, and that membership from critical and emerging industries is strongly represented.

Ann then said that the Nominating Committee would like to recommend the following individual for membership to the Board: Mr. Raymond Wrobel, Vice President of Business Development, Northern Massachusetts Telephone Workers Community Credit Union, Branch Office in Haverhill, MA.

Motion by Cal Williams seconded by Mike Munday to approve the recommendation of Ray Wrobel Vice President of Business Development, Northern Massachusetts Telephone Workers Community Credit Union as a member of the board. Motion passed.

5. Report of Executive Director

Fred Carberry began his remarks stating that he would like to thank Stefanie McCowan of the Amesbury Chamber of Commerce & Industry and MVWIB Youth Program Manager, Deb Andrews, for helping to make arrangements for our meeting here at the Amesbury Sports Park. He also said that he would like to thank Amesbury Mayor Thatcher Kezer for his continued involvement in the work of

the Merrimack Valley WIB. The Board has made a concerted effort to move our quarterly meetings to various locations up and down the Merrimack Valley, in an effort to be inclusive and connected with the unique workforce development needs of our entire coverage area. Our next meeting, on June 24th, will be in Newburyport.

Fred said that he is pleased to announce that last week, the MVWIB re-submitted our High Performing Workforce Board packet to the Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development. In accordance with our discussions, which included our Chairman, Joe Bevilacqua, WIB staff, myself, with the Under-secretary of Labor and Workforce Development, Jennifer James, over the last several months, we comprehensively updated our HPWB documentation to reflect her advice and comments, as well as those of the MVWIB's HPWB Advisory Council and newly formed Executive Committee.

Our re-submission packet contains the following: A revised MVWIB HPWB Strategic Plan – which responds to specific questions and comments from EOLWD, providing a more detailed vision of the strategic priorities of the MVWIB; its extant or planned methodologies; and a broad overview of the multi-faceted, board-driven approach that the MVWIB is utilizing in order to:

- Build the capacity of the workforce system
- Address the regional skills gap in key sectors; namely: Health Care, Manufacturing (both traditional and advanced), Green Jobs, and Life Sciences
- Enhance the youth pipeline

Also included is an MVWIB HPWB Overview - which features a graphical representation of the MVWIB as a High Performing WIB, including: mission, vision, priorities, goals, objectives, systemic overview, and committee structure; An Updated MVWIB Performance Scorecard - based on EOLWD recommendations and comments, which include detailed priorities and quantifiable performance gains, relevant to specific initiatives; An MVWIB HPWB Revenue Plan - defining specific workforce priorities; current resources; projected shortfall; potential resources; and how to measure success. Our re-submission will be reviewed by state officials in the very near future. I am extremely optimistic that we will be granted HPWB certification this time.

Fred said that the MVWIB joined with the Greater Lowell Workforce Investment Board and Southern New Hampshire Workforce Opportunity Council in a DOL funded **Regional Innovation Grant or "RIG"** to support the sustainability of our regional manufacturing industry. Despite declines in manufacturing nationwide, this sector remains of critical importance to our regional economy, with one out of five Merrimack Valley workers being part of the manufacturing sector; and, for this reason, is a primary focus of our efforts.

On Friday, April 9th, as a product of the RIG initiative, the inaugural meeting of the newly formed Merrimack Valley Manufacturing Advocates was held at a luncheon at the Andover Wyndham. We were honored to have Daniel J. Ryan, Vice President of the Operations and Integrated Supply Chain Cross-Business Team (CBT) for Raytheon Integrated Defense Systems (IDS) as our guest speaker. The Agenda included:

- Manufacturers in Massachusetts and New Hampshire speaking about the challenges and opportunities in the current business environment;
- A review of the key findings from the recently completed Merrimack Valley Survey of Manufacturers;
- A brief review of resources and opportunities available to employers for workforce and economic development activities;

- Identification of primary advocacy/support issues and next steps.

The meeting is the first step in a regional effort to develop ways to support the manufacturing industry, and enhance our local economy, to meet the industry's workforce training needs.

Fred continued stating that last month, Governor Patrick announced the award of a Health Care Skills Gap Grant to workforce boards across the Commonwealth. Here in Massachusetts, healthcare jobs rank among the 30 fastest growing occupations, with allied health jobs such as Personal and Home Care Aides and Home Health Aides being among the top five, growing by 36% and 34% respectively. In addition, nursing positions are expected to increase to more than 16,000 jobs and Home Health Aides (HHA) by 5,820. Demand for Certified Nursing Assistants (CNAs) and RNs continues to be high due to high turnover and burnout. While economic conditions in 2009 reduced turnover levels somewhat, staffing remains a problem among our employer partners, for whom turnover rates of frontline healthcare workers (CNAs, HHA, Attendants) range from 15% to 40%. From just our four employer partners, we project a need for 186 CNAs and HHAs in the 2010 to 2012 period. However, employers struggle to hire and develop healthcare workers due to their low levels of academic proficiency, including math and reading. Moreover, while the healthcare sector is demanding higher skills and educational levels, college education is often an impossible goal for the population of the Merrimack Valley area, where 1 of 3 immigrants has limited English skills. In order to address these challenges, we have partnered with Notre Dame Education Center, Northern Essex Community College, WorkSource Partners, and ValleyWorks Career Center, to:

- Enhance an existing and already successful CNA program with academic programming, customer service and content on aging; so as to graduate and place individuals who can be successful CNAs, access further training opportunities including college education, and advance in the healthcare industry.
- Design a "Bridge to Allied Health Careers" course through Northern Essex Community College, which will prepare individuals to enter college-level certificate and degree programs.
- Offer academic remediation to incumbent and unemployed individuals, in order to improve their skills and facilitate their pathway to job, career and educational growth.

A project team, comprised of representatives from each partner organization will be involved in the planning, design and evaluation of this initiative. The MVWIB will provide ongoing oversight and project management for this initiative.

We are also a partner on a Green Jobs training initiative called the State Energy Sector Partnership, along with the Northshore WIB and the Greater Lowell WIB. Our training strategy is based on four key components: First, to target industry sectors for which the state's energy policy is acting as a driver to grow jobs, Second, to target occupations for which businesses have identified demand and for which workers can be prepared in less than 2 years, Third, to leverage the investments made through state energy training funds to build training capacity throughout the state, and Fourth, leverage the capacity provided through the Workforce Investment Act and state investments to develop regional WIB and Career Center infrastructure. We are specifically interested in placement and training opportunities that would be appropriate for blue collar dislocated workers, veterans, and low-skilled unemployed residents (including out-of-school older youth). Our three-WIB joint venture will receive \$950,000 to fund the program over the next two years.

Fred said that at our January meeting, he informed the board about the ARRA Group Training proposals that were under review. He is pleased to announce that six innovative and original

proposals were selected for funding, including Green Jobs Skills training, Emergency Medical Technician, Pharmacy Technician, General Machine Shop skills, Green Handyman Training, and Automotive Technologies and Appraisal. We look forward to the launch of these training programs, and trust that they lead to successful job placements.

In the interest of time Fred said that he has tried to summarize some of the more interesting and noteworthy programs for your edification.

Fred began by stating that as most of you are aware, he will be retiring from his position as MVWIB Executive Director on May 1st. Having been here for a little over four years, he said that he can honestly say that the volume of work seems to grow continuously. This may be a result of the poor economy or perhaps our efforts in achieving High-Performing status; but, there is one element that has allowed the MVWIB to grow in relevance as our region's preeminent workforce development entity. And that element is undeniably, a small but incredibly talented staff, who make it all possible. Fred then called on the WIB staff individually to please stand and be recognized. Any progress that we have made as a WIB has been due to the persistent and unswerving efforts of these fine workers. He said that he is blessed to be counted not as their Director, but as their friend.

In addition to having a first rate staff, Fred said that he also had the pleasure of working with some extraordinary Board members, including our committee chairs: Peter Matthews; Ann Ormond; Cal Williams; and our Board Chair Joe Bevilacqua and so many dedicated members of our Board from private industry; education; labor; and government. He said that it has been a privilege to serve as the Executive Director.

Fred also acknowledged the hard-working staff of the ValleyWorks Career Center and its Executive Director, Arthur Chilingirian. ValleyWorks is consistently one of the best performing career centers in the state, and they do this while serving one of the most demographically difficult to serve populations in the state.

In closing, Fred quoted the famous last words of Emma Lazarus' 1883 sonnet, "The New Colossus", which are as timely today as they were 127 years ago: ***"Give me your tired, your poor, Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free, The wretched refuse of your teeming shore. Send these, the homeless, tempest-tost to me, I lift my lamp beside the golden door!"***

Fred then said remember my friends and colleagues: It is you, helping a new immigrant enroll in an ESOL class; It is you, funding a CNA training program for a single mother; It is you, giving the ex-offender a second chance to earn an honest living; It is you, offering hope to the high school dropout; It is you, retraining the unemployed father trying to keep a roof over his children's heads; It is you, who keep the lamp burning brightly.

He thanked everyone for listening and for allowing him the honor of leading the MVWIB staff for the last four years.

Joe Bevilacqua then said that he would like to recognize Fred Carberry on behalf of the board and the committee chairs. He said that Fred was never deferred by challenges and because of the work of the WIB and ValleyWorks Career Center our programs are working. He then presented Fred with a plaque in appreciation of his work at the MVWIB as Executive Director.

6. Amendment to Articles of Organization

Fred Carberry said that the Articles of Amendment allows for us to amend our Articles of Organization on file with the Commonwealth of Massachusetts under Article IV, add Section (F). The language was included in the meeting packages and was requested by the Internal Revenue Service in response to our 501©3 application. Fred then read the two paragraphs the IRS requested added to our Articles of Organization.

Motion by Fred Shaheen seconded by Cal Williams to approve the amendment to the Articles of Organization as presented. Motion passed with twenty board members present and fifteen voting electronically for a total of thirty five members (over two-thirds of the membership).

7. Adoption of Formal Grievance/Complaint Policy

Fred said that also included in the meeting packets was a copy of the Formal Grievance/Complaint Policy which has been in place the last eight years. During our recent monitoring it was suggested that the board take a formal vote to approve the policy.

Motion by Cal Williams seconded by Peter Matthews to approve the Formal Grievance/Complaint Policy as submitted. Motion passed.

Joe Bevilacqua said that although it is a sad day to lose Fred Carberry, we look forward to working with Ralph Abislaiman who was born in Cuba, attended Boston College, and is a member of the United States Naval Reserves. He has been deployed twice since 9/11 and has been responsible for the installation of Navy Control Centers. He began working in Lawrence in 1987 at DTD and then the Gateway Cities Initiative. He became Executive Director of the International Institute in 1991.

9. Adjournment

Having no further business Howard Allen made a motion to adjourn and Ray Wrobel seconded the motion. Motion passed and meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Kivell

Recorder