

Washtenaw County  
**Workforce Development Board (WDB)**  
General Session  
Meeting Minutes

**Meeting Date:** Monday, July 7, 2008 **Meeting Time:** 8:00 AM

**Meeting Location:** 301 W. Michigan Avenue, Suite 400, Ypsilanti, MI 48197, Alpha Level Conference Room

**Members Present:** Suzanne Bade, Jesse Bernstein, Dorothy Quinn, Cindy Harrison, Commissioner Jeff Irwin, Diane Keller, Mary Kerr, Mike Martin, Diana McKnight-Morton, William Miller, Michael Schippani, Keith Peters, Wesley Prater, Gregg Weaver, Anne Williams, Donn Wolf, Cynthia Travis

**Members Absent:** Daphne Adams, Nicholas Fortson, Gene Graber, Fiona Greenland, Steven Gulick, Eric Mahler, Mark Ouimet, Timothy Robinson, Clifford Smith Jr.

**Staff Present:** Trenda Rusher, Jenny Bivens, Tiffany Lucas, Rana Al-Igoe

**Guests Present:** Joanne Morris, Rolland Sizemore

**I. Call to Order**

- Peters called the meeting to order at 8:05 AM.

**II. Welcome and Introductions**

- Peters welcomed everyone to the meeting and asked the Board Members and Guests to introduce themselves. The Board Members and Guests introduced themselves.

**III. Public Comment**

- There was no comment from the public.

**IV. Approval of the Agenda**

- Rusher amended the agenda to remove both items F and G from the Report of the Executive Director. Wolf added the Community Action Report

**Wolf moved to approve the meeting agenda as amended. Prater supported. The meeting agenda was approved as amended.**

**V. Consent Agenda**

A. Approval of the meeting minutes

- McKnight-Morton pointed out that she was listed as supporting a motion to approve the meeting minutes at the last meeting, to which she was not present. She asked that the meeting minutes be amended to reflect her absence.
- **Wolf moved to approve the meeting minutes as amended. McKnight-Morton supported. The meeting minutes were approved as amended.**

**VI. Report of the Chair**

A. Announcements and Updates

- Peters announced that several of the Workforce Development Board (WDB) Members would be attending the Workforce Innovation Conference in New Orleans. Rusher noted that the United States Department of Labor (USDOL) had asked that the WDB send members to give a two day intensive training workshop on Access Points. Washtenaw County was chosen because our County has been a leader throughout the nation in starting and training new Access Points. To date, we have nearly 30 Access points total. ETCS Program Manager, Jenny Bivens, Kevin Bulifant of our Michigan Works! One Stop Service Center, along with ETCS Director, Trenda Rusher will be facilitating these training sessions at the conference.
- Rusher also pointed out that the Access Points will be teaming up with Diane Keller, President of the Ypsilanti Chamber of Commerce and the Christian Business Coalition to link businesses into the great opportunities for training and partnership through the Access Points.

B. Business Update

- Keller reported that the Ypsilanti Economic Development Group has put together a list of exciting projects that they will be working on to boost the economic health of Ypsilanti. However, those projects cannot be revealed at this time as they have not gone before the Ypsilanti City Council for approval.

Also the Eastside Economic Development Group is working on developing the Gateway Area of Ypsilanti, which encompasses the Parkview Area, and the downtown Ypsilanti Area.

- Bernstein noted that the Community Success project was progressing well and that the Cultural Plan was coming together. There is a lot of discussion about developing talent, but Bernstein pointed out that focusing on the transportation system is also a vital piece of economic and workforce development, adding

that this is the reason he sits on the Ann Arbor Transportation Authority (AATA) Board.

- The Ann Arbor IMPACT event will be coming up soon on September 10, 2008 at the Kensington Court- Ann Arbor. He noted that it will focus on education and cooperation and collaboration in government. Bob Guenzel and Roger Frasier will facilitate.
- Thomas Freedman will be visiting with the Washtenaw Economic Club. His visit will be coupled with other events and will be hosted at the EMU Convocation Center. This will hopefully allow the Washtenaw Economic Club to accommodate everyone interested in attending. There is special seating, but the stadium seats will only cost \$10.00 per person.
- Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi will be in Washtenaw County at the Borders store in Ann Arbor for a book signing on August 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup>.

#### C. Labor Update

- Prater reported that Road Construction is in full swing and that 2008 will be a major year in Construction.
- The Washtenaw County unemployment rate is low compared to the rest of the State, but this will still be a tough year as there are still skilled tradesmen who do not have jobs available.
- The Alternative Energy Project will be very important and Prater noted that if he is elected Commissioner in the upcoming elections he would like to focus on alternative energy as a source for heat. Peters noted that the Employer's Committee had recently explored alternative energy as well.
- Martin reported that with the help of Governor Granholm the Film Agency was able to finalize a contract and there are now several projects in progress.
- Rusher noted that the Film group has been working through talent agencies to find many new hires, but she was wondering why they have not worked through the Department of Labor and Economic Growth(DLEG) to find talent. Martin reported that he was not certain why, but would check into the matter to find out. Prater added that many don't understand the benefits of going through DLEG.

#### D. City of Ann Arbor Liaison Report

- There was no City Liaison in attendance at the meeting

### **VII. Report of the Chief Elected Official**

- Irwin reported that the County had recently gone to bid on the jail expansion project and will hopefully be moving forward on that soon.
- There is a “Green County” initiative in progress. It will not only explore wind energy, but will also look at many different avenues of sustaining alternative energy resources.
- In addition to many of the local conversations that are happening the WA-LI project team has been drafting mass transportation projects between to connect Walled Lake and Livonia. The documents have just been published to [www.ewashtenaw.org](http://www.ewashtenaw.org) are now available. On the east and west side the transportation efforts are projected to be completed in 2010.
- Talks are also moving forward on the SPARK East Incubator, and the project is still progressing. At the County we are committed to make the SPARK East Incubator a reality.

## VIII. Knowledge and Innovation Feature

### A. Career Jam

- Sizemore explained that Career Jam is a program conducted to expose youth to alternative career opportunities through hands on experience. We’ve found in the past that a byproduct of the Career Jam Program is that many of the parents of the youth who attend also end up finding job opportunities as well. These are opportunities that do not necessarily require a four-year degree, but will enable these students to make a decent living and support themselves in the future.

Rusher noted that ETCS is able to leverage both Workforce Development and Community Action funds in order to do some very creative things for Career Jam. When the program was first hosted years ago it was done from a business perspective.

**Bernstein moved to approved to support the Career Jam Program. Prater supported. Motion carried.**

## IX. Report of the Executive Director

### A. Federal/State/Local Updates

#### Federal

- Rusher reported that we are still working with David Bradley to get the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) reauthorized, but even after 5 years we still do

not have funding, however Congress did thwart President Bush's cuts to the program.

#### State

- Rusher noted that she sits on the State Council for Labor and Economic Growth (CLEG), who will be starting an initiative to make Michigan the hub for entrepreneurship in the United States. The initiative is only in draft form at this point, but it aims to change the way we think about entrepreneurship, and will focus on fostering entrepreneurial traits in children from grade school.

#### Local

- We are working very hard with the Chambers to help economic and workforce development. Recently Mike Finney and I met with the SEMWAC group to discuss how our workforce development and economic development staff work together to help keep the unemployment rate low in Washtenaw County, and how we make businesses want to come to our County. The group was very impressed with the way we have hired a Talent Director to work between the two agencies.

#### B. Resolutions

- i. ETCS is requesting that the Workforce Development Board (WDB) approve the ETCS plan application to the Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Growth (MDLEG) for the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) Incumbent Worker Training (IWT) Program for the period of July 1, 2008 through June 30, 2009 in the amount of \$192,278 for Washtenaw County.  
**There was brief discussion. Prater moved to approve the resolution. Keller supported. Motion carried.**
- ii. ETCS requests the approval of the Workforce Development Board (WDB) on the Program Year (PY) 2008 Workforce Investment Act (WIA) Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth Plan for the period of July 1, 2008 through June 30, 2009 in the total amount of \$3,993,840.  
**There was brief discussion. Wolf moved to approve the resolution. Keller supported. Motion carried.**

#### C. Business and Education Entrepreneurial Partnerships Plan

- Miller reported that the approval of this plan will be delayed to allow the proper procurement process to be conducted. We would like to go out for bid, and get the Board's approval to do so. We will also pull in the Business Side (B-Side) organization to assist with this plan.

**Prater moved to approve the bid process. McKnight-Morton supported. Motion carried.**

#### D. Ann Arbor Chamber Youth Leadership

Rusher noted that we have historically approved the Ann Arbor Chamber's Youth Leadership program, as it is a stellar program, and is a national pilot for youth. The youth go through the program to hopefully entice them to stay in Michigan and to introduce them to different opportunities and careers. The Ann Arbor School system should be commended, as they have been an integral supporter of the program.

**Wolf moved to support the Ann Arbor Chamber Youth Leadership program. McKnight-Morton supported. Motion carried.**

- E. GDI Inc. – Customized Job Guarantee Program
  - o The idea behind the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) was to help employers recruit and train talent through the workforce development center. GDI approached Washtenaw County ETCS to help with talent recruitment necessary to expand their business. GDI needed at least 30 qualified candidates. ETCS has been assisting GDI to find the talent they need, and we have come up with a really exciting training package that will help GDI fill the jobs they have available. The candidates that we screen for the training program will go through an extensive training and will be guaranteed jobs, provided that they complete the training program successfully. The jobs pay in the range of approximately \$60,000.00 annually. This proposal has gone before the Employers Committee and the Executive Committee already and has been approved. We think it is a great opportunity. Peters added that as Chair of the Board, he recommends approval.

**Weaver moved to approve the GDI Customized Training Proposal. Wolf supported. Motion carried.**

## **X. Report of the Committees**

- A. Education Advisory Group
  - i. CVS Partnership
    - o Miller noted that the EAG will be entering into a partnership with CVS aligned with the Early College Alliance, which will expose youth to career paths in the pharmaceutical industry.
- B. Strategic Planning Committee
  - i. Labor Assessment Update
    - o The Labor Assessment is now available online at [www.ewashtenaw.org/etcs](http://www.ewashtenaw.org/etcs). We also have copies available on disc for the entire Board today.
- C. Employers Committee
  - ii. Announcements and Updates

- The Employers Committee is continuing to do work with MEGA-P. At the last meeting we discussed the new CLEG Entrepreneurship proposal, and also talked about the need to look at additional funding opportunities
- Rusher noted that we did not get funding for our RSA, and that she will be pursuing the funding anyway. The group has already begun making a list of the top ten reasons why the program should have been funded. Our RSA is a model for the State, and therefore it should have been funded. The funding lost was \$30,000.00.
- The Southeast Michigan MWA's will be changing their names to the Southeast Michigan Works! Caucus.

**XI. Community Action Report**

- McKnight- Morton reported that the Community Action Board will be hosting their First Annual Community Action Day BBQ on August 9<sup>th</sup> 2008 at the Harriet Street Community Action Agency Office. This event will be held in tandem with the Quarterly Food Distribution Day, and will honor Community Action Board member Joseph Dulin.

**XII. Other Business**

- There was no other business.

**XIII. Adjournment**

- Peters adjourned the meeting at 10:08 AM.