

Washtenaw County  
**Workforce Development Board**  
General Session  
Minutes

- Meeting Date:** Thursday, November 03, 2005 **Time:** 8:00 am
- Members Present:** Anne Williams, Cindy Harrison, Clifford Smith, Diane Davidson, Donn Wolf, Frank Zyber, Gene Graber, Gregg Weaver, James Frenza, James Magyar, Cynthia Maritato, Keith Peters, Mark Ouimet, Mary Kerr, Nicholas Fortson, Steven Gulick, Timothy Robinson, William Miller and James Bunton.
- Members Absent:** David Potter, Diana McKnight-Morton (excused), Edward Resha (excused), Eric Mahler (excused), Janie Jones (excused), Sabrina Keeley (excused) and Suzanne Bade (excused).
- Staff Present:** Trenda Rusher, Jenny Bivens and Rana Al-Igoe – Washtenaw County ETCS  
Kevin Bulifant and Joanne Morris – Washtenaw County MWSC
- Guests Present:** Dennis Sykes and Irma Zuckerberg – Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Growth (DLEG) and Denise Dalrymple – Washtenaw County Children’s Services Department

1. **Call to Order**  
Wolf called the meeting to order at 8:03 am
2. **Welcome and Introductions**  
Wolf welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked Washtenaw Community College for allowing us to use their room at the Michigan Works! Service Center. Everyone introduced him/her self.
3. **Approval of the Agenda**  
Weaver moved to approve the meeting agenda. Davidson supported. Meeting agenda approved.
4. **Public Comment**  
There were no comments from the public.
5. **Consent Agenda Items**
  - A. Approval of the Minutes  
Ouimet moved to approve the minutes from the 09/08/05 general session. Davidson supported. Meeting minutes approved.
  - B. Resolutions
    - i. Ratification of the Chair of the Board’s signature on the fiscal year (FY) 2005 Displaced Homemaker Program plan in the amount of \$35,872 for the period of July 1, 2005 through June 30, 2006.
      - o This plan is a pass through. The State goes out for a request for proposals (RFP). They decide who gets the grant and contracts with ETCS to provide oversight.
      - o Davidson asked whether staff had some outcomes from the work that the subcontractor has done in the past. Staff replied that although the subcontractor does good work, they do not do a good job of filing reports and filling the

necessary paperwork. Bivens noted that the ETCS passed comments on to the State, yet they continue to award the subcontractor the grant. Rusher added that staff continues to write letters to the State stating our concerns. It was suggested that as state plans are set up, some input and more involvement from the locals should be factored in. Rusher thanked Board members for their comments and asked that they bring this up later in the meeting when the DLEG guests arrive. Bivens noted that in previous years, the subcontractors have been the only providers in the area of this service. It was agreed that this issue be brought up later so that DLEG might help. Bivens added that the subcontractor has a new director and hopefully things will improve.

- ii. Ratification of the Chief Elected Official's signature on the FY 04-05 Workforce Investment Act (WIA) Incumbent Worker Program Plan to the Michigan DLEG in the amount of \$218,495 for the period of October 1, 2004 through September 30, 2005.
- iii. Request for approval of the Award for the Food Assistance Employment Training (FAE&T) Program Services for the period of October 1, 2005 through September 30, 2006.
  - o The food assistance program allows us to provide employment training services to food stamp recipients.
  - o While the procurement was for a two year period, funding is received on an annual basis. Therefore, recommendations are being made for the selection of service providers for the two year period, while funding is recommended for a one year period. Upon receipt of the FY 06 funding, updated recommendations will be brought to the Board for approval. The draft FY 06 allocation is \$82,257.
  - o Bivens noted that she just met with the Department of Human Services (DHS) yesterday to discuss collaboration. She noted that this service is voluntary and one thing we need to do is spark interest among possible customers.

Ouimet moved to approve all three resolutions. Weaver supported. Resolutions pass.

Rusher noted that all consent agenda items have been reviewed by the Executive Committee prior to the General Session.

## **6. Report of the Chair**

### **A. Announcements and Updates – Wolf**

- i. DLEG Regional Leadership Training
  - o Harrison, Peters, Williams and others attended the state-wide DLEG Regional Leadership Training. Harrison reported that the day was very interesting. There was a lot of discussion on how to recruit Board members. The afternoon was spent working on a strategic plan. Harrison noted that for the Washtenaw County WDB members, this was a bit redundant because this is something we do regularly. Peters agreed with Harrison.
- ii. Super Bowl
  - o Wolf asked Kerr to talk about the upcoming Super Bowl. Kerr reported that Ann Arbor was invited to participate as a Super City for the upcoming Super Bowl. There are a number of events and activities planned around the Super Bowl. There is a fundraising event that will be held at the Ypsilanti Marriott. All money generated from that event will go to support youth programming for community foundation in our area.
  - o Rusher added that the Southeastern Michigan Works! Agency Coalition (SEMWAC) is working to train hospitality staff in time for the Super Bowl. A grant was submitted to the State to develop a program to help get employee

training through community colleges. Rusher fondly named the program the Quarterback Sneak. The program is kicking off this week with a number of area hotels participating. This is a great opportunity for us because it allows many in the area to collaborate. There was a recent article in Crain's; this article found that many of the hospitality employees didn't know enough about the community. In hospitality, employees move around a lot. This gives us the opportunity to ensure they are being trained. It was noted that Washtenaw County has the highest hotel occupancy in the nation. This means we have a lot of business coming in and that it is really growing at a fast pace. This is exciting for us because we have engaged the area hotels, taxi cab companies, and the next wave will be with the gas stations. Rusher added that for those participating in the Quarterback Sneak, ETCS has developed a trophy that can be on display in their place of business. This is all very exciting.

- Rusher noted that Kerr has been very valuable and is a great representative of our County.
- Wolf added that this is great for the Washtenaw County WDB because we initiated a hospitality industry cluster roundtable a number of years ago. This is one of the results of that. Kerr added that this allows us to develop the curriculum of the hospitality industry. The training track will included the things that are happening in our community.

#### B. Report of the Nominating Committee – Gulick

- Gulick noted how pleased he was with the work that the committee did.
- Last year, two co-chairs were created for one of the vice chair slots due to the requirements in the Board bylaws. There was some discussion about a bylaws change; it was proposed that the requirement of two of the three vice chairs be from the private sector be dropped. Gulick suggested that we omit this requirement, as it is not a requirement of State law.
- Frenza moved to strike the last sentence of the WDB Bylaws in Article IV Section II that states, "Two of the three vice-chairs must be from the private sector." Kerr supported. The Bylaws also state that any changes must be distributed at least seven (7) calendar days prior to the date of the meeting at which the changes are to be considered. Since the change was distributed today, this action must be ratified at the next Board meeting where there is a quorum. Furthermore, the affirmative vote to amend the Bylaws must be by a vote of two-thirds of the members present.
- Wolf noted that we could continue with our elections today, since the officers do not take office until the next Board meeting.
- Gulick announced that the offices of the three Vice Chairs were uncontested. The office of Chair however was. Gulick laid out the procedure for Board elections. Members will be asked whether there are any nominations from the floor for each office three times. The current Chair will appoint tellers to count the ballots for the office of Chair and any other office if there are nominations from the floor. Wolf elected Al-Igoe and Ouimet as tellers.
- Gulick asked if there were any nominations from the floor for the office of Vice Chair of Workforce Development three times. There was none. Wolf moved that a unanimous vote be cast to accept the Nominating Committee's recommendation of Cindy Harrison as Vice Chair of Workforce Development. Ouimet supported. Motion passes.
- Gulick asked if there were any nominations from the floor for the office of Vice Chair of Youth and Educational Services three times. There was none. Wolf moved that a

unanimous vote be cast to accept the Nominating Committee's recommendation of Bill Miller as Vice Chair of Youth and Education. Harrison supported. Motion passes.

- Gulick asked if there were any nominations from the floor for the office of Vice Chair of Community Services three times. There was none. Wolf moved that a unanimous vote be cast to accept the Nominating Committee's recommendation of Steve Gulick as Vice Chair of Youth and Education. Weaver supported. Motion passes.
- Gulick asked if there were any nominations from the floor for the office of Chair of the Workforce Development Board. There were no nominations from the floor. Ballots were distributed to all voting members on the Board. Gulick asked that votes be cast for the office of Chair. Tellers collected the ballots and tallied them.

### C. Business Update

#### i. Ypsilanti Area Chamber of Commerce – Peters

- There will be a decision on the new developer of the Water Street Project in January or February.
- Peters extended an invitation to the January 20, 2006 Post Holiday Gala at the Washtenaw Community College Morris Lawrence Building. It will be held from 5:30 – 10:00 pm and is a free event.
- Eastern Michigan University is discontinuing their Relations Department effective immediately.
- Peters was recently elected as the Chair of the Board of the Michigan Chamber of Commerce Executives.
- Peters noted that the Ford Rawsonville Plant will increase the number of its employees by up to 500, which is good news for the Ypsilanti Area. Everyone is committed to the project.
- Prater added that Toyota in York Township is proceeding. The improvements on the roads are almost complete. Groundbreaking will take place as early as the spring. Toyota might employ more than 2000 employees.
- Peters noted that the East-West airstrip at the Willow Run Airport is expanding. This will allow larger planes to use the airport, which will have a huge and wonderful impact on the area. The airport has developed a large number of acres for businesses to move in. There is some objection to the proposed plan from the Van Buren Township. Commissioner Sizemore is the County liaison to this project.

#### ii. Ann Arbor Area Chamber of Commerce – Rusher for Keeley

- Rusher reported on the Youth Leadership Mentoring program where the youth have been working side-by-side with the adults in the Chamber's mentoring program. There are seven youth participating on this project from area schools.

There was a break in the meeting when Dennis Sykes and Irma Zuckerberg arrived. Wolf introduced and thanked them for joining the meeting today. Wolf asked everyone to introduce themselves.

### D. Labor Update

- Gulick reported that Resha was very sick and unable to attend today. He is in the hospital and actually wanted to check out to attend the meeting.
- The outlook of Washtenaw County is really good right now. Road construction continues.
- Eyes are being kept on Pfizer; the company was scheduled to expand but is experiencing some layoffs.

- Gulick noted how far ahead our Board is compared to others at a National conference he attended recently. Organized labor is looking at expanding. Gulick added that the economic outlook overall is looking really good.

## **7. Report of the Board of Commissioners (BOC) Chief Elected Official** – Prater

### A. Announcements and Updates

- Prater reported that last night, the BOC adopted the 06/07 budget. There were no eliminations of any active employees at this time. Law enforcement contracts are a major issue that the BOC has been working on. A petition drive has been set up. There may be enough signatures to put this resolution on the ballot. If it goes to the ballot, commissioners may rescind the resolution.

There was another break in the meeting agenda so that the results of the vote could be announced. Gulick thanked the tellers for their work. Keith Peters was elected as Chair of the Board for 2006. Gulick noted the tremendous work and time members dedicate to this Board. He added how pleased he is to work with so many great board members. Wolf thanked Gulick for the work that he does and for representing the board so well. Frenza thanked Williams for all of her hard work and dedication to the WDB as well. Peters thanked the Board and stated how he was looking forward to a great year as Chair. Rusher noted that with his new position as the State Chamber President, Peters will set a great example of how the Chambers need to work with their local WDBs. Rusher added that the Board staff will help in any way they can.

## **8. Report of the Executive Director** – Rusher

### A. Announcements and Updates

#### i. NACo Joe Cooney Award

- Rusher presented an award to Kevin Bulifant, one of the managers at the Michigan Works! Service Center, on behalf of the WDB. He was chosen as this year's Joe Cooney Award winner by the National Association of Counties (NACo). The Award was for Excellence in Workforce Development and is given to an individual who has made a substantial contribution to employment and training. Bulifant thanked the Board for the award. Bulifant added how pleased he is to work with such a great Board and staff.

#### ii. Youth Employment / Internship Website

- Rusher introduced Denise Dalrymple, the Director of the Washtenaw County Children's Services Department who talked about the Youth Employment /Internship Website proposal.
- This is a cutting edge proposal for the department to partner with the community college, community foundations, and area businesses.
- The County Commissioners have a vision for teens in the County outlined in the Washtenaw Area Teens for Tomorrow (WATT) program. The Department of Children's Services is working on about twelve other proposals; mentoring is a separate proposal. The purpose of WATT is to try to pull together existing programs.
- At a recent youth summit, participants stated that they wanted a kind of Monsters.com for teens. What is different with this project is that employers can list jobs and are then contacted by staff. Teens can look for jobs and their requests are funneled to staff. So staff is the link between employers and the young job seekers. Youth learn the value of resumes. The next youth forum is on December 3 where all of the proposals will be reviewed and a discussion will take place.

Software will be provided for free from Santa Clara, California, where the program started.

- Online services include links to local colleges and universities and other opportunities. Juvenile Court and Ann Arbor Center for Independent Living are some of the partners.
- Miller added that the Education Advisory Group (EAG) is meeting this month and would like to invite Dalrymple to the table.
- Davidson commented that in the same area in California, there is a Youth Build group that also work with youth.
- Grabber asked what was being done to find employers for interested teens. Dalrymple replied that was where the WDB and the private sector come in. Rusher added that ETCS has a Corporate Services unit that is working on recruiting employers. In fact, just yesterday, the Corporate Services unit hosted a youth job fair at Pioneer High School.

B. Mystery Shopper Report

- The report was included in board meeting packets for members to review.

**9. Knowledge and Information Feature**

- Rusher introduced the Knowledge and Information Feature for today's General Session, Dennis Sykes, Deputy Director and Irma Zuckerberg, Senior Executive Assistant to the Director and Deputy Director both from the Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Growth (DLEG). It is their job to carry out the objectives of the Governor.
- ETCS held off on publication of the updated Report Card so that it could align with the goals of the State.
- Michigan is in a state of transition and communication and selective solutions are really needed.
- Washtenaw County is really ahead of the rest of the State and even the country.
- Sykes and Zuckerberg thanked staff for inviting them to the meeting. They stated that Rusher is always thinking outside of the box and trying to come up with new and innovative initiatives. She works to ensure that all of the participants come together. The challenge is how to get the rest of the state WDBs to think and work like Washtenaw County's does.
- On of the Governor's initiatives is the Michigan Opportunity program (MiOpp). This program is based on job pledges received from companies throughout the State. This brought groups together; instead of everyone working alone they are all working together. Over 250,000 letters went out to employers asking them to pledge jobs and to fill vacancies.
- The Governor pledged dollars to help hospitals and community colleges to conduct accelerated training in 12-13 months. Hopefully we will see the number of high demand job fillings by next year. The Governor also established an aggressive rapid response to the city of Detroit for teachers who were laid off as a result of job eliminations. A number of the employees in the school system have been placed into the healthcare services to fill the gap. The number of jobs being filled has exceeded the number of jobs being eliminated.
- Rusher noted that one issue the Michigan Works! Association (MWA) faces is how to communicate all of the successes publicly.
- DLEG staff meets with the MWA and area directors regularly to work on collaborating.
- Ouimet asked what sector receives the bulk of the jobs being filled. Zuckerberg replied that most are in the fields of high tech computer and healthcare. The problem with healthcare is that there aren't enough skilled workers in the field. That is why training with colleges is so important. Ouimet noted that taking proactive steps towards training is one of the things we need to do.

- Sykes noted that it is important for the WDB to address the link/gap between education and workforce development. Sykes noted that the statistics show that parents do not think that education is important.
- Harrison noted that she is very encouraged to hear that so much work is being done to support kids and their interest in healthcare. Harrison noted that there is a four year waiting list at Washtenaw Community College for healthcare professionals. There are serious issues with finding teachers and the capacity to educate and train all those that are interested. It was noted that more should be done to introduce kids to the fields at a young age. Ouimet agreed with Harrison and added that the interest is there, and the jobs are there, the problem is that we need to get those interested through the training and into the jobs. Ouimet noted the key is to find out what makes this successful and work backwards to see what we did right. We should use the knowledge we gain to look into the future and be proactive.
- Miller noted that Washtenaw County is able to make the transition better due to the level of education that our citizens have. The State system might be too rigid. Board members agreed. One suggestion was to get the students into the workforce and train them there instead of in a classroom.
- Sykes stated that the notion of the regional skills alliance (RSA) is an attempt to try and bring focus as to how to invest workforce dollars. The economy is changing very fast and the government is not changing fast enough to keep up. Miller added that government even restricts how the locals spend their own dollars that are generated.
- Davidson added that department heads within the County should work together and find ways to spend dollars more efficiently.
- Sykes added that education should sit at the table with workforce development as is done in Washtenaw County.
- Peters noted that in talking with other chamber representatives, he has noted that many ask how Washtenaw County recruits so many employers. Peters stated three things that employers want when they are being recruited; infrastructure, quality of life and education. Peters added that Washtenaw County attracts global companies, including many research and development jobs. At the State level, there is a great attempt to recognize the challenges.
- Weaver noted that veterans are coming out of duty very well trained, but the State requires them to be certified. Meanwhile, the State is allowing other workers, such as truck drivers, to test out. They should allow others, such as those in the healthcare system, to test out based on their qualifications. Weaver added that the veteran organizations have offered to pay for the testing.
- Sykes noted that if we are going to fulfill the demand, we should look at how we do business. We should look at things differently and explore broader options.
- Gulick noted that the Washtenaw Intermediate School District (WISD) had funding for career prep but those dollars have dried up. He added that focusing on youth is very important. What is also important is training incumbent workers that we already have. There are a lot of people, who want to receive training, and there are people who can conduct the training, we all have to work together. Gulick agreed that we should not waste our talent that is provided by the veterans.
- Zuckerberg noted that the Council for Labor and Economic Growth (CLEG) is a great avenue to bring about change. Manufacturing and healthcare are discussed at those meetings.
- Maritato added that as one of the faces of state government locally, innovation is difficult but she is very interested in working with community partners. She recommends taking one thing at a time and focuses on that. Zuckerberg added that locally, you can do more. Rusher noted that Maritato is one of the most innovative people.
- Rusher thanked everyone for their comments.

## 10. Committee Reports

### A. Strategic Planning Committee – Williams

- Williams presented the updated Report Card. The Committee and staff worked very hard to complete the update, titled Report Card 2005 & Beyond. The last one was a vehicle that people could take to national conferences; hopefully this one will be too.
- Rusher noted an error in the Report; we only championed and convened two of the workgroups and not the entire Blueprint to End Homelessness as indicated in the Report.
- Rusher distributed the updated Report Card to department heads yesterday and received great feedback.

### B. Education Advisory Group (EAG) – Miller

Miller expressed thanks to the people on this Board who serve on the EAG.

- Project Great Start
  - Currently, the WISD is working on a long range plan to ensure school readiness for all children in Washtenaw County. The WISD is working with Washenaw United Way, who is the lead on this project called Great Start, and a number of area agencies.
  - A handout on the project was distributed along with a chart outlining phases to the project. The implementation work is ongoing.
  - More information is available online at <http://www.wuway.org/sucuess.html>.
- The WISD is also involved with a complete review of career and tech offerings in area high schools. There are some concerns about equity issues between the different schools. There are also concerns about loosing curriculum.
- The high school exit studies have been completed. The surveys have more data and provide valuable feedback. It was noted that the WISD is the only one in the State to survey students as they graduate.

### C. Community Action Board (CAB) – Wolf and Gulick

- Wolf noted that in Washtenaw County, the Workforce Development Board and Community Action Board fall under the same umbrella agency, ETCS. Some on this board sit on that board and ETCS is truly able to provide one-stop services to its customers.
- The next meeting of the CAB is at the end of the month. Gulick added that we are looking at labor being more active on the CAB.
- January 23 is the date of our annual meeting; it is held jointly with the CAB.

## 11. Other Business

Davidson noted that the lead story on the County's website is on homelessness. The focus is on judges of the 14<sup>th</sup> district court who help those with a record to clear it.

## 12. Next Meeting Date

- David Bradley is the featured speaker for the upcoming Joint Annual Meeting. He helped write the Economic Opportunity Act and is our lobbyist for workforce development.
- Bradley will also be part of a panel discussion during the Retreat that will hopefully engage the two Boards. The discussion will be on how to merge workforce development and community action. The panel will challenge us to come up with even better strategies on how to do things better. Bradley has a background in workforce development and community action, which is great.

## 13. Adjourn

Wolf adjourned the meeting at 10:20 am.