

Washtenaw County
Workforce Development Board
General Session
Minutes

Meeting Date: Thursday, July 06, 2006 **Time:** 8:00 AM

Members Present: Cindy Harrison, Diana McKnight-Morton, Diane Davidson, Donn Wolf, Eric Mahler, Gene Graber, Gregory Gurka, Gregg Weaver, Jim Frenza, Cynthia Maritato, James Bunton, Jennifer Leach, Mark Ouimet, Mary Kerr, Nicholas Fortson, Steve Gulick, Tim Robinson and Bill Miller.

Members Absent: Anne Williams, Clifford Smith, Jr., Keith Peters (excused), and Suzanne Bade.

Staff Present: Trenda Rusher, Jenny Bivens, Rana Al-Igoe and Justin Al-Igoe.

Guests Present: Mark S. Dunning, Senior Manager, Global Engine Manufacturing Alliance (GEMA)

1. Call to Order

Vice-Chair Harrison called the meeting to order at 8:06 AM. Staff made a special announcement on behalf of the WDB. Today is Rusher's birthday and a cake was presented in appreciation of her dedication, especially on her birthday.

2. Welcome and Introductions

Harrison welcomed everyone to the Board meeting. She asked everyone to introduce him or herself.

3. Public Comment

There was not public comment.

4. Approval of the Agenda

A copy of the agenda and meeting materials were sent to Board members to review via mail and email prior to the meeting.

Wolf moved to approve the meeting agenda. Gulick supported. Meeting agenda approved.

5. Consent Agenda Items

A. 05/04/06 General Session Minutes

- Mahler noted that he was present at the last meeting and should not be listed under the members absent.

B. Approval of the Michigan Works! Legislation SB 1288

C. Ann Arbor Chamber of Commerce Conference Sponsorship

D. Resolutions

- i. Ratification of the Chair of the Board's signature on the PY 2006 Workforce Investment Act (WIA) Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth Plan to the Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Growth (DLEG) in the amount of \$1,939,280 for the period of July 1, 2006 through June 30, 2007
- ii. Ratification of the Chair of the Board's signature on the Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Growth's plan application for the Employment Services Program in the amount of \$459,030 for the period of July 1, 2006 through June 30, 2007
- iii. Ratification of the Chair of the Board's signature on the PY 2006 Workforce Investment Act (WIA) Capacity Building and Professional Development Plan in the amount of \$24,000 for the period of July 1, 2006 through June 30, 2007
- iv. Ratification of the County Administrator signature on the Southeast Michigan Hospitality and Tourism Grant Regional Skills application to the Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Growth (DLEG) in the amount of \$90,000 for the period of July 1, 2006 through June 30, 2007
- v. Ratification of the Chair of the Board's signature on the FY 2006 Michigan Works! System Plan for the period of July 1, 2006 through December 31, 2006
- vi. Ratification of the Chair of the Board's signature on the PY 2006 Statewide Activities Funding for High Concentrations of Workforce Investment Act (WIA) Eligible Youth Plan to the Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Growth (DLEG) in the amount of \$32,163 for the period of July 1, 2006 through June 30, 2007
 - o These resolutions have been approved by the WDB Executive Committee and last night by the Board of Commissioners.
 - o These are all renewals.
 - o Davidson asked whether the WIA programs were being combined in resolution number one. Staff noted that the resolution one is not meant to combine the WIA programs. Instead, it is three separate funding streams under one plan.
 - o Item four is something we have been talking about for some time. We had a mini grant before, now we received a \$90,000 grant for the Hospitality and Tourism Grant.
 - o Item five is work that we are doing with the State Senate to make sure that the Michigan Works! Legislation is on the books. It will go before the House, probably in the next few weeks.

Fortson moved to approve the consent agenda items with the noted change (Mahler was present at the 05/04/06 General Session). Weaver supported. Consent agenda items approved.

6. **Report of the Chair** – (Harrison for Peters)

A. Announcements and Updates

- Peters asked Harrison to chair today's meeting; he is on vacation celebrating his wedding anniversary.

B. Business Update

- Rusher reported out that Peters asked to let WDB members know that staff is working with the Board of the Chambers to help companies that are in trouble and need assistance.

C. Labor Update – (Gulick)

- Road construction throughout the County is coming along well.

- The building trade side in the County is also doing well, both with the expansion at St Joes and at the University of Michigan hospitals. Work will progress in the City of Ann Arbor as they get approval for higher raise buildings.
- Last week, Gulick attended the AFL-CIO Working for America Institute’s High Road Network Conference.
 - Gulick noted that, as usual, a lot of the discussion was around things we already do in Washtenaw County.
 - There was some discussion at the Conference regarding an initiative there in San Diego, similar to what ours will be with the hospitality cluster. They are interested in the collaborative work of taking people in entry-level jobs and moving those employees up the career ladder. The project is progressing and Gulick would like to bring some of the things they are doing back here so to not reinvent the wheel.
 - The first two days of the conference covered cuts. Major cuts in adult dislocated worker programs and some of the things we are doing here are being reintroduced. Gulick noted that, hopefully, Congress would vote the cuts down.
 - One of the County’s in California received foundation grant monies to help kids with a special program. Kids select what trade they want to go into and then get exposure in 9th and 10th grades. This year was the first of the graduating class and the project was very successful. They have a massive need for construction workers in California and they are really pushing high school kids to take those jobs. Gulick added that there, only 20% of graduates continue on to higher education. Conference attendees were impressed and interested in studies by the WISD (Washtenaw Intermediate School District) in tracking graduates one and five years after graduation.
 - There is a growing trend towards a fundamental change in the economy. Hydrogen revolution is expected to be introduced in the next 12 to 18 years. This will really change the way we work. The Incumbent Worker Training program in San Diego is huge. Gulick noted that we have to educate the existing workforce to increase their quality. He added that it is a lifelong learning and work process and, right now, we don’t have the workforce to support the hydrogen industry.
 - Gulick found the conference exceptionally interesting and thanked the Board for the opportunity to attend.
- Harrison noted that the healthcare industry is experiencing a shortage in workforce. Some hospitals have developed their own University’s to train their staff.

7. Report of the Board of Commissioners (BOC) Chief Elected Official – (Ouimet for Prater)

A. Announcements and Updates – None

B. Towner / ETCS Space Plan

- The Commissioners are engaging at looking at, from the County’s standpoint, what its space needs are. Towner is one of the buildings that are being looked at.
- The Commissioners think that it is important that customers who enter the Towner building feel comfortable. The Commissioners also need to make sure there is a flow in the building.
- One of the questions that the Commissioners are trying to answer is who should be at Towner; should ETCS be located at Towner or somewhere else.
- Mary O’Hare is in the process of taking interested groups and walking through the building. Once they figure out where everyone belongs, a dollar amount needs to be determined based on the proposed layout. Ouimet added that O’Hare does an excellent job of bringing people together.

- Harrison asked what the time frame was. Ouimet replied that the Commissioners are conducting fact-finding now. The space plan will probably be discussed more after November.
- Rusher added that O'Hare approached her after the BOC meeting last night. O'Hare wants to discuss this issue with the WDB by August. Rusher added that space planning has been a long time issue with ETCS. We have the Michigan Works! Service Center (MWSC) on Harriet Street. Rusher added that we have been working with the City and Bill Kinley to build up at the Harriet Street location. We are also working with Washtenaw Community College (WCC), which is co-located at Harriet Street, and Larry Whitworth to expand that site. The only problem with the site is that it lacks adequate parking. Rusher added that we are looking now at some partnership opportunities with the new employers occupying the former Exemplar building. The site is great because it provides easy on/easy off access to interstate 94. Guenzel, the County IT Director and Rusher are going to visit the Capital Area Michigan Works! Service Center for a tour. Rusher pointed out that they do not have a corporate service unit at the Capital Area MWSC, but they are going to take a look at what is going on out there.
- Frenza asked about customer service access to the Harriet Street location, busses for example. Rusher replied that busses serve that area. Rusher noted that this site (Towner) is very convenient because ETCS serves approximately 40% of the Department of Human Services (DHS) customers. Maritato noted that the number would increase, because some of the changes that are taking place with DHS.
- Ouimet noted that this is an important process that the Commissioners are working on with Guenzel. They all want to make sure that the County is making it easy for citizens to get the services they need.

8. Knowledge and Innovation Feature – (Mark Dunning, Global Engine Manufacturing Alliance)

- Dunning thanked the Board for inviting him to the meeting. He noted that he supports everything we have said and appreciates everything that the Board has done for the Global Engine Manufacturing Alliance (GEMA).
- Dunning noted that GEMA picked the spot where it is currently located because it is close to Washtenaw County and Detroit. This gives GEMA access to education and research and development opportunities.
- Everyone is taking notice that the skill base that employers have depended on for so long is retiring. GEMA welcomes folks that have the interest and the vision to open their eyes as to what the future has to offer.
- GEMA is a separate stand-alone company created by a number of difference companies. Chrysler, Hyundai and Mitsubishi own GEMA 1/3 each. Hyundai is a newly created and a very proud company; they make great cars at a great price. Dunning noted that Hyundai is growing very fast; it is a very aggressive company.
- GEMA consists of two plants in Dundee, Michigan. The educational development in this area is great. The technology has developed and GEMA becomes the launching point for the technologies that are being developed.
- GEMA has five engine plants throughout the nation. Together, they are the largest engine-manufacturing program in the world.
- In Dundee, GEMA wanted to gather all of the greatest ideas in the world and use them in their plant. They seek the very best workforce possible and strive to retain proactive, high-paying jobs.
- The GEMA building in Dundee doesn't look like a manufacturing plant. They wanted to become a part of the community. It is located across from Cabella's off US-23.

- The staff members work in small teams of six to eight people. Additionally, there are only four levels of staff in the entire plant. With fewer levels in the teams, a lot of issues can be solved right away. Staff lives the four “A” concept that anyone can do anything at anytime anywhere. Everyone wears the same uniform, including the president.
- Many ask how they can get to work at GEMA. The reality is that the engine is a very important part of the car. GEMA insists on employing individuals with a two-year technical/college degree, journey person status, or five years machining/CNC experience. Dunning noted that GEMA tries to draw people from different industries. He went over the candidate selection flow and the employee orientation and safety training.
- Staff described the work ETCS does with GEMA. We contributed seven OJTs (On-The-Job Training) to GEMA. They are now all permanent full-time staff and part of the GEMA team, except for one person who moved on to establish her own consulting firm.
- This is the new wave for workforce investment. This is the type of employment that we need to invest in. We need to also continue to help people move on to self-sufficiency.
- Graber noted that this is a great story and asked if Miller could help get the word out to high school students. Dunning said he would be pleased to present to other groups at the request of Board members. Graber suggested the Dunning develop an informational video on GEMA. Miller noted that the workforce of GEMA is very mature. Graber added that students need to know what the world is demanding. Students are just not seeing that that an associate’s degree is sufficient. We need to focus on at-risk students who frankly don’t have the money to go to college. Graber added that this community believes that a bachelor’s degree is necessary. Miller noted that part of what the WISD is doing is getting students to get some college credits before they graduate high school. They are focusing on the population that is very capable.
- It was noted that this represents our strategic plan/Report Card in action.

9. **Report of the Director** – (Trenda Rusher)

A. Federal/State/Local Updates

Federal

- Next week is a big week, Rusher and a number of WDB officers will be attending the Innovations Conference. We have been boycotting the conference, but will attend this year. Wolf, Harrison and Rusher will attend. Southeast Michigan received a WIRED grant and will be there to support that.

State - None

Local

- Rusher introduced Martha Walsh. Welsh will be working with staff on the MEGA P and the Commitment to Change. These projects are mammoth and we need expertise on these.
 - i. Commitment to Change (C2C)
 - A copy of the C2C partnership was included in meeting packet.
 - Staff is working with local ministers and members of the faith-based community to make sure that ETCS is extending all of its services and to area churches and places of worship.
 - This partnership is on a quick path. The feds have offered services to the State of Michigan and Washtenaw County is spearheading and taking a leadership role on the federal access points program.
 - Every participating organization will receive training here in Washtenaw County.
 - Wolf added that this is one of the initiatives that the Community Action Board (CAB) is pushing.

- McKnight-Morton asked how the information is to be generated to faith-based organizations. Rusher replied that there are two groups that staff are working with; the Ypsilanti area Ministerial Alliance and the Chelsea area Ministerial Alliance. Working with these two groups will allow us to blend the east and the west sides of the County. Eventually, we want to have the entire County involved.
- Rusher added that staff is going to make sure that the Jewish and the Muslim communities are involved.
- This partnership is about how to help people and not about doctrine.
- Frenza asked what it meant to extend services. Rusher clarified that this will mean that the organizations will provide volunteers that staff will train on our services. For example, if church choir is practicing on a Saturday night at church, they will be able to work with the church staff serving as a liaison to access our Michigan Talent Bank. Rusher noted that we might be able to provide mini “angel” grants to help offset their costs. Another thing we can do is work with organizations to obtain refurbished computers that we can give to organizations that serve as access points to our services.
- Davidson noted that it will be important that this work with the existing 211 system. Rusher replied that it will and that this will supplement the 211 system. Rusher noted that we have talked about this with USDOL and USDOL has assured us that this system will work with 211. Staff added that the beauty of this is that citizens in the outer parts of the County will have greater access to ETCS services.

B. Resolutions

- i. Approval of the ETCS budget to support the operations of the Ypsilanti Gateway Community and Economic Development Corporation (YGCEDC) in the amount of \$600,600 for the period of May 1, 2006 through December 31, 2008
 - Rusher noted that this resolution has not gone to the BOC yet. Ouimet commented that the resolution should go through.
 - Davidson asked what the CAP dollars were. Rusher answered that CAP was the money that the County charges ETCS for doing business here. Rusher added that this does not come from the workforce development budget; it comes out of the community action budget.
 - The Commissioners have made a long-term commitment to the Gateway community. It is the most destitute part of the County. The executive director will report to the Gateway Board and to ETCS. ETCS will take them on as a unit. They will do community action work through 2008.
 - Davidson expressed concern that staff is already down to its barebones in terms of staffing and the last thing we need is to take on more work.

McKnight-Morton moved to accept the resolution. Davidson supported. Resolution passes.

- ii. Ratification of staff recommendations for service delivery of Employment Services
 - Bivens noted that staff did procurement for ETCS Wagner-Pyser bid via the County system and only received one respondent.
 - Staff is requesting ratification to go ahead and contract with the one respondent. We have limited dollars in the program. The bid that was received was higher, but was negotiated down.
 - Graber asked how the cost compared to the costs of the program in the past. Bivens replied that program funds are less this year.

McKnight-Morton move to accept the resolution. Graber supported. Resolution passes.

DISCUSSION

- Davidson asked about the contractors past performance. Bivens replied that their work is satisfactory. Weaver added that they are good.

C. Ann Arbor Center of Independent Living (AACIL)

- James Magyar, the Executive Director, of AACIL contacted Rusher requesting a letter of support from the WDB. The grant for the Southern Michigan Disability Network – Work Incentives Planning and Assistance Project was due the next day and Magyar apologized for the late request. Rusher went ahead and wrote the letter of support, which was part of the grant application.

Wolf moved to accept the letter of support. McKnight-Morton supported. Request passes.

10. Report of the Committees

A. Communications and Marketing Committee

- The next meeting is scheduled for July 21 at noon at the Ypsilanti Marriott.

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

- The next meeting is scheduled for October 18 at 3 PM at the WISD.
- There are a number of new programs in career and technical education.
- Miller expressed concern about losing highly educated graduates that are leaving the County.

11. Report of the Community Action Board (CAB)

The next meeting is scheduled for September 25 at 6 PM at the MWSC.

12. Other Business

- Weaver presented a Certificate of Appreciation to the WDB from the Michigan Institute of Aviation and Technology. ETCS, through Michigan Works!, sponsored the lunch at their career expo on May 8.
- McKnight-Morton announced that Washtenaw Community College celebrated the groundbreaking last month for their new fitness center. The projected completion date is September 2007.

13. Other Business

Harrison adjourned the meeting at 10:08 AM.