

Washtenaw County
Workforce Development Board
General Session
Meeting Minutes

Meeting Date: Thursday, March 15, 2007 **Meeting Time:** 8:00 AM
Meeting Location: Michigan Works! Service Center, 304 Harriet St., Ypsilanti, MI
Room 112

Members Present: Mary Kerr, Wesley Prater, Diana McKnight-Morton, Keith Peters, Steven Gulick, Gene Graber, Gregory Gurka, Reid McCarthy, Cindy Harrison, Clifford L. Smith, Michael Schippiani, Eric Mahler, Anne Williams, Jesse Bernstein, Gregg Weaver, Donn Wolf, Nicholas Fortson

Members Absent: James Frenza, Jennifer Leach, William Miller (excused), Mike Ouimet (excused), Timothy Robinson (excused), Mark Martin (excused)

Staff Present: Trena Rusher, Jenny Bivens, Rana Al-Igoe, Tiffany Lucas, Justin Al-Igoe

Guests Present: Diane Durance- Ann Arbor IT Zone, Kenneth Nisbet – University of Michigan, Martha Welsh – M3, Strategies

1. Call to Order

Peters called the meeting to order at 8:08 AM.

2. Welcome and Introductions

Peters welcomed everyone to the meeting and asked that members and guests introduce themselves.

3. Public Comment

There were no comments from the public.

4. Approval of the Agenda

Peters moved to approve the meeting agenda, Wolf supported. Meeting agenda approved.

5. Consent Agenda Items

- A. Peters moved to approve the minutes from the 11/02/06 meeting. Gulick supported. Minutes from the 11/02/2006 meeting were approved.
- B. Wolf moved to support the ratification of the Chair's signature on the WIA Plan modification. Gulick supported. Motion carried.
- C. Peters moved to support the Pfizer Challenge Grant. Wolf supported. Pfizer Challenge Grant approved.

6. Report of the Chair

- A. Announcements and Updates

- There was an overwhelming interest in the Mega Partnership initiative at the NAWB conference in Washington, DC.
- The Pfizer layoffs have given Washtenaw County a chance to observe the benefits of the Mega Partnership initiative in action, as many of the Mega Partners have banded together to transition Pfizer employees into new employment and entrepreneurial endeavors.
- While in Washington DC, Rusher and Peters planned to meet with speaker of the house Nancy Pelosi, however due to a conflict in Ms. Pelosi's schedule the meeting was cancelled.
- Rusher and Peters were able to drop off some information for Ms. Pelosi's consideration and were invited to be special guests at a Pre-school education summit Pelosi will host.
- The Michigan Chamber of Commerce Executives (MCCE) held a meeting where Dana Johnson of Comerica Bank official announced Comerica's decision to move out of Michigan.
- Engineered Plastics are making plans to relocate to Michigan and have contacted Washtenaw County to help recruit C-Level staff with the help of the JOB FIT and video interview software programs. The business is expected to bring approximately 100 positions total, with plans to expand.
- Bernstein reports that there are many Washtenaw County residents and Pfizer employees interested in starting new businesses.
- Prater notes that road construction season is nearing and will provide a boost in employment. Washtenaw County Road Commission has more grant money for special projects than ever before. The bridge in Dexter will be replaced, and the Beck road exit will continue to be re-done.
- Many of the educational institutions within Washtenaw County are expanding, along with several new condominium projects which will also provide additional employment in the area.
- The manufacturing industry is slowly recovering and will be boosted by Chryslers' plans to open a new facility.
- Labor unions will take an aggressive stance to move legislation forward.
- Schippani reports that the contracts that many fleeing companies have with the UAW will protect significant benefit packages of the employees.
- The real estate market is still very soft. Sellers are not able to move, because prices continue to decline.
- It is estimated that nearly 270,000 autoworkers have lost their jobs in Michigan, and nearly 1.5 million jobs will need to be created to keep up with the lost.
- Repossessions in the state have been double the normal rate in the last year.
- 100,000 people have left Michigan as a result of the recent layoffs and business closings; this has created a brain drain and skill drain.
- There are three essential problems. The state budget has a 900 million dollar shortfall, next year it will have a 2 billion dollar shortfall, and efforts must be bi-partisan.
- Kerr has been working with an electricians group to get people into the state. Kerr is working to determine if Washtenaw County can host the Plumbers and Pipe Fitters, who have chosen Michigan because they feel the community supports the workers.

The plumbers and Pipe fitters union are moving their headquarters, but the conversation is still premature. Kerr says she should know more by April and a final decision should be made by August.

7. Knowledge and Innovation

- The Talent Portal won't simply match job seekers with employers, but will create be a database of social networking where they can come to talk to others in their field of work, or in just in their region.
- Studies have found that 20 percent of people get their jobs through social networks. This portal will be an innovative tool for building and expanding such networks.
- It is a tool for recruiting and developing talent, and is designed to work on a regional scale which can later be linked with other similar regional portals.
- The portal will reduce the time and cost associated with locating talent and opportunities.
- Users will be able to announce events on the network, and engage in discussion about them afterwards.
- The system is scaleable and has characteristics of an e-vite like system.
- Current partners include Ann Arbor SPARK, MEDC, and Business Review.
- The next steps include finalizing and funding. The portal would need at least \$200,000.00 to get started.
- Peters motions to support funding of the Talent Portal Network. Wolf supported. The motion is carried.

8. Report of the Executive Director

A. Announcements

- ETCS will be moving to Key Bank. The Key Bank location will offer better facilities. The corporate services staff will be relocated from the Michigan Works! Service Center to the Key bank location and the community services teams will move over to the Michigan Works! Service Center.

B. Federal/ State/ Local Updates

Federal

- David Bradley reports that the Democrats will be investing more in workforce development, vowing to break the last six years of decline in the workforce.
- Watching the Iraqi supplement...there is opposition from the Republicans, and some Republicans who support the changes for the workforce.
- Bradley will be asking Michigan to help by supporting Terry Bergman.
- The Mega- Partnership workshop presented by Rusher and Peters was a huge success at the Annual NAWB conference.

State

- The No Worker Left Behind initiative will tie into the efforts to respond to the Pfizer layoff. The funding will be drawn from the states' dislocated worker fund.

Local

- Mary Kerr chairs the Regional Skills Alliance marketing Committee. The committee is currently meeting to discuss implementation of a web network for the hospitality industry.

- The Talent portal is causing quite a stir. The Pfizer talent team approached the state to ask for improvements and enhancements to the current Talent Bank. The State has agreed to do some of the improvements themselves. The Michigan Talent Bank will now allow job seekers to post their resumes.
- ACH plants will be closing and selling many of their properties. The Workforce Development Board will need to be proactive in getting those employees at ACH ready for the close. Rusher says we have spoken with congressman Dingell to get his help with the effort.
- The Pfizer talent team conducted a survey to find out what the needs of the Pfizer employees are. A story will be appearing in the paper and media. The survey can be viewed at all the Mega Partnership members' websites.

C. Resolutions (Bivens)

a. Incumbent Worker Training Grant Chart

- Many companies are trying to re-tool their workers. Etc had \$104,000.00 available for the incumbent worker training and decided to give out grants to help these employers. The goal was to give out ten grants. So far, we have had only six. This will be short term incumbent worker funding, which must be used by June 30, 2007. No carry over will be allowed.
- Peters moved to support. Schippani supported. The resolution is approved.

9. Report of the Committees

A. Education Advisory Group (EAG)

- Regional Health Care Alliance is moving forward. In three to five years the group is hoping to have 500 participants each year. School systems will continue to give their dollars, while students go to Eastern Michigan University, and the credits earned at EMU will be paid for.
- The program will begin in middle school to make sure students are on the correct path to be ready for the middle colleges.
- There are still transportation issues being worked out, but there will be no limits on how many children can enter into the program. Eastern Michigan is willing to find space.
- In the first phase there will be a selection process.
- There is a slideshow presentation that is forthcoming. The board will invite Dugger and Shivers to the next general session to present that slideshow.

B. Strategic Planning Committee Report

- The committee met on February 16, 2007. There was discussion about the Last Report Card 2005 & Beyond. There will be exploration of the beyond in a proposed addendum to the Report Card, called "The Beyond". The committee has set a completion date of July 1st for this project.
- The next meeting is scheduled for March, 23, 2007.

C. Employer's Committee Report

- The Employers Committee met on February 16, 2007. The employers group will be working closely with the Pfizer Talent Team to help with the Pfizer layoffs.

- The committee will be reinstituting pink slip parties to benefit the Pfizer employees.

10. Report of the Community Action Board

- etcs was designated to come to the aid of those families affected by the Paradise Manor fires. Jenny Bivens was the point person and worked to secure funding for the funerals and displaced families. All the families are now in new homes.
- The SOS and other community partners worked hard to make the effort a success.

11. Other Business

- Washtenaw County has established a Community Collaborative bringing all the community agencies together. To join we must pay 5,000.00. There are other levels in the structure that are of no cost, but will offer little participation.
- The idea is to bring all the right leadership together.

12. Adjournment

- Peters adjourned the meeting at 10:09 AM.