

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

**Meeting Date:** Thursday, September 6, 2007 **Meeting Time:** 8:00 AM

**Meeting Location:** Washtenaw County Human Services Bldg. 555 Towner, Ypsilanti

**Members Present:** James Bunton, Gene Graber, Cindy Harrison, Mike Martin, Keith Peters, Donn Wolf, Jeff Irwin, Bill Miller, Greg Weaver, Wesley Prater, Steven Gulick, Timothy Robinson, Diana Mc-Knight – Morton, Suzanne Bade

**Members Absent:** Cynthia Maritato, Jesse Bernstein, Nicholas Fortson, Fiona Greenland, Gregory Gurka, Mary Kerr, Eric Mahler, Reid McCarthy, Mark Ouimet, Anne Williams, Clifford Smith Jr.,

**Staff Present:** Trenda Rusher, Jenny Bivens, Tiffany Lucas

**Guests Present:** David Dugger, Marti Welsh, Maura Campbell

**I. Call to Order**

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

**II. Welcome and Introductions**

Peters welcomed everyone to the meeting. Board members, guests and staff introduced themselves.

**III. Public Comment**

There were no comments from the public.

**IV. Approval of the Agenda**

- Wolf moved to approve the meeting agenda. Fortson supported. The meeting agenda was approved.

**V. Consent Agenda**

A. Approval of the 5/03/07 Meeting Minutes

Suzanne Bade pointed out that she was unable to attend the last Board meeting, and that the minutes should be reflect her absence.

**VI. Report of the Chair**

A. Announcements and Updates

i. Board Appointments Letter

- Peters pointed out to the Board members that if their term is expiring, that they should have received a letter from the Board of Commissioners informing them of the expiration. If those Board members whose terms are expiring would like to continue on the Board their letters of interest should be submitted promptly.

ii. Appointment of the Nominating Committee

- Peters appointed the following Board Members to the Nominating Committee.
  1. Gene Graber
  2. Greg Weaver
  3. Steve Gulick
  4. Donn Wolf
  5. Mike Martin
  6. Diana- McKnight- Morton
- Peters asked if there were any objections to the appointments. There were no objections. Peters thanked the appointed members for their willingness to participate on the committee.

iii. Updated WDB meeting schedules

- Keith reviewed the updated schedules included in the meeting packets for the WDB executive committee meetings and the WDB general sessions.
- Peters asked that the Board members make note of the changes for future reference.

B. Business Update

- Keller noted that she is working closely with MEGA-P on several projects.
- The building on the corner of Michigan Avenue and Washington has been bought and will be developed as lofts.

C. Labor Update

- Gulick reported that building trades are moving along smoothly. The Toyota center is in progress, and EMU and WCC have finished construction.
- We are watching the events unfolding with the UAW closely.
- Gulick notes that there will be a summit in Lansing to address civil rights, labor, and faith-based activists joining together. Donna Gazelle will be the keynote speaker for this event.
- There is an initiative by out of state legislators to push “right to work” in Michigan. The argument of these legislators is that wages will increase, but benefits are no longer offered. Michigan legislators are against bringing “Right to Work” to Michigan.
- Prater reported that there is construction going on throughout the State. There are more federal dollars being spent in Washtenaw County than ever before, and the issue is local matching.
- Local transportation funds about 40% of the grant and this years revenue on the roads will be less than it was before. The state is running out of dollars.
- Prater adds that he does not believe we will see this type of construction next year, citing that the smaller projects will dry up.
- There is a five year plan to increase 16,000 miles of road. The expansion of Carpenter Road will continue and I-94 will be increased to four lanes. Schippani reported that food service in the Ann Arbor School District has been privatized and that it has adversely affected many.

D. City of Ann Arbor Liaison Report

- There was no City Liaison present.

## **VII. Report of the Board of Commissioners' Chief Elected Official**

### **A. Announcements and Updates**

- Irwin reported that the Board of Commissioners has chosen not to expand the Road Commission.
- The County Budget will be on the table within the next two months. We continue to re-invest to help keep Washtenaw County strong with SPARK and we appreciate **etcs** and SPARK's relationship.

## **VIII. Knowledge and Innovation Feature**

### **A. Update and Introduction**

- Dugger announced that the Early College Alliance (ECA) officially started yesterday, September 5, 2007.
- The program will begin using the RCTC mechanism, although it is not an RCTC program.
- On Friday, the students will attend their first class at Eastern Michigan University. The class is UNID 100. The student will receive general education credits for this class.
- In January the students will physically move completely to Eastern Michigan University's campus.
- The difference between this program and Washtenaw Technical Middle College is that Washtenaw Technical Middle College is a charter school and has a competitive relationship with the school districts. The Early College Alliance (ECA) still allows the student to remain a part of their school district while attending the program.
- The ideal behind the ECA is very European. It allows students to learn and develop at different periods of time. Kids don't develop all at once, and they end up with deficiencies when they are pushed through our current educational system. The ECA will focus on domain learning – the emotional, social, and academic processes required to compete and be prepared for college.
- Miller noted that the program has had great support from EMU, WCC, and the Ann Arbor Chamber of Commerce.
- With this effort you are witnessing the future of secondary education emerge.

## **IX. Report of the Executive Director**

### **A. Announcements and Updates**

#### *Federal*

- Rusher reported that workforce development is currently a hot issue in the Senate and that the Iraqi War is our biggest opponent for funding. Rusher noted that there will most likely be continuing resolutions until the budget is passed.
- Prater asked that we contact Ronnie Peterson to ask for his support to help get the programs reauthorized, since there has been no Congressional action to date.
- Wolf and Rusher recently attended the NACO Conference. Eric Coleman was elected as the new president of NACO. Coleman hosted his inaugural celebration during the conference. Rusher and Wolf worked very closely with Coleman's national campaign.

- David Bradley has been asked to pull together the top leaders in workforce development, to be a part of a session with Congress to discuss the concerns with USDOL. Trena will be working with David and his leadership staff on this.
- The top priorities of this meeting will be to express that there must be local control to decide what is best for our respective areas. There must also be adequate funding, allowance for innovation, and true global competitiveness.

*State*

- At the State level our focus is still on the support of the “No Worker Left Behind” initiative (NWLBI).

*Local*

- At the local level we want to acknowledge Amy Cell, Kevin Bulifant HDRI, Ross, and M3 Strategies for their work with etc. We would also like to thank Greg Weaver who works in our One Stop center daily helping the veterans in our community. We appreciate all their hard work and dedication.

B. Action Items

- i. Approval of 07-08 Welfare Reform / JET Program Funding etc is requesting the Workforce Development Boards’ approval of staff recommendation for service delivery providers of Welfare Reform/ JET Program Services.
  - Bivens stated that final Jet allocation still have not been received from the State. There is a two year cycle with contracts and our current contracts are ending. We cannot execute final contract until we have allocations.
  - Our current contractors did bid and the proposals were outstanding. There are many JET support programs in those proposals, such as “Computers Don’t Bite”.
  - The recommendation for funding is \$1,282, 283.60, slightly lower than what was funded last year.

There was brief discussion.

**Graber moved to funding for the Welfare Reform/ JET Program Services in the amount of \$1,282, 283.60. Weaver supported. The motion passed. Mc-Knight- Morton abstained from the vote.**

ii. Washtenaw Contractors Association “Just Build It” Proposal

- Gretchen Waters of the Washtenaw Contractors Association announced that this year will be the tenth anniversary of the Just Build it Career Expo. It has been extremely successful, because the schools are mandated to provide career exploration activities, and this event offers that to their students. We only ask that the schools transport the students to the event, but otherwise, there are no additional costs.
- This year we will be able to recognize the schools who have participated in the past 10 years, by presenting them with a gift of \$1000.00 for supplies to help their skilled trades programs.
- Our objective is to continue to attract young adults to the skilled trades industry as it has an aging workforce where the average worker is in his or

her mid 40's. This current statistic is of great concern as the workers continue to age.

- Construction and skilled trade is considered to be a traditional industry and parents do not tend to encourage their children to pursue a career in this industry. What we are seeking to do is let parents and students know that skilled trades in no longer an unskilled field, there are virtually no unskilled jobs available in the field anymore.
- We are requesting that the Workforce Development Board fund the “Just Build It” Career Expo in the amount of \$17, 775.00. There is not a list of sponsors yet.
- Wolf commented that he has attended the “Just Build It” Career Expo in the past and encouraged that all the board members take the time to attend as well, if they have never done so.
- Gulick commented that this was a great program since they often see applications form applicants that obviously require remedial math, because the technology and everything has changed in the industry.
- **Gulick moved to approve \$17,775.00 in funding for the “Just Build It” Career Expo. Prater supported. The motion passed.**
- Waters thanked the board.

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

### A. Education Advisory Group (EAG)

- The Education Advisory Group has not met. There is no report at this time.

### B. Strategic Planning Committee

- Rusher reported on behalf of Anne Williams that the Strategic Planning Committee has been working through the summer. The plan has been to take the existing “Report Card, 2005 and Beyond”, and make it current.
- The Committee would like to energize and engage the entire board on this project, so that it is not simply a passive document distributed by the board.
- Our timeline is currently to meet next month to discuss your feedback to the information presented in your board packet about the committees’ work to date. In November we will be meeting to discuss the Labor Assessment. In December we will finalize the report. In January we will roll out the full report to the Board at our Joint Annual Meeting, and In July we will have a “Speed Dating” activity to engage the board further.
- The Committee has focused on technology, the health care industry, hospitality, advance manufacturing, and Life Sciences in this report. The committee also agreed to work on financial literacy with the CAB and the Gateway Board.
- Rusher asked that the Board Members review the strategic planning slideshow included inside their board packets and respond to Tiffany Lucas with feedback for

discussion by the Strategic Planning Committee at their next meeting October, 23, 2007.

- Tiffany Lucas will send an e-mail reminder to the board members which will include an electronic copy of the slideshow.

C. Employers Committee

- Rusher reported on behalf of Cindy Harrison that the MEGA-P hosted its first annual meeting to recognize the strides made by the group. The Employers committee has been very active with MEGA-P.
- The MEGA-P held its first annual meeting on July 11, 2007. The meeting was well attended by all the founding members.

**XI. Report of the Community Action Board**

- The next Community Action Board Meeting is scheduled for Monday, September 24, 2007.

**XII. Other Business**

- Diana Mc-Knight –Morton announced that Washtenaw County Community College will be hosting the ribbon cutting ceremony on September 8<sup>th</sup>, 2007 for their new Wellness Fitness Center at 10:00 AM.

**XIII. Adjournment**

- Peters adjourned the meeting at 10:33 AM.