

Washtenaw County
Workforce Development Board
General Session
Meeting Minutes

Meeting Date: Thursday, March 13, 2008 **Meeting Time:** 3:09 PM

Meeting Location: 301 W. Michigan Avenue, Ypsilanti, MI 48197, Garden Level
Conference Room

Members Present: Bill Miller, Cindy Harrison, Clifford L. Smith Jr., Daphne Adams,
Diana McKnight- Morton, Diane Keller, Donn Wolf, Eric Mahler,
Gene Graber, Gregg Weaver, James Bunton, Fiona Greenland,
Keith Peters, Mary Kerr, Steven Gulick, Suzanne Bade, Timothy
Robinson, Mike Martin, Wesley Prater, Jeff Irwin

Members Absent: Anne Williams, Michael Schippiani, Jesse Bernstein, Mark Ouimet,
Nicholas Fortson,

Guests Present: Martha Welsh, Maura Campbell, Verna McDaniel, Lois Johnson

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

I. Call to Order

- Peters called the meeting to order at 8:09 AM.

II. Welcome and Introductions

- The Board members and Guests introduced themselves.

III. Public Comment

- There was no comment from the public.

IV. Approval of Agenda

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

V. Approval of Consent Agenda

- Wolf moved to approve the meeting minutes. Prater supported. The meeting minutes were approved.

VI. Swearing In of New and Re-appointed Board Members

- New Board Members Daphne Adams, and Diane Keller and re- appointed Board Member Eric Mahler were sworn in. Al-Igoe and Chair of the Board, Keith Peters congratulated the Board Members, and welcomed them to the Workforce Development Board.

VII. Report of the Chair

A. Announcements and Updates

- Peters reported that he, Trena Rusher, and Donn Wolf had recently attended the NAWB conference, where Trena gave a presentation on the Washtenaw County Access Points Network, as a part of the USDOL workshop, "Priceless Partnerships".

Peters noted that while attending the conference the group was able to make contact with key staff from Microsoft Corporation, Manpower, CVS, and Realtor Rodney Tucker of Realty Building.

Mr. Tucker is interested in forming a partnership with Washtenaw County and local Realtors to assist companies that will be relocating staff or their businesses to the Washtenaw County area. Tucker has agreed to find a local Realtor who will help with the logistics of putting this partnership together.

B. Board Elections

- Gulick reported the work of the Nominating Committee for the election of officers for the Washtenaw County WDB. Nominations for Officers were given to the Nominating Committee at its meeting on Tuesday, March 11, 2008. Members of the Committee include Gulick as Chair, Donn Wolf, Diana McKnight- Morton, Mike Martin, Gene Graber, and Gregg Weaver who met in the ETCS administrative offices. Gulick thanked the members for their diligence and hard work serving on the Committee.
- The Nominating Committee reported the following slate of candidates for acceptance as a ticket:
 - i. For the Office of Chair: Keith Peters
 - ii. For the Office of Vice Chair for Workforce and Economic Development: Cindy Harrison
 - iii. For the Office of Vice Chair for Education and Youth Services: Bill Miller
 - iv. For the Office of Vice Chair for Community Services: Diana-McKnight- Morton
- Wolf noted that he has been pleased to serve as the Vice Chair of Community Services in 2007, but due to his growing business would not be able to make the necessary commitment to continue. Wolf noted that Diana McKnight – Morton had expressed interest in the past in serving as Vice Chair of Community Services and given her many years of experience feels she will be a great fit.
- Gulick asked whether there were any nominations from the floor for each of the offices three times. With no nominations from the floor, Gulick requested a motion to accept the ticket.

Wolf moved for unanimous acceptance of the ticket. Prater supported. The motion to accept the slate of candidates passes.

- Gulick noted that we are very lucky to have such great leadership on the Board. He also thanked the officers who have served on behalf of the Board.
- Peters thanked Wolf for his service on the WDB as Vice Chair for Community Services, and thanked the nominating committee for their work.

C. Business Update

- Keller reported that work of the business incubator for Ypsilanti is progressing.
- The Blueprint of Ypsilanti is now available online, and really provides a great outlook for the development of Ypsilanti in the future.
- Peters interjected that the Economic Outlook luncheon was also hosted this week, and for the first time in years the report was positive. Peters reported that there is an energy company with new technology which could double the miles per gallon of vehicles that is considering locating their business to the Ypsilanti Area. The company would first like to present the product to General Motors to find out if there is a possibility of partnership, should they locate in Michigan.

D. Labor Update

- Gulick reported that construction in the County is increasing, despite some opposition by Ann Arbor residents with the development of the Downtown Ann Arbor area.
- Gulick also reports that DLEG and USDOL have been working on a program to assist disadvantaged women to get the necessary training for them to apply for apprenticeship in the construction field.
- The Michigan AFL-CIO and Ann Arbor SPARK are in the process of creating a program to help immigrants with upper level degrees obtain Visas, to encourage them to stay in Michigan and possibly help boost the economy by starting new business, or contributing to the development of our workforce.
- Prater reported that the total budget for the Road Commission will be about 60 Million dollars this year, but the general fund will be less than it was in 2004, which was approximately 16 million dollars. The Road Commission is getting ready to start many construction projects as well, which will mean lots of summer construction, and many traffic delays.
- Mike Martin reported that the Kroger Company has a third party contractor that has decided to relocate from Michigan to Delaware, where they are able to pay lower wages and no benefits. Martin noted that the UAW and the Governor Granholm had met with the company to offer them tax incentives to stay in Michigan, but the company still chose to relocate to Delaware. Martin encouraged the Board members to avoid Kroger, and shop at Meijer or other grocery stores that support the Michigan economy.

- E. City of Ann Arbor Liaison Report
- There was no City Liaison present.

VIII. Report of the Chief Elected Official

- Deputy County Administrator Verna McDaniel reported on behalf of County Commissioner Jeff Irwin.
McDaniel noted that the County is still working to close the 8 Million dollar deficit in the budget. The County has currently identified approximately five million dollars in reductions, and will first be seeking cuts in any non-service positions.
McDaniel reported that there was also a presentation yesterday given by the health department about a PBS special that will explore the socio-economic disparities that cause health problems and ultimately early death for many people in America. The study points out that the United States is one of the wealthiest Countries in the world yet we place 31st in life expectancy.
Prater also interjected that the County will be erecting a fifty meter pole that will measure the wind speeds in the area to determine the effectiveness of Windmill power in Washtenaw County.
McDaniel ended her report by noting that the County will also be meeting with the City of Ann Arbor to possibly combine duplicative services.

IX. Knowledge and Innovation Feature

- Rusher pointed out highlights in an article from the Governors office that spoke about Washtenaw County's contribution to Michigan lead in the Nation on Access Points.
Rusher noted that the Access points are extensions of the One Stop service centers, that provide a non-threatening environment for community members to seek the services offered. Through the Access Points we have been able to identify key issues like illiteracy, domestic violence, and financial hold that are hindering students from progressing in college.
Rusher noted that two weeks ago she had one ambassador give the corporate services team a lead on 100 new jobs with Toyota.
Fiona Greenland inquired about the understanding the Access Points have with ETCS and Michigan Works! Rusher responded that each Access Point must go through a training process and sign an MOU stating that they will open for a certain number of hours per week, and will not use the computers and software provide to them for unacceptable behavior.
Lois Johnson of Community Church of God reported that her Access Point started over a year ago and is open 4 times a week. Currently the Access Point has approximately 42-43 participants and has found 4 of those participants employment, and has helped the majority of them create effective resumes. Johnson noted that the schedule is posted monthly along with any job leads sent over weekly by the Corporate Services staff at Michigan Works!.
Rusher thanked Lois and the volunteers at the Community Church of God for their hard work and dedication to the community.

X. Report of the Executive Director

- Rusher noted that she is looking forward to following up on the partnership opportunities with Microsoft, Manpower, CVS and the Realtors, and asked if the Board would take a motion to support the pursuit of these partnerships.

Wolf moved to support pursuing the partnerships. Gulick supported. The motion passed.

- On Monday Rusher met with the Council of Labor and Economic Growth, where Governor Granholm gave highlights from her State of the State address.

XI. Report of the Committees

A. Strategic Planning Committee

- Rusher reported on behalf of Anne Williams that the Strategic Planning Committee will be reprinting the Annual Reports to include information from the Wadley-Donovan Group.

B. Employers Committee

- Harrison reported that most of the work the Employers Committee will be meeting to discuss an initiative called No Employer Left Behind, and will also brainstorm ways to get the business community involved with a program similar to the Access Points

C. Education Advisory Group

- Miller reported that the Education Advisory Group has a meeting scheduled for March 24, 2008 where there will be discussion of the Career Readiness Certificate, and a project with CVS. The group will also discuss Aging out of Foster Care.

XII. Other Business

- Concerned citizen Dan Schuman commented that the meeting was very informative and offers a lot of information about ongoing projects in the County where residents or other concerned citizens can become involved. Schuman concluded by thanking the Board for the opportunity to sit in on the meeting.

XIII. Adjournment

- Peters adjourned the meeting at 10:03 AM.