

Washtenaw County
Workforce Development Board (WDB)
General Session
Meeting Minutes

Meeting Date: Thursday, March 12, 2009 **Meeting Time:** 8:00 AM

Meeting Location: Key Bank Building, 301 W. Michigan Ave., Ypsilanti, MI 48197, Alpha Level Conference Room

Members Present: Nicholas Fortson, Cindy Harrison, Diane Keller, Mary Kerr, Mike Martin, Diana McKnight-Morton, William Miller, Mark Ouimet, Wesley Prater, Dorothy Quinn, Tamara Real, Michael Schippiani, Gregg Weaver, Anne Williams, Donn Wolf

Members Absent: Daphne Adams, Suzanne Bade, Jesse Bernstein, Steven Gulick (excused), Eric Mahler, Rolland Sizemore, Clifford Smith Jr., Cynthia Travis (excused), Keith Peters (excused)

Staff Present: Trena Rusher, Jenny Bivens, Tiffany Lucas

Guests Present: Jason Brooks, Maura Campbell, Marti Welsh, Joanne Morris, Peg Windsor, Kerstin Kacmarck, Therese Taylor, Jody Buchholz, Deborah Swasey

I. Call to Order

- Harrison called the meeting to order on behalf of Keith Peters at 8:01 AM.

II. Welcome and Introductions

- The Board Members and Guests introduced themselves. Harrison welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked them for their attendance.

III. Public Comment

- There was no public comment at this time.

IV. Approval of the Agenda

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

V. Swearing in of the New and Reappointed Board Members

- Deputy County Clerk Jason Brooks administered the Board oath to members Wesley Prater, Michael Martin, Anne Williams, Tamara Real, and Dorothy Quinn.

The members were officially sworn in as members of the Washtenaw County Workforce Development Board.

VI. Consent Agenda Items

A. Approval of the 9/18/08 Meeting Minutes

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

B. Resolutions (approved by the Joint Executive Committee on 2/17/09)

- i. It is requested that the Board Workforce Development Board approve the ETCS plan to the Michigan Department of Energy, Labor and Economic Growth (DELEG) for the Fiscal Year (FY) 2009 Food Assistance Employment and Training Program (FAE&T) Plan in the amount of \$92,525 for the period of October 1, 2008 through September 30, 2009.
- ii. It is requested that the Workforce Development Board approve the Fiscal Year (FY) 2009 No Worker Left Behind (NWLB) General Fund/General Purpose (GF/GP) Funding from the Michigan Department of Energy, Labor and Economic Growth (DELEG) for the time period of October 1, 2008 through September 30, 2009 in the amount of \$38,450.

It is requested that the Washtenaw County Workforce Development Board approve the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) National Emergency Grant (NEG) project plan in the amount of \$138,606 for the period of July 1, 2008 through June 30, 2009.

There was brief discussion.

Wolf moved to approve consent agenda resolutions. Martin supported. The resolutions were approved.

VII. Report of the Chair

A. Announcements & Updates

- Harrison reported that in the absence of the Chair Keith Peters, there was no report from the Chair at this time.
- Rusher added that Peters had recently returned from the NACO conference with her in Washington DC, which was well attended by all the Workforce Agencies in the United States. Highlights included a visit by President Bill Clinton, and Secretary Solis.

B. Board Elections

- Wolf reported the work of the Nominating Committee for the election of officers for the Washtenaw County Workforce Development Board. Nominations for Officers were given to the nominating committee on March 10th, 2009. Members of the Committee included Jesse Bernstein, Mary Kerr, Daphne Adams, Steve Gulick, and myself as Co-Chairs. Wolf thanked the members of the committee for their diligence and service on the Committee.

Wolf report on behalf of the committee the following slate 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, William Miller
 - iv. For the office of Vice Chair for Community Services, Diana McKnight-Morton
- Wolf asked whether there were any nominations from the floor for each of the offices, repeating the question three times for each office. There were none.
Seeing no nominations from the floor, Wolf requested a motion to accept the ticket.

Martin moved to accept the ticket. Prater supported. Motion carried.

C. Business Updates

- Keller reported that the Ypsilanti Chamber Business Expo is coming up on March 24th at the Four Points Sheraton. SPARK and ETCS are expected to be there in participation.
- There will be a legislative event held by the Chambers of Commerce in April with Congressman Dingell; however the date has not been finalized. Be on the lookout for more information.
- A commuter train meeting will be held on March 18th from 4:30 PM – 7:00 PM at HAAB's to discuss a rail system that runs from Ann Arbor to Detroit. Keller noted that this will be a very exciting meeting, as this project may create jobs for some of the displaced autoworkers. Rusher noted that there has also been discussion of light rail from Michigan to Chicago. Steve Gulick has been working with the planning group for this project, and will give a full report at the next Board meeting.

D. Labor Update

- Prater reported that the Road Construction will be down this year, although many cities will be receiving additional funding through the Stimulus Bill. The Road Commission is only allowed to spend 30% of the federal funding on local road construction, so Jackson Avenue will most likely be the only road finished this year.
- Martin reported that Hillary Swank is wrapping up her movie being filmed here in Michigan. Also, George Clooney did some filming at Metro Airport which is wrapping up.
Michigan continues to attract contracts from the film industry, which has lead to a call for additional training in CDL and Chauffeurs' licensing.

- The township trustee has just renewed its commitment to Ann Arbor SPARK and to the Aerotropolis project, which should create about 65,000 jobs in the initial ramp up phase. The Township is very excited about this great opportunity to create jobs in the County.
 - Schippani noted that there has been much discussion about what to do with the unused manufacturing facilities in Michigan. Also, it has been noted that the majority of the new transportation materials such as light-rail vehicles are not built in the United States. Schippani suggested that there may be an opportunity to repurpose these facilities for the manufacturing of mass transit materials here in the United States.
- E. City of Ann Arbor Liaison Report
- There was no liaison present.

VIII. Report of the Chief Elected Official

A. Announcements and Updates

- Ouimet reported that the County budget this year is approximately \$107 million, which will trail off to about \$80 million in 2010. With this in mind it is important that the County change the way it does business, otherwise there will obviously be huge gaps. The County is beginning to prepare for this change in funding. First, the County will be evaluating what services are mandated, and speaking with employees to find out what things can be changed and what opportunities there are.

The Commissioners are very concerned about the quality of services offered by the County, and also the employees. We feel this will be a systematic change in the way County Government operates. We will do our best to maintain the level of services, but might have to evaluate how many services we offer and determine whether or not we can still afford to provide those services. Prater noted that much of the deficit in the budget is due to foreclosures in the County, and inability to collect tax revenues from these homes. Catherine McClarey, County Treasurer has begun a program for foreclosure prevention which is promising and will hopefully help as well.

IX. Report of the Executive Director

A. Federal/State/Local Updates

i. Local

Rusher reported that next week Stedman Graham will be in Washtenaw County to help kick off the Blueprint to End Illiteracy with the Washtenaw Literacy Coalition. Rusher noted that if Board members have not gotten a ticket they should see Tiffany Lucas before leaving the meeting today. Prater added that members can also RSVP to Joanna Bidlack in the County Administration office as well.

ii. Federal

Rusher noted that approximately \$7 billion dollars will be funneled into Michigan from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. The \$279 million for Weatherization impacts us largely. Across to nation there was 5 billion dollars devoted to weatherization. President Obama would like the Community Action Agencies across to Country to weatherize at least 1 million homes with these funds.

The State will be challenged with disbursing these funds within 30 days. We are concerned about this, as it seems legislation will need to be changed. Our department will be waiting for that.

B. Resolutions

- i. It is requested that the Workforce Development Board (WDB) approve Program Year (PY) 2008 Workforce Investment Act (WIA) Statewide Activities Funding for High Concentrations of WIA Eligible Youth Plan in the amount of \$21,442 for the period of July 1, 2008 through June 30, 2009.

There was brief discussion.

Miller moved to approve the resolution. Prater supported. Motion carried.

C. American Recovery and Reinvestment Act

- Rusher gave a slideshow presentation detailing the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act.

Rusher reported that statistics show that unemployment will reach double digits nationwide by the end of 2009, and currently Michigan is at approximately 11% counted or 14% unofficially. For this reason the Obama Administration is adamant that the Recovery dollars be used to help people who are unemployed, while using our existing funding to continue normal services.

Rusher also noted that the health industry will also receive a large amount of funding from the Recovery and Reinvestment Act, but much of it must be used to create and implement automated systems for health care rather than “business as usual”.

The key point is that these funds are not to be used for “business as usual”. The funding must be spent quickly and wisely. Congress really wants to see the economy impacted. Much of the funding will be used for unemployment extensions, infrastructure, education, and “green” initiatives.

There will be a large increase in the Summer Youth Employment Program funding, which will allow our department to employ approximately 600 youth here in Washtenaw County. We are ramping up for this.

Rusher noted that the Office of Management Budget (OMB) will have oversight of the recovery funding, and Washtenaw County will keep a close watch on how our dollars are spent making sure we are accountable. State agencies will have until May 1st, 2009 to present a concrete stimulus plan to the OMB.

The federal government will get funding to the States within 30 days, who in turn must get funding to the locals within another 30 days.

D. Fuel and Retool Initiative with Ypsilanti Area Chamber of Commerce/Eastern Leaders Group

- Rusher explained that she and Diane Keller sit on several Boards together, including the Eastern Leaders Group, and the MEGA-P group. Both groups are focused on improving the economic situation of the Ypsilanti Area. In an effort to do so, Rusher noted that she and Keller had come up with the Retool and Refuel program. This program will focus on attracting and growing leaders in the Ypsilanti Area. We will do these things by developing a full service office, customized training/OJTs, marketing, coordinating with the MI-SBTDC, coordinate neighborhood improvement plans, develop consultation and referral services, and coordinate joint services and activities between the Chamber and ETCS. We would also like to work with the EMU business school to get a HUD grant to expand and improve the Key Bank building. We have decided to take a block by block approach to this project, looking at one block at a time in the Ypsilanti Area for improvement. We are anticipating a kick-off with huge publicity, through media, CONCENTRATE, Billboards, Coffee Klatch events, Facebook, Linked-In, etc. We are looking to develop executive, middle management, and those interested in entrepreneurship. Also, we'd like to create avenues and opportunities for those looking for paid internships, and apprenticeships.
- The cost for this project would be \$350,000.00 over two years. The outcomes will include creation of at least 250 - 300 jobs. Training of 200-400 individuals, and 25-30 business either retained or created.

Wolf inquired whether or not the funding for this project would come from Stimulus funds or regular funding. Rusher responded that it would come from regular funding.

Quimet questioned where the project will be headquartered, and if Keller or Rusher will be willing to take on oversight of the staff for this project. Keller and Rusher commented that the project has been a work in progress, and may eventually be grown into a larger project or rolled into a larger project with its own oversight. Quinn asked if it might be better to take a look at whether or not the current jobs of staff already on board should be changed to meet these new demands rather than hiring new people.

Real noted that the creative sector should be included in this project, and that Stimulus funding should be considered for use to increase the scope of the project.

Prater moved to support the Fuel and Retool project. Weaver supported. Motion carried.

X. Report of the Committees

A. Education Advisory Group

- There were no updates to report at this time.
- B. Strategic Planning Committee Report
 - There were no updates to report at this time.
- C. Employers Committee Report
 - i. Helping Businesses Thrive and Grow Event
 - Rusher noted that the Thrive and Grow event was very successful. There were approximately 90 businesses in attendance, ranging in size from 1 employee to 10,000 employees. Each business in attendance had a chance to create its own recovery plan.
- D. Communications and Marketing Committee (postponed to May)
 - i. 2009 ETCS Marketing Plan
 - Wolf reported that the Joint Marketing Committee had met to review the 2009 ETCS Marketing Plan developed by Maura Campbell. The members of that committee were asked to give their input on the plan along with the Joint Executive Committee. We are currently evaluating and incorporating the suggestions that were received. We have also learned recently that Congress should be one of our target audiences, so we are incorporating this adjustment as well.
The Marketing Plan will be presented to the full board upon completion of this process.

XI. Report of the Community Action Board

- McKnight-Morton reported that she had recently attended the NCAF Legislative Conference, which many legislators were in attendance at. Morton noted that the thoughts of these legislators seemed to be the same, that the Recovery funding is top priority and that most are pleased to be working with President Obama and his Administration.
- McKnight- Morton also noted that she was pleased to see the dedication of the Community Action Colleagues around the Nation who are working to help people during this time of need.
- Rusher reported that the group also met with Secretary of Labor Chu, Congressman Obey, and Senator Stabenow.

XII. Other Business

- Meals on Wheel Annual Spring Fling will be at the Marriott Bentleys, March 19th. Corporate tables are \$500 and individual tickets are \$19.99.

XIII. Adjournment

- Harrison adjourned the meeting at 10:00 AM.