



MINUTES OF THE EWIB MEETING

TUESDAY, MARCH 23, 2010
8:00 A.M.

Members Present: Tom Burns, Pete Connair, Frank DiFusco, Susan Hibbard, Jacqueline Korengel, Cynthia Lamb, Michelle Landry, Jeffrey Beadle, Jim Butler, Karen Eichstaedt, Shelly Giménez, Lindy Lee Gold, *Marge Valentin*, James LoMonaco, John Markowicz, Iris Mellow-Barnes, Mel Olsson, *Jon Sarkis*, & Ross Tomlin.

Staff Present: John Beauregard, Carol LaBelle, Virginia Sampietro, Guy Saporito, & Sheila Taurianen.

Others Present: Pat Dixe, Joan Carrasquillo, Roger Mason, Liz Binger, Mary Berry, Suzanne Cimochoowski, Peter DiBiasi, Ellen Paul, Alice Carrier, Tina Rice, Dianne Williams, & Don Klepper-Smith.

Call to Order

Chairman Burns called the meeting to order at 8:10 a.m., and introduced Dr. Ross Tomlin, who has replaced Dianne Williams as Quinebaug Valley Community College (QVCC) President, as well as on the EWIB's Board.

Mr. Beauregard presented departing Board member Dianne Williams with a token of the Board's appreciation for her years of service. He noted that she was the only Board member to have served on the Southern, Northern, and Eastern Boards during her tenure. He outlined several highlights of her term, including hosting a Dislocated Worker Career Center on QVCC campus prior to the arrival of "One-Stops," and her recent partnership with EWIB to establish regional testing centers to convert on-line course work into college credits.

Public Comment

None.

Acceptance of Previous Minutes

A **MOTION** was made to approve the minutes from the January 26, 2010 Board of Directors meeting, as presented (*Gold/Markowicz*). **ACTION:** Unanimously approved.

Correspondence/Communications

Mr. Beauregard reviewed the following items of correspondence:

1. **WIA Re-Authorization** –
 - a. A letter thanking the Board for hosting US Rep. Courtney's February 17th WIA Re-Authorization Roundtable
 - b. The CT Workforce Development Council's (CWDC's) "*WIA Reauthorization Discussion Themes*" that will be shared with the CT Employment and Training Commission (CETC). He briefly

highlighted three (3) key items related to WIA Re-Authorization: **1)** retaining local control provision; **2)** the importance of directing resources to youth; and, **3)** the separation of the resources that pay for the infrastructure (*i.e.*, *CTWorks Centers*) from training dollars. A major issue of WIBs throughout the country is spending a large percentage of their WIA funding on infrastructure costs.

The Board is tracking several items of State legislation, including House Majority Leader Merrill's "*No Worker Left Behind*." The proposed legislation seeks to waive tuition (*up to \$5,000*) for workers going to the CT Community College system in a "*high-demand*" or "*emerging industry*" field. The legislation has been voted out of Committee with no funding attached.

2. **American Council on Education (ACE)** – With Stimulus training dollars depleted and a heightened need for efficient use of training funds, the Board is working with ACE to give QVCC, & Three Rivers Community College (*TRCC*) the ability to proctor exams for ACE-recognized college credit courses. Once approved, the individuals who complete previously approved on-line training courses offered through *CTWorks-East* will be eligible for college credits. The on-site review will be performed shortly.
3. **"Solutions" Magazine Article** – The January/February 2010 edition featuring the Eastern CT region and the efficiencies of our on-line learning program in a One-Stop Career Center was discussed.

Guest Speaker (*Don Klepper-Smith, Chair, Governor's Council of Economic Advisors*)

Mr. Klepper-Smith gave a presentation on "*New Perspectives on Pending Economic Recovery*" highlighting the changes in the regional, state, and national economy over the past six months.

- **Recovery** – A job-less recovery is anticipated in the short-term, as labor markets are not expected to bottom-out until mid-2010. The focus is on increased productivity (*doing more with less*) and profitability.
- **Job Growth Lags** – To-date, 8.6M jobs have been lost during the Recession. Businesses are not likely to add new hires early in the recovery due to lagging sales growth and (*in*)direct labor costs.
- **Unemployment Rates** – The current US Unemployment Rate stands at 9.7%, however, the more comprehensive calculation, which includes marginally attached and those working part-time jobs while seeking full-time employment currently stands at 16.8%.
- **Domestic Labor Market** – The number of long-term unemployed (*27+ weeks*) has more than doubled over the past year (*now 2.7M*). Businesses are not likely to add workers because:
 - **The Cost of Doing Business** – CT ranks 5th nationally for the highest cost of doing business, 3rd (*11.1%*) in the tax burden (*behind NJ at 11.8%, and NY at 11.7%*).
 - **Businesses Substitute Capital for Labor** – There is a 14% increase in the use of temporary workers, because employers don't want to make a commitment.
 - **Business Barometer** –The Governor's Council anticipated that the State would lose 105K-115K jobs as a result of the Recession. During the previous 15-year period (*1994-2004*), the New London/Norwich/RI region grew 15.4% ~ almost 3x the state average (*5.4%*).
- **CT Manufacturing Jobs** – Manufacturing is one of the State's major economic drivers (*167K jobs statewide*), and is critical to long-term economic health. However, the State's high cost of doing business is driving many manufacturers out of state.
- **New London & Windham County Economies** – From 1994-2008, on average, CT wages (*despite removing outlier Fairfield County*) wages have outpaced New London and Windham (*\$37,387*) Counties. Mr. Beauregard & Mr. Klepper-Smith stated that matching the State's escalation pattern for both Eastern CT counties is achievable, and is a realistic goal for the Board given its focus on broad-based STEM competency development currently underway.

CETC Report

Alice Carrier (*OWC*)– reported that the State Energy Training Partnership last met on March 11th and is scheduled to meet again on April 20th where they will discuss the \$700K available for Individual Training Accounts (*ITAs*).

Chairman/Executive Director Report

Executive Directors Report

- **TANF/ARRA Funding** – CT is eligible for a portion of the federal TANF Emergency Contingency ARRA Fund, based on past expenditures made with State funds on TANF families. The application process supports subsidized employment programs and supplementing the Summer Jobs program. The grant requires matching funds, therefore, EWIB's Summer Youth Employment Program (\$350,000), allocated by the State Legislature, would be put up as part of the match. Adults currently on Cash Assistance can be placed in subsidized employment, as well as youth with this funding. If received, the Summer Program would be approximately the size of last year's program. Additionally, a Bill in the U.S. House of Representatives seeks to add Summer Youth funding, which could bring even more money to the program, if approved. The Board will be asked to act on a Board Resolution for the CT Summer Youth Program funding later in the Agenda.
- **Job Creation** – Chairman Burns informed the group that House Majority Leader Merrill held a Job Growth Roundtable & Speaker of the House Donovan held a "Green Jobs" Panel. A report has been issued for both events. Please contact staff if you are interested in receiving either report.

Committee Reports

Performance, Accountability, & Planning Committee Report

Committee Co-Chair Markowicz reported that the Committee met on February 3, 2010. EWIB has been selected as one (1) of two (2) CT WIBs for a federal oversight review of WIA programs, to be held during the last week of April. The Committee reviewed the allocation of WIA tuition funds and recommended returning the Tuition & Support Services threshold to \$3,000, effective July 1, 2010. The reduction will make the tuition available to more people after the elimination of the Stimulus funding. The current status of the Norwich CTWorks-East Center lease was discussed. Staff will continue to pursue DOL's official position regarding the Center. A **MOTION** was made to approve the Performance, Accountability, & Planning Committee report, as presented (**BUTLER/LAMB**). **ACTION:** Unanimously approved.

STEM Council

Council Chairman Lamb reported that the group met on January 27, 2010 where the STEM Council's Statement of Strategic Direction Ad-Hoc Committee briefed the Council on their findings, which included the following recommendations:

- **Competency Development** – support the initiatives at the secondary school level to improve the math skills & STEM talent retention
- **Entrepreneurial Development & Business Leadership Skills** – increase regional networks & collaboration to promote competency-based talent development model & "communities of innovation"
- **Build the Capacity of the Eastern CT STEM Council** – ensure that the organization includes all the key stakeholders & consider a two (2) sub-committee structure (1. *Innovation & Collaboration*, and 2. *Foundational Skills, Math*) to accomplish prioritized RIG objectives.

The Council agreed to support the Strategic Direction, including the formation of sub-committees for **1)** Foundational Skills; and, **2)** Innovation/Collaboration.

An initiative by Microsoft "Elevate America" was discussed, where 9,000 Microsoft e-learning vouchers could be available to clients throughout the state utilizing the STEM Grant's virtual website as the portal. A demonstration of the grant's Virtual STEM Center Website (www.ctstemjobs.org), was given.

Youth Council Report

No report.

Old Business

None.

New Business

- **Resolution EWIB-10-02 (*Metal Trades Council Peer Counseling Grant*)** – The grant is intended to serve ~400 laid-off Electric Boat workers, and has been authorized by the EB Labor/Management Committee. The \$50,000 grant from CTDOL is to match the salary & fringe for a 2nd peer counselor. A **MOTION** was made to approve EWIB Resolution EWIB-10-02, as presented (*Markowicz/Connair*). **ACTION:** Unanimously approved.
- **Resolution EWIB-10-03 (*SFY 2010/2011 State Youth Employment & Training Program*)** – Preliminary funding amounts have been received, and show Eastern CT receiving \$350,000. A **MOTION** was made to approve EWIB Resolution EWIB-10-03, as presented (*Butler/Markowicz*). **ACTION:** Unanimously approved.

Natchaug Hospital Fundraising Luncheon – Dr. Korengel informed the Board of the Third Annual Natchaug Hospital fund-raising luncheon that is being held on May 12, 2010 at 1:30 pm. Anyone who is interested in attending the event can contact Dr. Korengel at jkorengel@dime-bank.com or (860-859-4306).

Adjournment

A **MOTION** was made to adjourn the meeting (*Markowicz/Eichstaedt*). **ACTION:** Unanimously approved.

The meeting adjourned at 9:58 A.M.

Meeting Minutes respectfully submitted for Eastern CT Workforce Investment Board Secretary James S. Butler by Executive Assistant, Sheila R. Taurianen.