



PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING

Thursday, February 22, 2007

8:00 a.m.

Merrimack Valley Workforce Investment Board

Lawrence, MA 01840

Members Present: Peter Matthews, Chair
Donna Gambon, Charles LoPiano

Members Absent: Sal Lupoli, Pedro Arce, Karen Sawyer-Faust, Shirley Callan

Staff Present: Betty Kirk

Guests Present: Arthur Chilingirian, Amy Weatherbee

The absence of a quorum was suggested. Mr. Matthews reminded the Committee that the Board had voted at the last meeting that the presence of 33% of members would constitute a quorum. The presence of a quorum was established.

1. Approval of Minutes of 1/17/07

Mr. Matthews called the meeting to order at 8:00 a.m. and called for a motion on the minutes of the 1/17/07 meeting.

Motion Charles LoPiano seconded by Donna Gambon to approve the minutes of the January 17, 2007 meeting as submitted. Motion passed.

2. Career Center Performance Update

For the WIA Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth, the performance report now displays the annual plan numbers for comparison. Betty stated that she did not see anything really problematic.

Regarding the Lucent Grant, we still have no commitment to a schedule of lay-offs. Chili feels that the Westford management people will be the next group to come out. Peter added that Alcatel wants the cuts to come in the United States rather than in France. Although the Lucent Grant is presently under-enrolled at 62, Chili said an extension may be needed as lay-offs occur down the road. He mentioned that Congressman Marty Meehan was always very helpful with the Lucent NEG's and will be missed if he takes the U-Mass position. Chili will ask for help from Congressman Tierney and from WIB

members. His next major concern is Malden Mills where 800 workers could be in jeopardy.

Chili updated the group on the Northeast Flood Grant. Due to the snow, the only sites still open are in Peabody. Chili wants to return to certain sites in the spring and continue the work. He feels that the Department of Labor will give their approval. The request for modification, however, is still with the State. The 30 entered employments are the employees from the Mary Immaculate Nursing Home, whose facility re-opened on September 18th.

The Smith & Nephew Grant will be monitored by the State on March 7th, 8th, and 9th. Chili feels that they will easily make their enrollment number of 120. Program Manager, Fran LaCerte has already enrolled 84 people and will continue to enroll. The remainder of enrollments will come through the vouchering component mainly out of the Lowell Career Center.

3. Update On Procurement For Professional Services For The Blueprint

Amy Weatherbee explained the procurement process to the group. Because we expected the cost to be less than \$25,000 and because time was a factor, the Division of Grants Administration suggested soliciting bids from experienced vendors with whom we were comfortable. We are just updating certain sections of the blueprint, but will look at publishing a new blueprint after the 2010 census comes out. The lowest bid came from Mt. Auburn Associates, Inc.

Motion by Charles LoPiano seconded by Donna Gambon to accept the bid from Mt. Auburn pending successful contract negotiations. Motion passed.

4. Discussion on Career Center Chartering

Arthur Chilingirian then spoke about the Career Center Chartering referencing a summary of review and recommendations provided to the committee. They have been reviewing other career center charters as well as their own. Donna Gambon stated that the ValleyWorks Career Center's charter is much more comprehensive than most others. Betty agreed, stating that she had reviewed the charter from Northshore and found it to be much less involved and more cooperative in language. Donna said they were looking for more cooperative/collaborative language. Chili said they expected to have a draft ready in early March. Betty said she had begun a draft version and would share it with the career center upon completion.

5. Workforce Competitiveness Trust Fund Update

Betty and Chili discussed two initiatives that the MVWIB and the career center have been collaborating on. We are also partnering with the Greater Lowell WIB and the Northshore WIB on these projects.

The first initiative is a manufacturing customized training project which will train dislocated workers, among others, in highly technical precision manufacturing. There are a number of employers in all three WIB regions, including GE, Raytheon, Magellan and Arwood who have expressed a need for highly skilled workers in defense and

aerospace manufacturing. There are meetings scheduled with the partners on March 6th in Salem and March 9th in Newburyport. The MVWIB is taking the lead on this project.

Chili discussed a construction initiative on which the ValleyWorks Career Center will be the lead partner. They have chosen to apply for a planning grant on this initiative rather than an implementation grant as a planning grant will give them more time to pull in all their prospective partners. Thomas Casey, a Union Organizer who serves on the WIB Board, is very interested in partnering with us on this project, especially to help local workers obtain good construction jobs. Chili will be looking at the dislocated worker population for this program as well as youth coming out of local Trade Schools.

Amy mentioned that we can pick our target populations for both these projects as the grant allows great flexibility and there is no income eligibility. We are focusing on dislocated workers, older workers and older youth. Applications for both grants are due on April 2nd.

In other business, the Committee approved of a membership form for Board members to fill out which would help us pin-point their interests and areas of expertise. Amy Weatherbee asked if the Committee would be able to meet a week earlier in April, on April 19th rather than the 26th, so that they could vote on a procurement for In-School-Youth. WIB staff will survey Planning Committee members to ensure that we would have a quorum for that date.

6. Adjournment

Having no further business, Donna Gambon made a motion to adjourn seconded by Charles LoPiano. Motion passed.

Respectfully submitted,

Betty Kirk
Recorder