



PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING

Thursday, May 24, 2007

8:00 a.m.

Merrimack Valley Workforce Investment Board

Lawrence, MA 01840

Members Present: Peter Matthews, Chair
Pedro Arce, Charles LoPiano, Donna Gambon, Shirley Callan, Mike Sweeney

Members Absent: Sal Lupoli, Karen Sawyer

Staff Present: Fred Carberry, Betty Kirk, Mary Kivell

Guests Present: Arthur Chilingirian, Amy Weatherbee

1. **Approval of Minutes of 4/19/07**

Mr. Matthews called the meeting to order at 8:00 a.m. and called for a motion on the minutes of the 4/19/07 meeting.

Motion by Mike Sweeney seconded by Chick LoPiano to approve the minutes of the April 19, 2007 meeting as submitted. Motion passed.

2. **Approval of Career Center Charter**

Betty Kirk said that we have reviewed the charter in detail and that she has made all the changes recommended at the last meeting to the Career Center Charter. She asked if there were any questions or additional comments and hearing none committee chair Peter Matthews called for a motion.

Motion by Shirley Callan seconded by Mike Sweeney to approve the Career Center Charter. Motion passed.

3. **Approval of Annual Plan**

Fred Carberry said that the Annual Plan draft document which was sent out to the committee is a work in progress and that we would be looking for a vote of endorsement in concept today, with presentation to the full board at the June 5th meeting. He then asked Arthur Chilingirian to talk about any changes or shifts from the FY'07 Plan.

Chili said that the Plan calls for the Career Center to continue their computer workshops and go back to opening nights. He said they have changed the numbers for serving different

populations but the number of job seekers has remained pretty consistent the last three years at 14,000. He said that they are increasing the number of businesses served and everyone is going to go through an orientation session. They are also training staff on presentation skills and conducting mock interviews. They held a UI session in Newburyport that was very successful and are bringing it to Lawrence and Haverhill. They held seven job fairs, one off site at Northern Essex, which also proved successful. Chili said that they plan to update staff once the Blueprint is available.

Fred Carberry said that an important aspect of the Plan is the funding to support it. WIA and Wagner Peyser funding increased 11%, but last year we incurred a 21% decrease and have not recovered to the FY'06 level. At the same time, costs and expenses have gone up.

Amy Weatherbee explained that the budget process begins with the allocations and the fiscal department who works the numbers and checks on carry-in dollars. In FY'07 we used 100% of the money and the city provided \$140,000 to support two positions. Amy said that what she has done is use last year's numbers as a baseline. Once we get the final allocation numbers we will integrate a full budget together. She noted that there is a major increase in the amount for dislocated workers to 38%. Amy also said that she has put a grant writer into the budget to work on getting additional funding.

Donna Gambon, DCS, said that she has had a cut in Wagner Peyser and UI funding and is waiting for carry in figures to work on the budget. As it stands now, she is looking at cuts in personnel without the carry in monies. Donna said that the state now wants the fiscal agent to handle non personnel services such as the ordering of supplies for an example. One item that Donna said creates a problem is the issue of IT services due to DCS security concerns and the UI Trust Fund. A new IT director has been appointed, who Donna said is forward looking, and concerns with working on computers etc. should be worked out.

Amy said that when the last piece is in place they will sit down finalize the budget. The final document will be around 50 or 60 pages. Amy said that she can prepare an executive summary for disbursement to the board.

Fred Carberry said that, with the concurrence of this committee, an executive summary can be sent to the MVWIB membership along with notification that the entire Annual Plan is available on the MVWIB website. The committee agreed that this is the best way to proceed and that they will be provided with a complete copy of the Annual Plan for their review. Fred Carberry also said that he would like to acknowledge the work of Chili, Amy and Donna.

Mike Sweeney said that he is pleased to see that the Plan does not require residency for services and emphasized the importance of providing services to veterans returning to the workforce. Discussion followed on services to veterans and the idea of convening a meeting of the area veterans' officers. Donna Gambon also spoke about the addition of another veterans' representative in the Career Center.

It was noted that the Annual Plan is due to the state by June 8th. Amy and Chili then spoke about the performance numbers and how they drive the goals going into next year.

Motion by Shirley Callan seconded by Mike Sweeney to approve the FY'08 Annual Plan, with the appropriate changes to the signature page, contingent upon a final review prior to presentation at the June 5th full MVWIB meeting. Motion passed with Donna Gambon abstaining.

4. Other Business

a. Out-of-School Youth Recontracting

Amy Weatherbee explained that there were three Out-of-School Youth programs up for review and recontracting. Amy said that the Youth Council met on May 16th and reviewed the performance data and voted to recommend these programs for recontracting.

She then explained the performance of the LARE OSY Education and CNA/CCHA noting that 17 students have completed the Red Cross CNA/CCHA training and 13 have obtained Vital Sign Certification and Alzheimer's Certification. She also said that 17 have obtained ARC C.N.A. Certification and 12 have obtained their state C.N.A. License. She is recommending re-funding for a second year of service with no changes in the program and a 5% contracting leeway to account for increases in minimum wage for subsidized employment.

The second program is the LARE OSY Education and Medical Assisting Program in which 7 students took the NHA exam for certification. She is recommending this program for re-funding with no changes and a 5% contracting leeway as above.

The third program is the LARE OSY Education and Medical Billing and Coding Program in which 2 students have taken National Exams (Billing and Coding Specialist) with the next test scheduled in June in the evening for employed youth customers. Amy recommends re-funding for a second year of service with no changes to the program and the same 5% contracting leeway.

Motion by Mike Sweeney seconded by Chick LoPiano to approve the recommendations for recontracting for the LARE Education and CNA/CCHA, LARE Education and Medical Assisting, and LARE Education and Medical Billing and Coding programs as presented and recommended by the Youth Council. Motion passed.

b.) Reallocation of FY'07 Supportive Services/Needs Related Payments

Amy said that Arthur Chilingirian, DTD Executive Director, is requesting a reallocation of \$10,000 from the Title I WIA Youth Supportive Service line item to the Title I WIA Youth Needs Related Payments line item based on the needs of the customers.

Motion by Shirley Callan seconded by Mike Sweeney to approve the reallocation of the FY'07 Supportive Services/Needs Related Payments in the amount of \$10,000 as presented. Motion passed.

5. Update Workforce Competitiveness Trust Fund

Betty Kirk reported that we have been awarded funding through Commonwealth Corporation for a Customized Manufacturing Training Program. We have been asked to respond to some clarifying questions by Friday. There is a start-up meeting at Holy Cross on May 31st and an

operating meeting on June 20th for the fiscal side. Betty said that we will be doing a job posting for a project coordinator to oversee the program.

Fred Carberry said that this was a highly competitive grant that came out of the Workforce Solutions Act and we applied for \$500,000 over two years. We collaborated with the North Shore and Lowell WIBs and partners include NECC, North Shore Community College, Whittier Regional High School. There are also ten private industry partners including Raytheon and GE.

6. Vendor Bid Issues

Fred Carberry spoke about a vendor complaint because of a different vendor submitting a proposal which contained significant portions of the original vendor's prior proposal. Fred obtained an opinion from City of Lawrence Attorney Charles Boddy who said that bids are a matter of public record. Amy Weatherbee said that the RFP contains language stating that bids are public record and it is common practice for bidders to request looking at previous submissions. This information was provided to keep the committee informed.

7. Update on the Blueprint

Betty Kirk reported that Mt. Auburn Associates requested an extension of their contract to June 30th in order to complete employer interviews for the Blueprint. This was granted and they will deliver a first draft in early June with the final document by June 22nd. Betty said that in her preparation for the Annual Plan labor market analysis she used information garnered by Mt. Auburn.

Pedro Arce said that once we receive the final Blueprint we need to place it on the website.

8. Career Center Performance for April

Amy Weatherbee said that the Career Center Performance for April is a document she prepares for in house staff on a monthly basis. Betty Kirk said that this was provided to the committee for informational purposes. She asked the committee if they would like to receive this information on a quarterly basis instead of at every meeting. The consensus was to receive the information on a quarterly basis since staff are reviewing monthly and can alert the committee of any concerns.

Fred Carberry said that Ms. Tamika Correira the Mass WIB Director who reports to Suzanne Bump has been invited to speak to the board at the next meeting June 5th. Fred also spoke about the Health Care Learning Network collaboration with Metro Southwest and North Shore WIB which is a learning system for health care networks. Another initiative that Fred said is not yet funded but which he is hopeful about is WIRED, a collaboration between nine WIBs.

9. Adjournment

Having no further business Chick LoPiano made a motion to adjourn seconded by Mike Sweeney. Motion passed.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Kivell
Recorder