



CEDAR CREST RESTAURANT
187 Broadway
Lawrence, MA

Annual Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, October 28, 2008
8:00 AM

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Kimberly Abare, Howard Allen, Mark Andrews, Joseph Bevilacqua, Shirley Callan, Thomas Casey, Thomas Connors, Paul Durant, Howard Flagler, Jeanette Guevara, Gary Hale, David Hartleb, Patricia Horgan, Robert Ingala, Jeff Linehan, Michael Lynch, Sal Lupoli, Stefanie McCowan, Peter Matthews, Ann Ormond, Karen Sawyer, Fred Shaheen, Tom Schiavone, Michael Sweeney, Cal Williams

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Pedro Arce, Lou Antonellis, Wayne Capolupo, Stephen Capone, James Driscoll, Barbara Grant, Susan Jepson, Charles LoPiano, Jeff Marcoux, Maria Miles, John Olenio, Kevin Page, Jean Perrigo, Cindy Phelan, Margaret O'Neill, William Pillsbury, Steve Salvo, Len Wilson

GUESTS PRESENT:

Leanne Eastman, Ronald Champagne, Atty. Robert LeBlanc, Jason Pimentel, Arthur Chilingirian, Dawn Beati, Lisa Coy, Kelly D'Archangelo, Odanis Hernandez, Gary Fountain, David Souza, Julie Ward, Amy Weatherbee, Barbara Zeimetz

STAFF PRESENT:

Fred Carberry, Elizabeth Kirk, Mary Kivell, Augustine Ambe, Corina Ossers

1. Call to Order

In the absence of board chair Pedro Arce, Peter Matthews, Planning Committee Chair called the meeting to order at 8:10 am.

2. Minutes of the June 24, 2008 Meeting

Peter Matthews then called for a motion on the minutes of the 6/24/08 meeting.

Mark Andrews made a motion to accept the minutes of the 6/24/08 meeting as submitted and Tom Schiavone seconded the motion. Motion passed.

3. Reports of Committee Chairs

i. Planning Committee

Planning Committee Chair Peter Matthews said that at the end of the first quarter, total job seekers and employers served is ahead of plan at 44% and 37% respectively. The career center has already served 3,177 UI claimants which is 49% of the planned total of 6500 with total entered employments on plan at 586. Critical and emerging industries served is ahead of plan at 44% and 29% respectively. The career center continues to work with a difficult to serve population where 66% of Title I Adults served were basic skills deficient and 25% had less than a high school diploma. Also, 33% of the Dislocated Worker population were basic skills deficient; 52% were between the ages of 40-54 and 20% were age 55 or older. The Youth Program has enrolled 181 customers which is 61% of the planned total of 296. Of these, 172 are carry-ins from FY08 and 9 are new participants. Additionally, 47% of youth participants are high school drop-outs with 41% pregnant or parenting youth and 76% are basic skills deficient.

The Lucent/Alcatel National Emergency Grant began on July 1, 2008 and will run until June 30, 2010. Peter said that at the end of the first quarter, there were 131 enrollees which is 77% of the planned total of 170 participants. He noted that 42 participants are in training under the TRADE ACT and, as of September 30, 7 participants have found employment and been exited.

Peter continued his report stating that two bids were received in response to the release of the RFP for space for the Haverhill Career Center. The first bid was for a location at 76-80 Merrimack St., the second at 192 Merrimack St. The review team recommended the second bid at 192 Merrimack St. to the Planning Committee and the Chief Elected Official for negotiation for the lease. Reasons for selection were, it was as the most cost effective over the five year period; the layout and plan had excellent customer flow; the build out could be done within 30 days; and it is a good location and has dedicated parking. The Planning Committee recommendation was for the approval of the bid for 192 Merrimack St. for negotiation for space for the Haverhill ValleyWorks Career Center to the Chief Elected Official.

He said that the Workforce Competitiveness Trust Fund (WCTF) Grant continues to provide training opportunities to individuals interested in entering a career in manufacturing and incumbent workers interested in improving their skills and advancing their careers. To date, 262 participants have been enrolled in this grant which is 154% of plan, 52 participants were unemployed or under-employed; 210 were incumbent workers, 43 participants attained new employment which is 126% of the planned goal of 34, 184 participants attained a skilled credential, 26 received a wage increase and 10 participants received a promotion. The planned end date for this grant is June 30, 2009 and we have already exceeded most of our goals. Customized training programs continue to be developed with employers working closely with training provider partners and the community colleges.

Mr. Matthews said that regarding the ECCLI grant, between October 1, 2007 and October 31, 2008, the Merrimack Valley Workforce Investment Board (MVWIB) engaged in research to obtain information regarding the present and continued projected shortage of healthcare workers, "burn-out" of front-line workers, CNAs and home health aides, and the retention of older workers, specifically at long-term care facilities. The MVWIB conducted interviews with CEOs and Directors of Nursing at seven long-term care facilities in the lower Merrimack Valley region. The interviews consisted of a list of seventeen questions, five of which were related to older workers. The interviews averaged approximately one hour. Topics of discussion included work readiness skills of new hires, "burn-out" and turnover issues, career

ladders/lattices, recruitment and retention strategies as well as familiarity with the Extended Care Career Ladder Initiative (ECCLI). Additionally, employee surveys were distributed to nursing staff and other front-line workers, with ninety-seven being returned. Peter said that a report based on the findings of the interviews, surveys and other research is being generated and will be submitted to Commonwealth Corporation at the end of November.

Mr. Matthews said that the Planning Committee voted to approve funding for the following Out-of-School Youth Programs: LARE's Education & CNA/CHHA Program for funding up to \$85,223; LARE's Education & Medical Billing-Coding/Medical Secretarial Program pending successful funding negotiations. The Committee also voted to approve funding for LARE's Education & Medical Assisting Program as long as the issues of placing youth in training related positions is resolved.

The Merrimack Valley WIB recently submitted an Older Worker Retention Strategies Proposal available for funding through the Workforce Competitiveness Trust Fund (WCTF). Our proposal was successful and we will receive funding of \$38,537.00. Working with our employer partner New England Die Cutting, Inc., we will develop a written strategic retention plan that will increase the ability of New England Die Cutting and other businesses to retain their older workers.

The final item of the Planning Committee's report is the RFP for space for the MVWIB/ValleyWorks Career Center. Peter Matthews reported that the Planning Committee has met and reviewed the proposals and the recommendation of the Review Team and said that he would like a motion to accept the recommendation of the committee to proceed with negotiations with Ozzy Properties for Proposal B. He said that this was the highest rated proposal and the most cost effective with the lowest price.

Tom Schiavone asked how bidders were notified. Amy Weatherbee said that we are required, under MGL, to notify the Central Register and to advertise in the local newspaper. Tom Casey asked if the site is in Lawrence and Amy said it is the current site of the Career Center.

Mike Sweeney said that the square footage price is reasonable and the Review Team looked at the possibility of a decrease in funding and the market we are now in. Based on when bids were received, we were confident we got the best possible price. Maybe it would be less if we went out to bid again.

Amy said that we are currently on extension at both sites and that we have competitive bids based on what we are now paying. The committee reviewed all of the costs and the reason we recommended this bid is that it is very cost effective.

Mark Andrews said that given the current market place and the projected three to five year slide, and any accelerators, perhaps it would be wise to go back out to bid.

Amy said that the bid is for the same price per square foot for all five years. Tom Schiavone asked what the current cost is and Amy said it is \$15 per square foot for 1,800 square feet and now we are paying \$19 per square foot. The cost for the WIB is \$13-\$14 per square foot for 2,300 square feet. Mark Andrews asked if it is all inclusive and Amy said that it is. Amy

said that the RFP allowed for bids with the Career Center paying electric as well as for all inclusive.

Mike Sweeney said that there is a potential if we re-bid for a lower price, but we are on a lease extension and we wanted to get a timely proposal before the lease extension ends. If we put it out until January or February, our costs will be higher. We negotiated a provision deferring an additional cost of \$4 per square foot, which will be forgiven if the current landlord is awarded the bid. Otherwise, we will have to pay the additional charge back to February. He said that he and Tom Schiavone negotiated this at the time the extension was granted. The original cost was \$15 - \$16 and when we requested the extension they wanted \$23, we negotiated it down to \$19 with the terms in the current lease with the additional \$4 to be forgiven if the landlord is awarded the bid. Mr. Sweeney said that going back out to bid is not a decision that the Review Team can make when they have responsive bids, although it is a legitimate question for the board to raise. If the board moves in that direction, we can expect the current landlord to exercise that provision. If we do re-bid, Mr. Sweeney said that he strongly suggests that all bidders be accountable for any holdover by the move of the timeframe. After the RFP came back, we checked with the Inspector General who said that deducting the \$47,000 from the dollar calculation and removing it from the total cost in comparison to other bids was ok.

Mark Andrews said that he agrees with Mike if we are going back out to bid. He would also add one word "value" given the federal and state cutbacks coming. We can be very confident that the market is shifting and the \$47,000 holdover should be put on bidders.

Shirley Callan said that extending the lease will increase the cost. Amy said that is if the landlord agrees to an extension with no options. The landlord could say no.

Tom Schiavone said that he finds it difficult to believe that any landlord would say no in this market. From his position as Economic Development Director watching state and federal dollars, the market is very competitive and we could have an opportunity to capture a better lease.

Amy said that the RFP was advertised in September and the bids came in October.

Jeff Linehan asked about the five year term and wondered about reducing the number of years. Amy explained that we currently have a five year lease and because of the size of the operation and the number of people the Career Center serves, it is more feasible to have a lease of that length. The Career Center needs stability and we need to consider disruption of services.

Tom Casey said that stability is extremely important and also the process we followed. If we back out, what does that do to our credibility?

Shirley Callan said that she doesn't want to cut off discussion but the Planning Committee and staff have spent a lot of time on these bids. She then made the following motion.

Motion by Shirley Callan seconded by Fred Shaheen to accept the recommendation of the Planning Committee to proceed with negotiations with Ozzy Properties for

Proposal B for space for the MVWIB/ValleyWorks Career Center and to the Chief Elected Official.

Sal Lupoli then said that there is a lot of space out there and there may be cuts in funding. As a board member who has created jobs in Lawrence and hired so many young adults, he is willing to help in any way he can. The stability of the WIB is very important and if money is the central issue, he said that sometimes you make money and sometimes you don't. As a bidder, any funding cuts are bad for Lawrence, so if it is about money it should be looked at. He also said that there is not a lot of profit in \$15 per square foot space.

Amy Weatherbee noted that since no other bidders are present to speak, Mr. Lupoli should not discuss the bid as he may have a conflict of interest. She said that price is a factor and the Ozzy Properties bid is the most cost effective and most advantageous. It is on the preferred first floor, the location has access to transportation and it was ranked highly advantageous by all members of the Review Team.

Tom Casey said that he too is concerned about conflict of interest. Tom Schiavone said that he is not questioning the fairness of the process and has the utmost respect for the people involved in the review. As Lawrence Economic Development Director his only reason is the volatility of the market and the "perfect storm" for buyers. There is no questioning the legitimacy of the process but we have a fiscal responsibility to capture the best dollar value.

Shirley Callan then asked to move the question.

Motion passed with Mark Andrews and Tom Schiavone voting "no" and Joe Bevilacqua and Sal Lupoli abstaining.

ii. Youth Council

Cal Williams, Youth Council Chair, reported on youth programming. Over the past year, the Youth Council has engaged in serious discussion on WIA Youth programming. Some of the issues of particular concern are the limited number of vendors responding to RFP solicitations; the need to develop more gender-neutral, group training programs that will attract more male youth; and low attainment rates for diploma or GED for program participants. The Youth Council recognizes that any youth-focused, strategic action plan must address these issues. We hope to foster new alliances between vocational training providers and school districts, especially Greater Lawrence Technical School and Whittier Regional Vocational School. We also want to explore career opportunities in manufacturing and the building trades, including the possibility of developing apprenticeship programs.

Another concern is the need for more private-sector participation on the Youth Council. Private sector companies can provide advice and information on the needs of business, now and in the future, accurate data on real job opportunities for youth, internships that can provide youth with a taste of the workplace to help inform their career choices, and teacher externships that help enlighten teachers of current workplace trends and concerns, allowing them to share these insights with their students.

Cal continued stating that the MVWIB, in collaboration with ValleyWorks Career Center, successfully employed 216 youth in the 2008 YouthWorks Summer Jobs Program at 56

different work-sites. Our YouthWorks allocation from the state increased to \$336,000 compared to last year's \$240,000. As in the past, the state designated Haverhill and Lawrence as our region's only eligible communities; however, up to 10% of the funding can be used to support youth employment in any of our region's municipalities. This 10% allocation was used to target Methuen youth. A Youth Job Fair was held on Wednesday, April 23rd, at Northern Essex Community College's Lawrence Campus. Cal said that while we were pleased with this year's increased allocation, it should be noted that over 600 eligible youth applied to the program. Over two-thirds of the applicants had to be turned away due to insufficient funding.

VWCC also ran a very successful leadership development program in conjunction with the Summer Jobs Program. Cindy Key, VWCC Workshop Manager, sited 4 facilitators, both in Lawrence and in Haverhill. Out of 32 participants, 30 successfully completed the program.

Through the Connecting Activities grant, National Job Shadow Day was observed on February 5, 2008. We were able to work with 127 students from six different high school programs; 15 students from Diploma Plus, 6 students from GLEC, 23 students from Haverhill High School, 25 students from Lawrence High School, 6 students from Methuen High School, 1 student from Job Corps, and 51 students from Triton Regional High School. We had 38 employers host Job Shadow students, including but not limited to, Merrimack Valley Federal Credit Union, Sal's, Lawrence City Hall, and Haverhill City Hall.

A Construction Career Day was held on May 8, 2008 and had a total of 64 students participating; 6 students from Triton Regional High School, 6 from Georgetown Middle High School, 7 from Amesbury High School, 6 from Andover High School, 18 students from Lawrence High School, 11 students from Diploma Plus and 10 students from Methuen High School. This full day event is designed to educate students about various careers in the construction and engineering industries. Students are exposed to hands-on demonstrations and representatives from these fields discuss a typical workday and explore different aspects of working in the construction and engineering fields.

Other Connecting Activities events included a visit to Federal Reserve Bank (funded by TDBanknorth Grant), a Teacher Externship Awards Ceremony, a Tech Prep Career Fair with Greater Newburyport School to Career Partnership, and a Youth Job Fair.

Through the P-21 Initiative, the MVWIB is working with Professor Russ Mayer of Merrimack College in updating our Youth Strategic Action Plan. Professor Mayer incorporated a wide-reaching survey of youth service providers into his political science class. This activity has been modified to adapt to the WIB's on-going High Performing Workforce Board initiative.

P21 is also funding an initiative to align ValleyWorks and Northern Essex Community College, which calls for co-locating NECC staff at the Career Center. NECC staff will design career pathways maps for VWCC youth with a focus on health care. We are negotiating for college credits and are comparing GED scores with college entrance exam (AccuPlacer) scores in hopes of identifying academic skills gaps and better align WIA remediation content.

The MVWIB, through the efforts of former Youth Workforce Program Manager, Chris Shannon, took the lead in studying the issue of homeless youth in the Merrimack Valley, with the "Merrimack Valley Summit on Unaccompanied Youth", held at Merrimack College. The event

was attended by over 100 persons, representing more than 50 different agencies. The purpose of the summit was to initiate an effort that will culminate with a White Paper that will document our youth homeless population and provide concrete solutions to address this problem. While not fitting into the realm of workforce development per se, youth homelessness does have a profound economic and social impact upon our region.

This past February, the MVWIB teamed up with the Merrimack Valley Chamber of Commerce in a presentation before the National Association of Workforce Boards in Washington, DC. The presentation focused on the successful collaboration that we have achieved with private industry, government entities, and educators. Entitled "Preparing our Workforce for a 21st Century Economy", the presentation definitely had a youth focus. Its goals included: create and/or strengthen working relationships between educational institutions and private industry; educate school staff in the career pathways, job opportunities, and workplace-specific skills required of the regional critical and emerging industries; develop academic content that is more relevant to the workplace; strengthen/expand existing regional school-to-career programming; and create systemic linkages between key stakeholders in the region's youth workforce system and the key school-to-career programming provided by each.

Cal Williams then said that on behalf of the Youth Council, he would like to recognize the following MVWIB members who made the presentation such a success: Peter Matthews, CEO, Merrimack Valley Federal Credit Union, Len Wilson, Regional President, Sovereign Bank, Sal Lupoli, CEO, Riverwalk Properties, Joe Bevilacqua, President, Merrimack Valley Chamber of Commerce, Michael J. Sullivan, Mayor of Lawrence, and Fred Carberry, Executive Director, MVWIB.

iii. Nominating Committee

Ann Ormond, Chair of the Nominating Committee, reported that the committee met on October 7th and the first item discussed was the High Performing WIB and the make-up of the board. Part of this initiative process re-emphasizes that business/private industry candidates be members of the board and under federal regulation the board must be 51% private sector. It is also important that membership be reflective of the region's demographics, geography, and critical and emerging industries. The Nominating Committee and WIB staff continue to work hard to attract members from Greater Haverhill and Greater Newburyport as well as members who represent the critical and emerging industries in the Merrimack Valley.

a. Candidates for Board Appointment

Ann Ormond then presented the following candidates who have been recommended for appointment to the board. They are Ronald O. Champagne, President of Merrimack College; Leanne Eastman, Haverhill Chamber VP & Economic Development Director; Attorney Robert LeBlanc, Methuen; Jason P. Pimentel, UPS HR Supervisor; and Michael Strem, President of Strem Chemicals, Inc., Newburyport.

Motion by Mark Andrews seconded by Mike Sweeney to approve the nominations of Ronald O. Champagne, Leanne Eastman, Atty. Robert LeBlanc, Jason P. Pimentel, Michael E. Strem to the board. Motion passed with Joe Bevilacqua abstaining.

b. Election of Officers

Ann then presented the following slate of officers for board approval. Joseph J. Bevilacqua for Chair (nominated by Mayor Sullivan); Mark Andrews for Treasurer (nominated by Mayor Sullivan; and Ann Ormond for Clerk (nominated by Pedro Arce.)

Motion by Mike Sweeney seconded by Tom Schiavone to adopt the slate of officers as presented. Motion passed with Joe Bevilacqua abstaining.

4. Report of Executive Director

Fred Carberry said that since this is the Annual Meeting he has prepared a slide show of the board's accomplishments. He talked about the achievements in performance at ValleyWorks Career Center which served 15,117 job seekers (108% of Plan), 1,151 employers (105% of Plan), 339 dislocated workers (126% of Plan), 732 veterans (92% of Plan), and 273 WIA Title I Adults (96% of Plan). The WIA Title I Youth served were 277 (93% of Plan, 79% Hispanic (state average 34%); 77% basic skills deficient (state average 57%), 83% entered employment (state average 71%), average wage \$9.33 (state average \$8.86).

For the fourth consecutive year, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts has granted an award of \$20,000 to the Merrimack Valley Workforce Investment Board for exemplary performance in meeting or exceeding fifteen (15) WIA Title 1 Performance Measures. He then congratulated staff from the Career Center on their achievement.

Under National Emergency Grants (NEGs) there are 131 Alcatel Lucent NEG workers enrolled (77.1% of Plan- through first two months). Haverhill Paperboard dislocated workers will also be served by the Alcatel Lucent NEG staff. There were 127 Smith & Nephew NEG workers enrolled at (105% of Plan). This grant closed-out on 6/30/08.

Over the past year, ValleyWorks Career Center's Business Services Unit has worked hard at developing and sustaining strong relationships with the region's employers. Seven Job Fairs were held throughout the region, some with nearly 50 employers in attendance and over 100 job recruitment events, providing an opportunity for "featured employers" to conduct interviews and presentations. A Business Service Rep was added to work exclusively on Youth Employment.

A Haverhill Paperboard Job Fair was held on site on August 21st with a total of 16 employers in attendance. The company has shut down and dislocated workers will be served by Alcatel Lucent NEG staff. Additionally a Veteran's Job Fair was held on November 16, 2007 with twenty-one employers attending. There were ninety-nine job openings with 426 job seekers referred and 85 placed. 155 job seekers attended.

Other job fairs were March Madness, a Youth Job Fair, a Spring Job Fair, a Mass Career Day, and Autumn Job Fairs. Fred said that the 2008 Veterans' Job Fair will be held on November 14th with special guest Sergeant First Class Dana Bowman (Ret.)

Under Youth Programming and the P21 Initiative NECC staff has co-located at VWCC and Merrimack College is working on a Youth Council Strategic Action Plan. The Connecting Activities program has provided hands-on assistance to 4 school districts, sponsored a Job Shadow Day, a Construction Career Day, Teacher Externships, and a Youth Job Fair.

The Summer YouthWorks 2008 served a total of 203 youth through YouthWorks and 13 youth through MassHousing. This was highlighted at a press conference with area Mayors.

Fred also reported that the Workforce Competitiveness Trust Fund (WCTF) is on track and all our numbers are above goal. We are also working with the Northeast Massachusetts Customized Manufacturing Partnership for input for the High Performing WIB Initiative. We are also working on a Regional Innovative Grant with the Greater Lowell WIB and are in receipt of an Older Worker Retention Grant.

Dr. Paul Harrington presented Labor Market Information for the Merrimack Valley and Greater Lowell Region at a Massachusetts Regional Summit held at Sal's Riverwalk and attended by over 200 guests. There were Break-out sessions for healthcare, manufacturing and life Sciences.

We held a joint MVWIB and MVCC Education Breakfast at which teachers and school administrators were honored for participating in the *Merrimack Valley Means Business Program*. A total of 25 teachers, from 8 school districts, representing 27 different subject areas participated in the program.

Looking forward we are focusing on achieving High-Performing WIB status and have hired a consultant to assist with this project. The MVWIB focus will be on the healthcare, manufacturing, and life sciences sector.

He then talked about the new board members added over the past year and highlighted upcoming meeting dates.

5. Presentation – Update on High Performing WIB Initiative

Fred Carberry introduced Barbara Zeimet, who is working with the WIB on the High Performing WIB Initiative.

Barbara said that in order to achieve high performing WIB status the submission to the state must include, signed assurances, updated membership matrices for Board and Youth Council, LWIB contact information, current CEO/LWIB Agreement, organizational chart, statement re Corporate (501 (c)(3) status, and copy of current By-Laws.

The Board will be required to respond to a number of questions in four categories. The questions are designed to determine the capacity and effectiveness of the Board in addressing local workforce issues from a broad strategic perspective with a total of 200 points apportioned across the four categories. The Board must score a minimum 80% rating for each of the four criteria categories and then an on site review will be the final determinate in attaining High Performing Workforce Board Certification.

Barbara then went over each section and the points allotted in each one.

The first section of Part II deals with the development of a 3-5 year Strategic Plan for the Board.

The MVWIB Performance Management Plan will include, how the Board measures its impact on the community and membership, what CQI practices are in place in the Career Centers and for youth programs, how the board analyzes service delivery for business customers, what policies and practices has the Board implemented to improve overall performance and address actual performance issues. We must describe what methods the Board will use to assess compliance with its strategic plan, describe the CQI practices the Board has implemented for itself, identify specific WIB functions which support workforce development efforts for businesses and workers (example WTF, what part do Board members play in the recruitment of new members? How do you assure representation reflects the local labor market, and how does the Board ensure the active participation of Board members (Policies? Procedures?).

The Board will develop a financial strategy designed to bring additional resources to the region.

The foundation of the High Performing Workforce Board Initiative is the development and use of a regional Strategic Plan. Strategic Plans will be reviewed and points awarded based on the responsiveness of the plan to questions articulated in Part II High Performing Workforce Board Criteria, Category A. Strategic Planning and Implementation of Mass Workforce Issuance 8-15.

The Plan will be comprised of the following seven sections designed to address all of the elements required for HPW Certification. Included will be background information on the Merrimack Valley Workforce region and an explanation of the Strategic Planning process; evidence that the process is inclusive of all appropriate stakeholders, reflects the priorities of the critical employment sectors in the region and local economic development partners; and is aligned with the Governor's workforce priorities.

Also included is analysis of current environment by utilizing current labor market, demographic and educational data as well as input from plan participants, identifying current labor market needs, resource availability and deficiencies, and other trends related to the local workforce system. (The Center for Labor Market Studies at Northeastern University has provided new regional labor market demand and supply data that identifies key industry sectors and regional workforce needs and priorities which will be the focus of the plan.)

The current MVWIB mission statement will remain.

The Governor has identified three workforce priorities or objectives which must be addressed in the MVWIB Strategic Plan. They are: building the capacity of the workforce system; closing the Skills Gap, and enhancing the Youth Pipeline.

The issues and Initiatives which will be addressed are: Skill Attainment and re-employment of dislocated workers; Older Worker Retention; enhanced career support and workforce preparation for at-risk youth; and expanded ABE/ESOL programming.

This section will broadly articulate what the MVWIB hopes to achieve in the next three to five years in terms of the strategic initiatives the Board has identified.

The Board will identify specific outcomes or end products to be achieved related to the goals and the plan will include proposed methodology, timeframes and benchmarks. The resources to be utilized must be identified.

The Board will also develop a plan to periodically evaluate progress toward strategic objectives. The plan will provide Board members, customers, and local stakeholders with a mechanism for monitoring progress on the implementation of the strategic plan through the establishment of HPW Advisory Council. Focus groups will assist in the development of goals, objectives, and benchmarks for addressing workforce skill and education needs in the identified industry sectors for employers and current/future employees.

Barbara then talked about the timeline and proposed submission date of March 2009.

6. Other Business

Fred Carberry took the opportunity to recognize new board members and thanked Amy Weatherbee for her work on the space RFP.

Tom Connors mentioned that, due to funding cuts, American Training will be forced to lay off 22 good employees and asked for other board members to keep them in mind for employment opportunities.

Peter Matthews thanked the board for their patience and Fred Carberry and his team for their hard work.

7. Adjournment

Having no further business Mark Andrews made a motion to adjourn and Shirley Callan seconded the motion. Motion passed and meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Kivell

Recorder