



SWW Workforce Development Board

Meeting Minutes

of May 25, 2022 Online (ZOOM) Meeting

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BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Ash Anand, Michael Bittel, Scott Brazie, Scot Chamberlain, Gary Dake, Dan Dudley, Doug Ford, Maureen Grabowski, Michael Kelly, Patricia Klimkewicz, Michael Mastropietro, Tara McCaughey, Zack Moore, Mike Munter, Laura Oswald, Turina Parker, Dominick Patrignani, Michael Prime, Caelynn Prylo, Matthew Rose, Joe Serafini, Wendy Skawinski, Mary Ann Spiezio, Ryan Van Amburgh, John Wheatley. (25)

EXCUSED: Kathy LaFond, Mark Fish, Tracey Riley. (3)

GUESTS: Jen McCloskey, Liza Ochsendorf, Laurie Thomson, Mark Stratton

STAFF: Gretchen Steffan, Executive Director

Welcome...

1. WDB Member Updates

Chairman Serafini provided the following updates:

- Scott Brazie and Joe Serafini have been reappointed to another term.
- Mark Fish is retiring as Superintendent of the Greenwich Central School 7/1. He will serve until June 30th.
- Mark Stratton, Superintendent of the Corinth Central School has been appointed to SWW as of 7/1.
- Michael Bittel, President & CEO of the Adirondack Regional Chamber of Commerce is retiring at the end of June. A search for his replacement is underway. He will serve until June 30th.

2. Approval of March 30, 2022 Meeting Minutes

Motion to Approve: by Ryan Van Amburgh **Second:** Mike Munter

Discussion: None; **Vote:** Approved unanimously.

3. Nominations for SWW WDB Chair and Vice-Chair for PY's 22 & 23, who will serve from July 1, 2022 to June 30, 2024.

Motion to nominate Michael Munter for Chair: by Michael Bittel

Motion to nominate Gary Dake for Vice-Chair: by Michael Bittel

Motions were Seconded: by Turina Parker

Discussion: None;

Vote: Approved unanimously.

4. Presentation by Laurie Thomson, Deputy Director for the Business Engagement Unit, Division of Employment and Workforce Solutions at the NYSDOL

Laurie provided an excellent overview of the variety of services her unit provides to Businesses. She provided specific insights on NYSDOL Virtual Career Fairs, and services such as custom recruiting, job



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postings, skills matching services, tax credits and tax incentives (*WOTC, WETC, NY Youth Jobs Program and Hire-a-Vet Credit*). She also provided insight on business consultation with NYSDOL staff for Human Resources Consultation Services (handbooks, evaluation, orientation, turnover analysis and labor law) as well as Safety & Health Assistance to keep the workforce safe.

5. Fiscal Update by Jen McCloskey, Fiscal Agent and Director of the Saratoga County Department of Employment and Training... Jen provided an overview of PY20 (*PY=program year*) carryover funding, PY21 accrued expenditures and the remaining funding available under the ER-NDWG grant, which concludes on 9/30/22. PY22 allocations increased 8.7% from PY21. Jen reported training data, which identified that in PY 20 SWW provided \$85,918 in individual training account funding (ITA's), and \$83,633 during PY21. Over the last 2 PY's, SWW provided almost \$45,000 in supportive services to clients, which include books, supplies, technology, scrubs, tools, work boots, transportation assistance and needs-related payments. SWW will be asking NYSDOL for a waiver of the 80% expenditure requirement for PY21, which is allowed under NYDSOL Technical Advisory #[20-01.2](#): Implementation of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) during the COVID-19 emergency, was issued on May 19, 2022. LWDBs will have until July 31, 2022, to submit waiver requests

6. Committee Updates

- a. **Executive Committee** report by Joe Serafini. Joe reported the committee met with Gretchen on May 5th about Board and Centers operations, elections, membership status, committee progress, the DRC Pilot, upcoming presentations, advocacy, fiscal monitoring, budgets, and the WDB meeting agenda.
- b. **Business Needs Committee** report by Gary Dake. The Truck Rodeo continues planning with Mike Kelly leading. A new communications chair needs to be determined. The Committee identified other priorities for post-CDL committee work, which were transportation, childcare and perhaps workforce housing. Matt Rose, was thanked for volunteering to head up the Childcare subcommittee, and the group will now need to narrow down the list to a couple of real action items that are that are achievable and measurable.
- c. **Resource & Development Committee** report by Gretchen Steffan for Ash Anand. The committee did not meet this month. A Pre-audit of the Centers will be done this summer. A Financial Literacy RFP is being developed. Development and coordination of a Guidance Counselor and District Superintendent contact list is ongoing. Once complete, a subcommittee will outline a strategy for relationship building.

7. Center's Operations Report

 Jen McCloskey, Liza Ochsendorf. Roberta Davis was on vacation.

Jen McCloskey reported she has 3 new staff members coming on board, and an exciting new beginning for the department. Very engaged right now with our summer youth employment program (SYEP) right now. Jen reported that the number of SYEP applications prior to the pandemic was higher, but this year there are more applications than last year, which is positive. Still accepting applications for the EMT pilot program with HVCC. The event kickoff at Shen in Clifton Park had ambulances and staff to help students intubate Resuscitation Annie's (simulators). It was a great event and the kids were really excited about the program!



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Jen reported that she has received applications from some amazing kids who want to be trauma surgeons and are thankful for this opportunity.

Liza Ochsendorf reported a lot of training requests coming in, and she has signed off on to more CDL trainees this week, as well as CNA's and EKG Technicians. Healthcare and CDL drivers are definitely high in demand. We are sponsoring some mental health programs for students. We are partnering with the Warren Washington Association for Mental Health, because there is a need for those who want to become peer advocates. Working on building a pipeline for mental health and substance abuse training. The Warren County Career Center is fully open, and has been for 3 weeks. Have only had a few visitors every day, aside from the appointments that are required. It's a soft opening. Warren County continues doing classes with DSS at the social services office. Our GED class for youth is full (*for those up to age 24*), with a waiting list for the first time in several years. As somebody finishes and passes the GED or section of the GED, others can then enroll from the waiting list. We also have double the youth, and double the work sites for the SYEP this year, which is great! We have youth with special needs and Liza has requested some ARPA money to cover the cost of staff support for these individuals.

8. WDB Operations Update

Gretchen Steffan updated the WDB on the MOU, the OSO RFP which is currently out for procurement, committee work support, WDB administrative process, and Quarterly Monitoring status (1st and 2nd quarters completed, with the 3rd Qtr. Underway). She reported that the WDB has applied for waivers to NYSDOL, presented at CRHRA Annual Conference in May as the closer with Brian Williams of the Capital Region WDB on: "**Workforce Development Innovation Strategies Through WIOA**", participated and completed the NYATEP Skill America Pilot with Jen. Gretchen advised that NYATEP has increased their membership dues substantially, but will include many learning-management tools for the WDB and our Centers. She attended the BOCES Machine Tool Program graduation, with a graduating class of 5 people. With our financial support, each student completed the 500 hours of content on Saturdays over many months. Gretchen will now be included on the Regional Economic Development WFD Workgroup for the Round 12 Consolidated Funding Application. Gretchen has also started conversation with BOCES on an agreement to support career counseling in local districts, replicating a successful Capital Region model, which supports our 2022 initiatives/action items. She attended the 1st NYS Business Council Innovation Awards in Albany, where Global Foundries was awarded the Business Workforce Leadership Award, and NYSDOL Commissioner Roberta Reardon was the keynote speaker. Summer work will be focused on administrative & operations process (*i.e., policies/school partnerships/media & marketing/network building and potential implementation of a Board Management platform*).

9. Additional Opportunity for Board Member Announcements / Comments

The following thoughts were offered...

Michael Bittel expressed his appreciation of his affiliation with the SWW WDB, and his admiration for the commitment of the group. He offered his thoughts on the WDB's geographic makeup of the number



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of members by county, and that we do have good geographic diversity that will help us well into the future. Michael offered that there are a lot of similarities across the 3 counties, but there are also some pretty big differentiators, and we need to remain cognizant as we move forward. He concluded with, "I just wanted to say thank you, and God Bless you all!"

Doug Ford informed the group about a workforce development initiative started 4-years ago, that focuses on the trades. On May 11, that group had a joint mixer between the Saratoga Builders Association and the Capital Region Builders and Remodelers Council, which was a great success. They will be following up with another event on June 28th, which he wanted to bring to everybody's attention. They are assembling some legislators to meet with the Trades Community at this event, which will be held at the Carpenter's Local office in Albany. He reported they're putting together a pretty good lineup of speakers and legislators, and if you would like to attend to reach out to Gretchen and she will provide more information. Doug also reported that last year Curtis Lumber had a Carhart tool bag initiative. Curtis had donated these tool bags to all the students that were graduating in the trades. This year, a coalition decided to expand that program, and will be handing out 250 of these tool bags to all the students graduating, not just from the construction group but welding and heavy equipment too. A great initiative!

Mike Munter offered, it's nice to go through a meeting and enjoy all the positivity that's going on in our system. This organization has progressed so well. I've got to thank the Center's, as you're doing an awesome job, and Gretchen of course, they keep you smiling. Please keep up the good work you're all doing. Thank you to Laurie and Wendy from NYSDOL, for giving us some insight on your piece of the puzzle, and how this stuff comes together to support workforce development. Congrats Jen on 10 years of service. That's amazing! Best of luck to you Mike Bittel, your service to this board has been outstanding! Welcome aboard Mark Stratton, we look forward to working with you in a couple different capacities here. And last but not least, Mr. Serafini, you are amazing! We've been through a lot together on this ride, and it's good that you're leaving us in a better place after a very steep uphill climb. We appreciate everything you've done during your time as Chair! We will be leaning on you as the Chair Emeritus brain in the room going forward. Thank you to the WDB for your confidence in me and Gary, to pick up the reins and work together to continue the success of this organization. We appreciate that!

Chairman Serafini concluded, thanking Mike Munter and Michael Bittel for their kind words, and thanking the Board and Career Centers for their support during his time as Chairman.

10. Adjournment Motion: by Michael Bittel **Second:** Mike Munter 10:00 am