

Board Meeting Minutes
December 16, 2021 8:00 am
The WorkPlace (via Zoom)
Watertown, NY

Welcome/Call to Order: Chairman Matt Cooper welcomed all of the Board Members at 8:07 am.

Privilege of the Floor: There was none.

Approval of Minutes:

- Chairman Cooper asked for corrections or discussion of the minutes for the September 16, 2021 Board Meeting. There were none. Chairman Cooper next asked for a motion to approve the minutes. Mr. Stehlin made that motion. Ms. Pietroski seconded. All were in favor.
- Chairman Cooper asked for corrections or discussion of the minutes for the November 30, 2021 Executive Board Meeting. There were none. Chairman Cooper next asked for a motion to approve the minutes. Ms. Pettit made that motion. Mr. O'Driscoll seconded. All were in favor.

Correspondence: Executive Director Mayforth stated that no correspondence had been received.

One-Stop Operator Report: One-Stop Operator Munson reported that there have been more customers utilizing The WorkPlace for re-employment services. In Lewis County, success has been had in one-on-one recruitments.

Ms. Munson discussed this year's Job Fair held at the Hilton Garden Inn. More than 1,400 job openings were available across 60 different businesses in attendance. Between 250 and 300 customers were in attendance, with three confirmed hires already. More announcements of hires will be forthcoming, as The WorkPlace does not receive that information until the following quarter. Many businesses stated that the Fair was much better than expected and customers were pleased with the variety of positions available.

Ms. Munson reviewed the quarterly statistics with the Board. Classroom training, particularly with the two frequently utilized nursing programs at Jefferson Community College and Jeff-Lewis BOCES, continues to be successful. The Rural Health Care Grant, sponsored by Working Solutions in Herkimer, Madison and Oneida Counties, has unfortunately not granted any of their funding to applications that were sent to their office by our agency.

Numbers for the On-the-Job Training Program are currently lower than normal; however, our office will be sending out correspondence in the new year to inform all of our returning and newer businesses of the benefits of the OJT program.

The Job Club diversionary program returned to in-person interactions in the month of August. Of the 16 attendees in the program, four obtained employment. Six of the 19 attendees in the month of September obtained employment. For October, nearly half of the group (11 out of 26) are now working. Nine of the 23 participants in November have also entered or re-entered the workforce.

Approved 3/17/22

Ms. Munson asked if anyone had any questions on the One-Stop Operator Report. The Board did not have any questions.

Director's Report/Financial Report: Executive Director Mayforth informed the Board that our fiscal audit with NYS is ongoing remotely.

Executive Director Mayforth also reviewed statistics with the On-the-Job Training and Classroom Training Youth and Adult programs. The decline in college enrollments has affected the Classroom Training program, but the Registered Nursing program at the college remains a popular one. Director Mayforth also noted that there is funding available in the federal Build Back Better Act. This Act has not passed Congress yet, but funding would be divided out over a five year period rather than a shorter period of time, as that has happened with past stimulus funds from the federal government.

Executive Director Mayforth informed the Board of the new Disability Resource grant that was distributed by New York State Department of Labor. This grant has allowed The WorkPlace to hire a Disability Resources Coordinator that will focus solely on assisting folks with disabilities in creating a resume, practicing interviewing skills and obtaining employment. This is a three year grant that has been mandated by NYS DOL. Director Mayforth stated that Mackenzie Dalberg has already been hired for the position and is a great addition to the office. Ms. Pietroski asked if this position could possibly continue once the three year period ends. Director Mayforth stated that similar positions in the past were extended once the grant had ended and the current position could possibly be extended, as well.

Executive Director Mayforth reviewed the Frontline Employment Partnership, which is a collaborative effort between The WorkPlace, Anchor Recovery Center and Community Action Planning Council in assisting folks in recovery in finding employment. The WorkPlace will not receive any funding from this and will continue to provide career and employment services to these folks.

Executive Director Mayforth discussed the upcoming change from the TASC Exam reverting back to the GED Exam at the beginning of the new year. Director Mayforth noted that statistics showed that folks had difficulty in passing the TASC Exam and the return to the GED Exam will hopefully increase the percentage of students who do pass the exam.

Executive Director Mayforth showcased The WorkPlace's participation in recent community related events, such as Winter Wonderlights at Zoo New York and a Christmas display presented in the Village of Clayton Christmas parade. Unfortunately, the weather did not cooperate for the City of Watertown Christmas parade, so we could not participate in that event.

Executive Director Mayforth that seasonal employment and seasonal unemployment are affecting current labor force statistics. However, these changes are typical since many of the layoffs can be attributed to construction and landscaping positions. Moreover, businesses continue to search for employees to fill vacancies that were exacerbated by the Covid pandemic. There is encouraging news for our area, as new restaurants and businesses to continue to open or are announcing their opening in the next few weeks.

New Business:

- **Resolution 21-06 Authorizing Purchase of Network Switch for The WorkPlace**
Chairman Cooper asked for questions on the resolution. There were none. He then asked for a motion of approval.
Motion: Mr. Aiken
Second: Mr. Hagemann
Approved: Unanimously

- **Resolution 21-07 Amending the Definition of Low Income and Priority of Services**
Chairman Cooper asked for questions on the resolution. There were none. He then asked for a motion of approval.
Motion: Ms. Pietroski
Second: Mr. Zembiec
Approved: Unanimously

- **Resolution 21-08 Amendment of Individual Training Account Caps and Policies**
Executive Director Mayforth provided background on this topic, including the increase in tuition for many programs that lead to in-demand occupations.
Chairman Cooper asked for questions on the resolution. There were none. He then asked for a motion of approval.
Motion: Mr. Stehlin
Second: Ms. Marks
Approved: Unanimously

Roundtable Discussion: Mr. Stehlin discussed the Upstate Masonry Institute (UMI), a new effort to introduce masonry and other trades to high school juniors and seniors. Mr. Stehlin introduced Amanda Bedian, the Director of the UMI in Albany, NY to explain specifics about the program.

Ms. Bedian stated that the UMI provides hands-on training Monday through Friday to students. These courses consist of the fundamentals of masonry while also reviewing construction and other trades that students may also be interested in for pursuing a career. Moreover, Ms. Bedian stated that she showcases commercial and residential construction, as many students are only familiar with the residential portion. Ms. Bedian stated that many of the local BOCES in the Capital Region have agreed to participate in this program with the hopes that additional BOCES will sign on. Ms. Bedian will be visiting the Jeff-Lewis BOCES Watertown office in the Spring of 2022. Mr. Stehlin also noted that five students have already signed up for the program with UMI.

Executive Director Mayforth discussed two new reports related to the local and statewide workforce. The first report is the annual State of the Workforce, released by NYATEP. Director Mayforth stated that she has requested that a staff member from NYATEP be available to present on this information during the March 2022 Board Meeting. The second report is released by Community Action Planning Council every two years and provides a snapshot of ALICE – Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed – folks in our community. This report will be released in the coming days.

Next Meeting: March 17, 2022 8:00 am



Jefferson-Lewis
Workforce Development Board

Bringing Jobs & People Together

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Adjournment: Chairman Cooper asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Hagemann made that motion. Ms. Pettit seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 8:46 am.

Attendance:

Robert Aiken
Rod Castillo
Matthew Cooper
Brittany Davis
Robert Hagemann
Shellie Marks
Cheryl Mayforth
Lynn Murray
John O'Driscoll
Shena Patrick
Jody Pettit
Lynn Pietroski
Mark Prasuhn
Karla Stefanini
Dale Stehlin
Joseph Wessner
Dave Zembiec

Others in Attendance:

Amanda Bedian
Ethan Brown
Lisa Hetzner
Angel Munson