

Executive Board Meeting
December 8, 2023
Hilton Garden Inn, Watertown NY

The Executive Board met on Friday, December 8, 2023 at noon at the Hilton Garden Inn. In attendance were Matt Cooper, Rob Aiken, Jody Pettit, Cheryl Mayforth and Angel Munson.

Chairman Cooper called the meeting to order at 12:27 pm. The agenda for the upcoming December 14, 2023 meeting was reviewed and discussed.

Director Mayforth shared that our guest speaker for the Board Meeting will be Jillian Redder. Ms. Redder is the new Director for Housing and Special Initiatives at Jefferson County DSS. Further discussion ensued regarding the creation of this position and the homelessness issues in the area.

Director Mayforth next discussed resolution 23-04 (Approval of Revision to the ITA Policy), and explained our ITA cap. It is currently higher than any other LWDA around us. Director Mayforth stated it seems like there has been a change in attitude of the customers that we assist. Further discussion ensued regarding this topic. Director Mayforth also stated that the spirit of WIOA law is to help the “most needy” customers. Other areas require that customers put their own funding into their education. The issue Director Mayforth has with this is that those who are most needy quite often cannot secure additional funding. One possible solution is to offer tiered funding based on income. One-Stop Operator Munson shared that this is already built into the OJT program based on the employer’s wage rate, but there is nothing in place for CRTs. Director Mayforth stated that many of her colleagues share the same frustrations. Further discussion ensued.

The House Education and Workforce Subcommittee on Higher Education and Workforce Development is currently looking at changes to WIOA and possible reauthorization. Due to next year being an election year, it is highly unlikely that anything will move forward, but further discussion ensued regarding formula funding, the Governor’s 15% fund, and capacity building. One takeaway is that smaller areas simply cannot compete, even if multiple LWDA’s work together in a regional capacity.

Chairman Cooper asked about Convalt Energy and if there was any movement towards opening. Director Mayforth shared that the owner has requested an extension on his IDA loan as he is still awaiting additional financing. Further discussion ensued regarding Convalt, and the new Watertown International Airport terminal. Jefferson County was awarded a 25 million dollar grant to build this new terminal.

Director Mayforth next asked Ms. Munson to leave the room as she was calling for an Executive Session to discuss status of the Assistant Director position.

The board meeting ended at 12:56 pm.