



NIAGARA COUNTY
WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD

Joel Feuerman, Chairperson
Bonnie Rice, Executive Director

Trott Career Center
1001 Eleventh Street
Niagara Falls, NY 14301-1201
Phone: (716) 278-8251
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Meeting Minutes –September 10, 2024

**Niagara County Center for Economic Development/IDA
6311 Inducon Corporate Drive in Sanborn, NY**

Members Present: Nasreen Akhtar, Maureen Bartlett, Jeanne Battaglia, Jim Bittner, William Carroll, Lindsay Collins, Joel Feuerman, Tom Grzebinski, David Haylett, John Lang, Michael Martin, Dennis Martinez, David Miller, Jim Scordato, Tom Seaman, Suzanne Shears, Michele Taylor, Katie Thompson, Todd Zyra

Members Excused: Michael Casale, Bill Robbins, John Scherrer, Kory Schuler, Divya Tandon, Shawn Williams

Members Absent: n/a

WDB Staff: Joanne Klemer, Bonnie Rice

Guests/Staff Present: Jeannine Brown Miller – JBM Consulting, OSSO; Donald Jablonski – Niagara County Employment and Training

I. Call to Order

J. Feuerman welcomed Board Members to the meeting and called the meeting to order at 8:02 am. J. Feuerman noted that quorum was established. J. Feuerman announced that the Board has a new member, Jim Bittner of Bittner Singer Orchards. B. Rice commented that this would add an agribusiness perspective and representation to the Board. J. Feuerman then turned the floor over to B. Rice to lead the meeting. B. Rice shared with the Board that advertisements for the meeting were placed in local newspapers and online so that the public would be able to attend.

II. Old Business

B. Rice reviewed the agenda items section by section. All information regarding each item was distributed to the Board members through email prior to the meeting.

- A. Approve 6/4/24 Meeting Minutes (quorum not achieved):** Board Members received the meeting minutes in the materials emailed prior to the meeting. B. Rice asked the Board for a motion to approve the minutes as presented. Motion made by T.Grzebinski. Second by W.Carroll.

Unanimous vote in favor of the approval of the June 4, 2024 Meeting Minutes.

- B. Approve 6/4/24 Executive Committee Meeting Votes:** B. Rice noted that all related items listed in this section of the agenda, and voted on and approved by the Executive Committee on June 4, 2024, were included in the packet distributed to members prior to today's meeting. B. Rice informed the Board that the following items would be approved as a Slate Vote:

- a. Approve Minutes – 3/5/24 Meeting
- b. Approve 5/20/24 Executive Committee Vote: Approve ability to transfer up to an additional \$20,000 from DW to Adult Funding, for a total transfer ability of \$420,000 in PY23
- c. Approve PY23 Budget Adjustments
- d. Approve PY24 Budget



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- e. Blanket Transfer Request, Dislocated Worker (DW) to Adult, per TA 17-6: Approve Ability to Transfer up to 100% of PY24 WIOA DW Funds to PY24 WIOA Adult Program
- f. Blanket Transfer Request, Administration to Adult/DW/Youth, per TA17-6: Approve Ability to Transfer up to 100% of PY24 Administration Funds back to the originating Program Funds for PY24 in all three programs. This amount cannot exceed the original 10% designated to Administration.
- g. Approval of One-Year Renewal of JBM HR Consulting, Inc., as One-Stop System Operator for PY24 at \$10,000 for the year
- h. Approve Revised Youth Supportive Services policy – redefining allowable transportation services, redefining Driver Education Training, adding Important Info page

B. Rice opened the floor for questions. None brought forward. B. Rice asked the Board for a motion to approve items a.-h. as a slate vote. Motion made by K.Thompson. Second by M. Bartlett. **Unanimous vote in favor of full Board approval of the June 4, 2024 Executive Committee Meeting Votes.**

- C. Executive Committee Meeting Minutes from 8/1/24 were included in the packet.
- D. Approve 8/1/24 Executive Committee Vote to Amend TES Staffing Payroll Services Contract:
B. Rice reviewed the need to increase the TES Staffing payroll services contract from \$1 million to \$1.5 million for calendar year 2024. Three additional months of youth work experience were provided by the NYSGVP grant and an additional seven months of work experience attributed the TANF YEP grant. The bulk of this funding is payable directly to the participants as wages, with TES receiving a markup as payment for their payroll services and other functions as the employer of record. B Rice opened the floor for questions. None brought forward. B. Rice asked for a motion to approve the increase in the TES Staffing payroll services contract up to \$1.5 million for calendar year 2024. Motion made by T. Zyra. Second by D. Miller. **Unanimous vote in favor of the addition of up to \$500,000 to the current TES Staffing contract, for a total contract amount of up to \$1,500,000 for calendar year 2024.**

III. New Business

All updates to items listed below were noted in the Agenda Packet sent to Board members prior to the meeting.

- A. Approve Youth Supportive Services Policy Change: B. Rice reviewed the revisions to the Youth Supportive Services Policy eliminating Driver Education training and increasing the Child/Dependent care assistance to \$1,000. B. Rice explained that the number of reliable, driver education providers in the area has decreased to just one, Steven's Driving School. D. Jablonski added that the limited number of successful completions, or youth completing lessons and obtaining their driver's license, was not reflective of the time and effort dedicated to offering this service. B Rice added that with increasing child and dependent care costs, this would be a good opportunity to shift funding towards increasing reimbursement for these expenses from \$500 per youth participant to \$1,000. B. Rice opened the floor for questions. S. Shears asked if the funds are paid directly to the care provider or to the Youth. B. Rice explained that this is reimbursement based. The youth participant would pay the care provider, and then be reimbursed once proper documentation was provided. B. Rice also noted that care costs would only be reimbursed for times during which the youth participant was in training or



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at work, and therefore attendance verification would also be required. J. Feuerman asked if the \$1,000 was per qualifying dependent or \$1,000 per youth participant. B. Rice answered that the total would be \$1,000 per youth participant, regardless of number of dependents, in efforts to maintain equitable reimbursement. K. Thompson asked if this would require a budget adjustment. B. Rice informed the Board that both driver education training and dependent care assistance are supportive services, so there is no need for a budget adjustment at this time. No further questions brought forward. B. Rice asked for a motion to approve the elimination of driver education training and increase child/dependent care assistance to \$1,000. Motion made by K. Thompson. Second by J. Lang. **Unanimous vote in favor of the approval to amend the Youth Supportive Services Policy by eliminating Driver Education Training and increasing Child/Dependent Care Assistance to \$1,000 per WIOA enrolled Youth.**

- B. Approve Adult/DW ITA Policy Change: B. Rice reviewed the revision to lower the CDL-A training requirement from 240 to 200 clock hours. B. Rice explained that 240 hours limits the number of CDL-A training providers whereas 200 hours would bring aboard two new vendors. B. Rice added that originally the required hours were 150, and then raised to 240 to achieve higher graduation rates. 200 hours is expected to be a good middle ground to achieve successful training and completion. B. Rice opened the floor to questions. T. Grzebinski asked if the CDL-A training would be tracked for successful outcomes at the proposed 200 hours. B. Rice replied that the CDL-A training is currently monitored and will continue to be reviewed for successful outcomes. No further questions brought forward. B. Rice asked for a motion to approve the reduction of CDL-A training hours from 240 to 200 clock hours. Motion made by J. Feuerman. Second by J. Scordato. **Unanimous vote in favor of the approval to reduce CDL-A training hours from 240 to 200 clock hours.**

IV. Informational Items

- A. WIOA Youth Program Update: B. Rice shared that the goal for Program Year 2024 (PY24) starting on July 1, 2024 and ending June 30, 2025 is 80 planned youth enrollments. To date, 66 total youth have been enrolled into the program, 8 of which are new enrollments and 58 are carry-ins from the previous program year.
- B. YEP Youth Program Update: B. Rice shared that this is a new youth work experience based NYS TANF grant that started on 9/1/24. There are 110-150 planned youth enrollments. This program has just started.
- C. SYEP Youth Program Update: B. Rice shared that the summer youth employment program runs from 7/1/24-9/30/24. 155 youth were placed in subsidized work experiences at 35 worksites across the County. 6 youth are to be hired post-grant, which is a record number of hires for this seasonal program.
- D. One-Stop Operator Performance Update: B. Rice turned the floor over to J. Brown Miller of JBM HR Consulting to provide the One-Stop Operator report. J. Brown Miller reviewed the report provided in the meeting packet. J. Brown Miller opened the floor for questions. None brought forward. B. Rice thanked J. Brown Miller for her report.
- E. WDB Inclusion Committee Updates: Rice turned the floor over to D. Martinez to give an update on the WDB Inclusion Committee. D. Martinez shared with the Board that the Youth Career Exploration Fair planned for 10/23/24 has been postponed until Spring of 2025. Further information will be provided once it is available. D. Martinez also informed the Board of an



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upcoming presentation by the Northeastern ADA Center at Cornell via Zoom, on 11/6/24 at 8:30 am. This free presentation will address the qualifications and guidelines regarding service animals and the rights of those utilizing their services. Currently, the two NYS approved service animals are a dog and a miniature horse. Anyone interested in attending this meeting should contact D. Martinez or B. Rice for further information.

- F. WDB Youth Committee Updates:** B. Rice turned the floor over to L. Collins for an update regarding the Youth Committee. L. Collins shared that at their last meeting, the Youth Committee had discussed various youth programs and opportunities that might help affected youth. Topics discussed included the Dream It Do It Program and the Opioid National Dislocated Worker Grant.
- G. Announcements by Board Members:** B. Rice opened the floor to Board members and guests for announcements.
- a. M. Bartlett shared that ONBOCES continues to work closely with D. Jablonski and the NCET staff for providing WIOA funding for various training classes. She added that of the 14 HVAC, 12 Electrical and 10 Welding adults they are currently training, over half are being funded with WIOA dollars. She extended her gratitude for the partnership and the positive effect it has on the lives of so many. M. Bartlett then added that she is exploring the option of offering an aesthetics program at ONBOCES in collaboration with N. Akhtar.
 - b. D. Jablonski shared that he had the opportunity to tour the ONBOCES training facility in Medina. He stated that he was impressed with the facility and how nicely it was equipped.

V. Next WDB Meeting

B. Rice informed those in attendance that the next WDB Meeting is scheduled for November 12, 2024 at 8:00 a.m. at the Niagara County Center for Economic Development.

VI. Motion to Adjourn

B. Rice thanked the members in attendance for their time and requested a motion to adjourn.

Motion by J. Lang. Second by S. Shears. All in favor. **Unanimous vote in favor of adjournment.**
The WDB Meeting adjourned at 8:32 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Joanne Klemer