

**The Fulton, Montgomery & Schoharie Counties
Workforce Development Board**

Board Meeting

Wednesday, May 2, 2018
Amsterdam Workforce Solutions Center

I. Opening and Attendance:

Welcome: Scott Stevens called the meeting to order at 4:35 p.m. He thanked everyone for coming and informed Board Members that the annual dinner meeting will be held on June 13th at the Raindancer Restaurant in Amsterdam. He asked all members to complete the RSVP form in the board packet and return it to Beverly by May 21st.

Members Present: Laurie Bargstedt, Anne Boles, Marty Callahan, Andrea Fettinger, Rita Franko, Art Graulich, Keith Gros, David Morrow, Judy Petroski, Linda Serdy, Don Snoop, Jeffrey Stark, Peter Stearns, and Scott Stevens

Excused: John Almaviva, Delores Caruso, Heidi Colson, Christopher Darling, Larry Kath, James Law, Karen Miller, Jeannette Spaulding, and Tina Sweet

Absent: Dave Fariello, Michael Peters, and Kenneth Rose

Guest Presenters: Jen Swart, Senior Youth Coordinator, FMS Private Industry Council and Nancy Reccio, Senior Business Services Rep., FMS Private Industry Council

Also present: Nancy Bell, Workforce Programs Specialist, New York State Department of Labor; Kerry Douglas-Duffy, Employment Services Manager I, New York State Department of Labor and Mary Hill, Program Director, FMS Private Industry Council and One-Stop System Operator

Staff to Board present: Gail Breen, Beverly Ball, and Kim Skiff

II. Presentation:

Jen Swart and Nancy Reccio, of our WIOA Services Subcontractor, the *FMS Private Industry Council*, discussed the Youth Work Experience and On-the-Job Training Programs. Jen shared that the youth program works with young adults between the ages of 16-24. Youth in the High School Equivalency (HSE) program are offered 500 hours of paid work experience. They are paid minimum wage or entry level wages for the position they are working in. Several have been hired at the end of the work experience hours. FMS Private Industry Council covers the workers' compensation while they are working. Each youth participates in a training called "Bring Your "A" Game to Work" that teaches soft skills. One of the hardest things for youth to learn is the soft skills, including showing up on time, not using cellphones at the worksite, and calling in when they are going to be sick or late. Jen stated that they have seen a difference since they started using this training. All that is

asked of the worksite is to mentor and supervise the students by teaching them and showing them what to do. Some of the youth have very little work experience. The worksites help them gain experience and build a resume. Employers are asked to meet with Jen for an hour orientation before a student is placed at a worksite. During this meeting, Jen will go over an orientation packet that explains what the Work Experience Program is, worksite standards, accident reports and what activities the youth will be completing on the worksite. Jen stated that they have found it useful for the employers to interview the youth prior to placing them at their worksite. Once the student has successfully completed the 500 hours of Work Experience and the employer is interested in offering them a job, Nancy Reccio can assist with On-the-Job Training (OJT).

Nancy shared that employers that would like to hire youth that have successfully completed the Work Experience program would need to justify the need for training to be eligible for the OJT program. Once Work Experience is completed, if a youth is hired by an employer and there is a need for training, OJT can assist with either full-time or part-time positions. A youth hired in a manufacturing business under the Work Experience program would typically be hired as a packer, etc. until they transition into an On-the-Job training situation and their ability is reviewed by their employer. Another example would be a youth hired as a grounds keeper under Work Experience. The youth has shown up every day, shown potential and is reliable. If the business wants to hire them as a permanent machine operator, the OJT program could reimburse up to 50% of their gross wages during the training program. Both full-time and part-time positions can be reimbursed up to a maximum of \$3,000, depending on how difficult the job is and how long the training period will be. With the full-time youth OJT, the starting rate is \$11/hr. This rate is different that it is with the adult OJT, which is \$2 over the minimum wage. The difference is typically because a youth is unskilled, and we can't expect an employer to pay over \$11/hr. for unskilled labor. Nancy reminded everyone that on December 31st minimum wage is going to \$11.10/hr. Full-time is considered anything over 30 hours a week. Part-time is 20-30 hours a week. The training period ranges from 4 - 26 weeks of training or \$3,000, whichever comes first. OJT's must be offered the same benefits as any other employee.

Nancy visits once a month to monitor, evaluate job performance and verify time and attendance. She stated that there is very little paperwork involved. The reimbursement is done monthly and would require all the same information that is recorded on a paystub. Some businesses just copy the paystub and give that to Nancy. After the voucher is signed, the business usually receives payment within two weeks. Nancy and Jen stated that they follow all labor laws regarding the placement of various ages on work sites. Most manufacturing companies require employees to be at least 18-year old. Most OJT's under age 18 are doing grounds keeping, clerical or office work.

Nancy mentioned that transportation is an issue and therefore doesn't have a list of individuals ready to go to work for you, but you never know daily who will walk through the door. Nancy shared that they have someone currently working at StickerMule punching out stickers. This position gives them work experience, references and helps build a resume. Nancy shared that StickerMule manufactures adhesive stickers and was formerly Noteworthy in Amsterdam. They are computerized and automated and are located on Elk Street. The location makes it convenient for youth who don't have transportation. She is always willing to work with you to see what she can do to help get an OJT for you.

III. Action Items:

- **Resolution BY 2017-14:** Acceptance of the minutes from the April 4, 2018 Board Meeting
 - Motion: Don Snoop Seconded by: Laurie Bargstedt
 - Discussion: None
 - Vote: All were in favor
 - Motion Carried

IV. Information Sharing:

Accountability and Return on Investment Committee: Andrea shared that we recently had a monitoring review of our PY'16 Program Year. Our state program monitor determined that there were 3 policies that we needed. They are "WIOA Individualized Career Services," "Functional Alignment," and "ETPL (Eligible Training Provider List)." These policies are currently in draft and will be brought before the Committee in May for the June Board Meeting.

Altogether, overall traffic numbers are down about 1,600 from last year. Amsterdam numbers have remained steady because of the mini-job fairs and recruitments in the Amsterdam Center. Additionally since there is no DOL staff in the Gloversville Center, Fulton County UI customers must come to Amsterdam. Gloversville continues to see a decrease because the days for serving Youth and Adults has decreased. Cobleskill reported they saw an increase in traffic because there is an increase in DSS clients and because they are holding more workshops. Metrix Learning continues to be popular. Nine customers completed a total of 27 courses. Over the course of this program year, 43 unique customers have completed a total of 281 courses.

Kim indicated that there were no unusual expenditures. The budget should be 75% expended by the end of March, and we are very close to target. Kim is working on preparing a budget for 2018. In addition to looking at an annual budget, we are going to do a 3-month spending plan as well. This will help to prepare us for any cuts or increases to our allocations when they are finalized in October. Andrea stated that we will review the 3-month budget the next time the Committee comes together. Gail shared that last year we lost \$59,000 at the time the allocation was final. Had we not had a 3-month budget in place we could have been utilizing money that was cut from the budget in the final allocation. We start out July 1 year with about 25% of the Dislocated Worker funds and 12% of the Adult funds, plus the Youth. And PY'17 carry-in. This makes it much more of a legitimate spending plan than one that we must change or modify.

Don Snoop stated that one of the most expensive line items that we have is the cost for technology. He said that our current fiber connectivity contract is with Spectrum. It was developed a few years ago and has worked well for us, with the exception of when we moved the Gloversville Center. At that time we wanted to downsize the fiber connectivity as we knew we weren't going to need the same that we have in the two other centers.

Unfortunately, the contract would not allow us to make that change. The contract is coming up for renewal in June.

Kim and Don have a conference call scheduled with Chris from Tech II to investigate all the various ways to keep the services we need and change or get rid of the things we no longer need. They will review the service costs and consider other vendors for possible savings. Don stated that the cost of fiber has come down tremendously of the past few years and that another vendor might be able to give us a better deal. He stated that if we can reduce that line item on the budget it would help us out tremendously.

The next meeting is scheduled for May 22nd at 4:30 p.m. in the Amsterdam Center.

Business Services and Employer Engagement Committee: Laurie reported that several customized recruitments and mini job fairs were held in the Amsterdam and Cobleskill Centers. There was one customized recruitment in Fulton County. There were a several hires and pending hires.

Chris Larrabee shared that NYS Department of Labor continues to send out email blasts to almost 4,000 jobseekers within a 50-mile range of Amsterdam for the customized recruitments/mini job fairs. However, even with that effort, participation rates remain low. Chris has been present at these events and given jobseekers' pointers with their appearance or attitudes that are not in their best interest or making a good first impression with potential employers.

Marty reported that Helmont Mills is continuing to have a good year. They have about 80 employees, including 7 new hires, and are looking for more new hires in the next 2 to 3 years. He shared that they have a recycling program with 5 local youth through the high school and PTech program. They are working part-time and are getting a good overview of the textile industry but can't work on the floor because of age restrictions in the NYS labor law requirements. He also shared that he is working with the College of Textiles in North Carolina.

Chris Darling shared that Beechnut has been doing a lot of recruitments as they are having difficulty finding good technician candidates. They are even recruiting as far away as Penn State College and Rochester and are hoping to find higher skilled longer-term employees through these efforts. Beechnut is working with several education and workforce development organizations to develop new programs to develop a new apprenticeship program that can be approved by the Department of Labor.

Heidi Colson, our newest FMS Board Member, and the Owner/Manager of CDL Associates Insurance Agency in Northville has 9 employees. She has worked with Nancy and the Employed Worker training to support six employees who trained and received their insurance licenses. All CDL employees will have their insurance licenses.

Laurie shared that her grant writing season is over, however she just received another one on her desk today. All her funding is coming to an end on June 30th. They are shutting

down current programs, but hopeful that they will be funded for new programs as they move forward. One of the programs she has applied for is English Language Learners (ESL) that incorporates the English language/vocabulary specific to the industry they work. The second grant they are hoping to receive is for those that are or have been incarcerated and are hoping to transition into the main workforce area.

The next meeting is scheduled for May 22nd at 8:00 a.m. in Amsterdam Center.

WIOA Partners Committee: Gail stated that we are proposing to change our By-Laws to reflect a change that combines MOU Partners group and Emerging Workers Committee into one committee. Under WIOA rules and regulations, the Emerging Workers Committee is called "Special Populations". We decided that we didn't care for the term "special" since it had a negative connotative instead of a positive one. So, we called our committee "Emerging Workers" since they are all coming into the workforce for a variety of reasons. We noticed both groups had the same people on them. Therefore, we are proposing to combine them both into a WIOA Partners Committee. We are excited about it because the attendance for the MOU Partners meetings has been approximately 30 participants, while the Emerging Worker Committee has only been around 6. Our next WIOA Partners meeting will be held next Friday, May 11th in the Amsterdam Center. We hope to bring it to the annual meeting in June as a change to the By-Laws.

Workforce Systems Oversight Committee: Don stated that there was no committee meeting held during April due to other commitments of members.

The next meeting is scheduled for May 23rd at 8:00 a.m. in the Cobleskill Center.

V. Environmental Scanning:

Gail shared that her Director's Report in the Board Packet. We also received a thank you note from our Schoharie County Business Partner of the Year, Catholic Charities. They included a nice picture of them receiving the award from Scott. Gail announced that a new NYSDOL Manager has been hired for our Amsterdam and Cobleskill Centers. Her name is Melissa Johnston and she will be visiting the center next week. She will officially start on May 17th. She has worked with Chris Larrabee in Building 12 and has much Business Services background. She was previously the DOL manager for Jefferson/Lewis and St. Lawrence Counties workforce areas. We look forward to welcoming her to our centers.

Gail announced that tonight would be Anne Boles' last meeting. She has submitted her resignation to the board due to other commitments. Anne recommended a replacement for her, Kathleen Kilmartin. We have taken her name to the Fulton County Board of Supervisors and look forward to having both Anne and Kathleen attend the annual meeting in June. We also received a resignation letter from John Almaviva from Richardson Brands. John suggested Kerry Brunner as his replacement. Kerry was an FMS Board Member when he worked with Walmart. We hope he will be serving as the replacement for John, following approval from the Fulton County Board of Supervisors. We also have a candidate for our opening in Montgomery County. Pamela Post lives in Montgomery County and

works at Townsend Leather. Once all these positions are filled it will once again bring our board membership to a full board.

VI. Board Member Go Round:

Laurie Bargstedt shared there is a fourth pathway to the high school equivalency exam as of last week. If you know of someone who has passed one or more regents exam, there is now a method to get credit for those exams. If you passed math you don't need to take the math TASC test. If you passed any ELA exam, you don't have to take reading or writing. This is exciting because there are so many people that didn't graduate high school because they couldn't pass Global Studies. Laurie can provide educational counseling to anyone who would like more information.

Anne Boles stated that she has many commitments that affect her ability to be an active Board Member. She has been appointed as the St. Mary's Liaison for Community Health Center, and she has a 4-year-old son with many commitments. She believes that Kathleen Kilmartin will be a wonderful addition to the board. She has been in Healthcare for over 25 years as an HR Director. Anne shared that she has enjoyed her time on the board and wished everyone well.

Marty Callahan shared that he was hoping to share some good news with the board tonight. They applied for a grant through the Workforce Development Institute (WDI) and had hoped to hear favorably by the meeting. Unfortunately, he has not heard yet, but will share the information with Gail as soon as he receives it. *We are pleased to announce that Marty contacted us the day after the meeting with the following news: "We were notified today that our grant application for Textile Fundamentals Training at North Carolina State was approved."*

Andrea Fettingner shared that May is Older Americans Month and this year's theme is "Engage at Any Age". She shared that the first round of applicants from the Caseworker civil service test did not give them a viable candidate. There will be another Caseworker civil service test next month. They must have a bachelor's degree and work in Fulton County.

Rita Franko shared that Walmart is bringing on their second SUNY Cobleskill intern at the end of the month. The first responsibility for this intern will be to attend a shareholders meeting. She said that they have had great success with SUNY Cobleskill. She also shared that they have made a connection with ACCES-VR and that Patti Williams will be coming out to tour the site with some consumers.

Arthur Graulich stated that he is pleased to announce that two properties in Schoharie County recently sold - The Parrot House and Maranatha. He stated that they have been purchased by people with the means to make them better and hopefully new jobs will be coming to the area.

Keith Gros shared that things are picking up in their window division and things overall are busy.

Dave Morrow asked if anyone knew how the Dollar General was progressing. Beverly said that Nancy Reccio stated they are approximately 2 months behind schedule in building. Gail shared that she believes they are behind in hiring their workforce as a result.

Judy Petroski said that Patti Williams has been promoted to Transitional and Youth Services VRC. She will be working with schools to make sure they are making appropriate referrals and monitoring the community employment specialist contracts. They will be without an integrated Employment Specialist. They have hired two of the three Master Level positions that were open and have recently posted three more positions. The Core Rehab Services contract has been delayed until January 1st due to extensive changes to services and expectations for services under WIOA and so that all staff can be properly trained.

Linda Serdy shared that the students on SUNY Cobleskill campus are very anxious as they gear up for their final exams. She has been busy looking at more certifications in the Health Care industry and hopes that in the next month or two she will have more information to share.

Jeff Stark shared that they continue to look for young men and women coming home from the service that already have their DOD clearance. He stated that as of July 1st he will no longer be the Business Representative but will remain as a consultant. He will also continue as President of the union.

Peter Stearns shared that construction is starting to take off now that the weather has gotten better. Gail asked if he knew anything about the program at Lowe's that offers an apprenticeship program to regular employees to turn them into knowledgeable construction employees. This program helps regular employees speak the same language when working with contractors or the union. Jeff Stark shared that many news media have reported recently about the growing shortage of skilled labor. He stated that there isn't a shortage in the skilled trade areas within the unions themselves.

Scott Stevens stated that things continue to be busy.

VII. Board Member Feedback?

VIII. Adjournment:

Meeting Adjourned at 5:27 p.m.

The Annual meeting will be held at the Raindancer Restaurant Route 30, Amsterdam on **June 13th, 2018** at 4:30 p.m. Please RSVP with your Meal Choice by Monday, May 21.