

The Fulton, Montgomery & Schoharie Counties Workforce Development Board

Board Meeting

Wednesday, September 4, 2019
Amsterdam Workforce Career Center

I. **Opening and Attendance:**

Welcome: Marty Callahan, Chairman of the Board, called the meeting to order at 4:35 p.m. All Board Members introduced themselves. Marty welcomed new Board Members Wendy Adams, Office Manager/HR at Lamont Engineers, P.C., and Donna Becker, Commissioner of Schoharie County Department of Social Services. He also stated we have another Board Member, Erin Clemons, VP of Human Resources at Beechnut who was unable to attend the meeting.

Members Present: Wendy Adams, Laurie Bargstedt, Donna Becker, Kerry Brunner, Marty Callahan, Roger Cusano, David Fariello, Andrea Fettingter, Pamela Goldswe, Arthur Graulich, Melissa Johnston, Karen Miller, Dave Morrow, Donna Pesta, Judy Petroski, Amy Rogers, Jeannette Spaulding, Jeff Stark and Peter Stearns

Excused: Kaleena Castiglione, Erin Clemons, Amy McCray, Ken Rose and Don Snoop

Absent: Kathleen Kilmartin, and Mark Mincher

Also present: *Jen Swart*, Senior Youth Coordinator, FMS Private Industry Council, Inc.; and *Mary Hill*, Program Director, FMS Private Industry Council, Inc.

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

II. **Presentation:**

Jen Swart, Senior Youth Coordinator, Private Industry Council gave an overview of the Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP) for 2019. The summer program works with youth between the ages of 14-20 years old. To be eligible for the program the youth must be in a family that receives assistance from the local Department of Social Services or is 200% below the poverty guidelines. She reported that this year's summer program started on July 13th and, for most youth, ended on August 30th. There are 6 youth still working in Fulton County, 15 in Montgomery County, and 5-6 in Schoharie County. They will continue to work until September 30th when the program funding ends. They had 90 youth participate in the program this year; 26 from Fulton County, 35 from Montgomery County, and 29 from Schoharie County. The youth were paid on a pay scale that reflected age groups. Youth 14-17 years old received \$11.10/hr. Youth 18-20 years old received \$11.60/hr.

Jen stated the participant numbers have gone down over the last few years even though funding has remained stable. Many youth lost eligibility when the Free and Reduced lunch program was dropped at many schools. Before that action was taken, all students in Amsterdam School District would have automatically been eligible. Other youth have found summer jobs on their own or were simply not interested in working. She shared that they have found it difficult to get the kids to work and are planning a new strategy next year where they will be distributing applications to each of the schools in April and will begin accepting applications at that time. Jen would also like to have the

application available online. Once the application is completed, it is good for one year so youth will not have to fill it out again after the funding is received.

Jen also said they have great employers that understand that many of these youth have never worked before so they work with the youth more closely to help them understand their responsibilities as employees. Some Fulton County employers chose not to work with the program this summer. They had big projects that they needed to get done and didn't feel they had the time to devote as supervisors to the youth.

There was a change to the Orientation Schedule this year. Instead of a full week Orientation, it was for just 2 days. On the 3rd day the youth started working. Jen stated that the youth liked this schedule better because they get to start work sooner. Speakers presented on various topics including: *SEFCU* covering "How to Open an Account, Credit Cards and Debit Cards"; *FMCC & SUNY Cobleskill* with presentations on Admissions and Financial Aid; and Nancy Reccio, *WIOA Senior Business Services Representative*, who spoke about STEM Careers and jobs that are offered throughout the communities they live in. They also had Bring Your "A" Game to Work, where they were taught soft skills such as how to shake hands and smile when they answer a telephone and how to call in sick or late to work. All youth also went through a Sexual Harassment Training this year.

Fulton County new worksites included Johnstown Senior Center and Studio Herbage. *Montgomery County* had one new worksite: the Walk-In Closet Consignment Shop. Montgomery County also had two worksites from previous years return: Amsterdam City Hall and the City Recreation Day Camp. *Schoharie County* had Mona's Café in Middleburg as a new worksite, and they brought back Wellington Inn and Paradise Inn.

Jen shared quotes from some worksites. One Montgomery County worksite supervisor stated that "He had a job that he thought would take a month to complete, but the young people there completed it in a week". He was ecstatic because it saved the company money and time. Studio Herbage said it was a pleasure working with the SYEP and can't wait to work with us again. (Jen used this opportunity to discuss the year-round Work Experience Program with the worksite supervisor). Another site said the youth were a "Godsend". Some worksites request to have the same youth back again and some offered to hire the youth at the end of the program. One worksite in Schoharie County has offered to hire the youth working there. One youth was hired in Fulton County at the end of last year and is still working there.

A Year End Luncheon was held for all youth. They were able to discuss their experiences this summer including what worked well, what didn't work, and what they liked and didn't like about the program. All of the youth were provided with a bag of school supplies that included everything from notebooks to pens, pencils, and post-it notes. School supplies are a big expense for students each fall.

Marty asked all Board Members to take a moment to look over the Annual Board Report that was included in the packet.

Beverly Ball, FMS WDB Summer Youth Employment Monitor discussed the monitoring process and her experiences this year. She explained that Jen and Mary supplied the list of Worksites and Participants for each county. Gail and Bev reviewed them and selected 4 participant files and 2 worksites to review in each county. Worksites are selected based upon several factors including age of participant, eligibility, number of times they have participated in the program and the location of the worksite (*sites chosen have never been visited or have not been visited recently*).

All files were reviewed for eligibility, case notes, participant information, lost check policy, medical information, parental permissions, photo releases, assessment plans, Orientation Confirmation, worksite agreements, and timesheets. Beverly explained that many of these documents are not "required" however PIC staff feel it is important information to have in the files. Much of the information helps support a better Summer Youth Employment Program.

Beverly met with Supervisors and the Youth to discuss Orientation and Work Assignments including Labor Standards, Supervision, Time & Attendance, Worksite Agreements, Communication with Youth Staff at PIC and Overall Program Perceptions.

Two of the sites that were visited this year were; **Wellington Herb & Spice** in Schoharie and the **Fulton County YMCA** in Johnstown.

Wellington Herb & Spice is a 45-acre certified organic farm in Schoharie. They have tranquil ponds, garden supplies, collectibles, imported teas and accessories, herb & spice products and dried flowers. They also have a "Tea Room" serving light lunches.

- *The Youth on the worksite stated:* "I like that it is funded by the government and helps a business out without costing them anything. I am learning workmanship and a reputation for a job well done". Some things this youth was responsible for was garden work, processing herbs and spices, trimming and planting.
- *The Supervisor stated:* "I try to let him be independent but make sure that he learns good work ethic as well. I make sure that he knows his responsibilities and "why" he is here."

Fulton County YMCA is the area's largest childcare provider licensed by NYS Office of Children and Family Services.

- *The Youth on the worksite stated:* "It has given me experience in preparing me for future jobs. Has taught me responsibility and the importance of confidentiality."
- *The Supervisor stated:* "He is learning leadership skills, how to work in a group setting, first aid and emergency management."

Beverly shared that she had one youth at a Montgomery County worksite that was told she would be coming out and would like to discuss the program with him. The day of the visit, he called in sick. The worksite staff and PIC SYEP staff felt that he was nervous about the meeting and that may be why he didn't come to work that day. Beverly reminded Board Members that, for many youth, this is their first work experience and they are still learning how to communicate with supervisors and interact with adults and co-workers. They can become nervous easily. She also commended the PIC staff for the work they do with the youth and businesses involved in the Summer Youth Employment Program.

Mary Hill shared that OTDA (the New York State Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance) that funds the Summer Youth Employment Program through TANF funding, also did a Program Review this summer. Although the PIC has not received their final report, the OTDA staff was impressed by the case files and the documentation that is not required. They visited one worksite, the Johnstown Senior Center.

Gail shared that she and Mary started with the Youth Program many years ago. She shared that we are grateful to the local Departments of Social Services because the funding goes to them and they pass the majority of the funding on to the Workforce Development Board to run the Summer Youth Employment Programs in the individual counties.

III. Action Items:

- **Resolution BY 2019-01:** Acceptance of the minutes from the June 5, 2019 Annual Board Meeting
 - Motion: Peter Stearns Seconded by: Dave Morrow
 - Discussion: None
 - Vote: All were in favor
 - Motion Carried

- **Resolution BY 2019-02:** Acceptance of the Request to Transfer Funds Between Dislocated Worker and Adult PY19 Funds on a Case-By-Case Basis
 - Motion: Andrea Fettinger Seconded by: Dave Fariello
 - Discussion: Gail reminded Board Members that at the end of last year we had a resolution very similar to this one that allowed us to Transfer Dislocated Worker Funds to Adult. We are allowed to transfer funds from Dislocated Worker (people who are unemployed) to Adults (people who many times are on public assistance or low income.) This resolution must be passed annually. Because we have received the TET-Dislocated Worker grant, we have significant funding for Dislocated Worker classroom and employer-based training. We don't have nearly as much training funds for Adult. By passing this resolution it would allow us to transfer some funds from Formula Dislocated Workers to Formula Adult in order to serve more adult customers. The WDB staff and Mary Hill meet to discuss how much funding to transfer and then present that request to the Accountability Committee. We have to remember when we transfer funds that we can never deny an eligible Dislocated Worker the opportunity for either Classroom Training or Employer Based trainings because there are no funds available. Gail stated that the Youth funding can **never** be transferred to another funding stream.
 - Vote: All were in favor
 - Motion Carried

IV. Information Sharing:

Marty shared that the Board is committee-driven, and committees do the bulk of the work. Minutes and meeting times are posted on line, and all members are always welcome at any committee meeting.

He asked the Committee chairs to briefly describe their committee's responsibilities as well as a summary of their last meeting. He asked Board Members to think about joining a committee if they are not already on one. Committees generally meet once a month.

Gail said that the Board is committee driven. Committees discuss issues ahead of time and decide if it requires a resolution or policy. If it does, it is referred to the full board for action. Gail explained that only at Board Meetings (with a quorum present) can we pass Policies and Resolutions. Committee minutes are posted on line for Board Members to review, but the Board Meeting is public and Board Minutes are posted in the public section of the website

Accountability and Return on Investment Committee: Andrea shared that the Accountability and Return on Investment Committee is primarily a fiscal review committee. Every month they look

at the budget, spending, revenue, and annually, the audit of WDB and PIC. Andrea shared that it is important for them to understand the audit results. She stated that this committee is where you learn the most about the financial side of this entity. It is about learning where the money comes from to pay for all the services that we offer. She stated that they are always looking for new members. They meet the 4th Tuesday of the month at 4:30 in the Amsterdam Career Center, but they also allow people to call in if they can't make it to Amsterdam.

The Accountability and Return on Investment Committee did not meet in August. However, they reviewed the monthly reports from Kim. June 30, 2019 marked the end of BY18. The Fiscal Year-End PY18 Budget for the WDB was underspent in total by \$44,786. Gail stated that Kim worked with PIC Staff, Tech II and Don Snoop in an area that we were being overcharged. It resulted in approximately \$15,000 in savings. Andrea shared that even though we say "underspent", it technically means that we found "savings." The money saved can then be used towards carry-in for the next year as long as the total carry-in is 20% or less of each funding stream for the year. Gail shared that it is important to have carry-in as you get only a small percentage of your year's funding sometime during the 1st quarter of the year. The balance of funding usually doesn't come in until late September. This means that you have to operate in July, August and part of September with the money that you carried in from the previous year. This prohibits us from offering any formula-funded classroom training for the first 3 months of the fiscal year. Andrea shared that is why the Accountability Committee has the 3-month budget. It is based only on carry-in and the expected first-quarter funding. When you, as Board members, vote on the 3-month budget, you are trusting the committee to come back in October or November and give a full year budget based on the total funding received.

We are sending quarterly reports to NYSDOL for the TET-Dislocated Worker Grant. However, our Program Monitor will also be reaching out to us for bi-weekly reports. They want to make sure that these funds are being spent in a timely manner and that any technical assistance issues be identified as soon as possible. Gail stated that they had discussed that bi-weekly reports are time consuming since they require Kim and Mary (and her staff) to pull numbers every other week.

Andrea thanked the Board for passing the resolution for the Transfer of Funds between Dislocated Worker and Adult funds.

The full Committee report is available to Board Members on the website.

Next Meeting: Tuesday, September 24th, 2019, at 4:30 p.m. at the Amsterdam Center.

Business Services and Employer Engagement Committee: Did not meet. Laurie shared that one of the most valuable elements of the committee is talking about opportunities and challenges facing Human Resource staff and then together discussing possible solutions. Many around the table might have ideas to share or things they may have heard about that would be useful to other members. It is a wonderful exchange of ideas. The committee discusses training opportunities and many members participate in our job fairs. They talk about how staff in the Centers support employers that have a large hiring need coming into our communities. They look at DOL labor statistics to see what sectors are strong in our state and region. They talk about how to meet challenges for jobseekers that need accommodations. Laurie shared that as a training provider she gets to hear about the challenges facing local employers. She then can go back to her staff to discuss how they can be a pipeline for success of the employers. She hopes that the committee members are taking back some of the ideas shared at the committee to help them in their efforts as employers. Marty shared that as a committee member he feels they get a broad overview of the area and what is going on.

The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, September 19th at 8:00 a.m. in Amsterdam Career Center.

WIOA (MOU) Partners Committee: Did not meet. The committee is made up of a group of the mandated WIOA Partners and other Partners in the FMS system. The committee meets to discuss the programs Partners run, the population we serve and new things that are happening in our communities that we are aware of. One of the primary activities of the Partners is to participate in the tracking of referrals made from the Partners. Each Partner is asked to document each referral made, received and followed up. The committee also works on identifying speakers for the Board. Those who serve different populations can speak to the board about resources that are available for individuals they may come across in their own workforce and how that can assist employers as well. Judy shared that one of the things that they make sure to do is to have a "warm handoff" as customers are referred from one Partner to another. They are not just handed a piece of paper with a name and phone number. They are walked over to another Partner's desk or a telephone call is made to an off-site Partner while the customer is still there.

Gail shared that the form Mary developed for tracking was so impressive to NYSDOL that they have used it as a sample for Best Practices.

The next meeting is scheduled for Friday, September 13th 9:00 a.m. in the Amsterdam Career Center. Ashley Paciello, with ACCES-VR and Ann Gallagher-Sagaas, from Commission of the Blind will give a presentation on Universal Accessibility of the WDS to Individuals with Disabilities, including those who are Blind or Visually Impaired.

Workforce Systems Oversight Committee - Gail said that the committee, along with the One Stop Operator and the Leadership Team, look at the system as a whole and how it is working. They look at the Center Activity reviewing Bev's Program Report. Many of those annual figures can be seen in the Annual Report distributed today. When you review "traffic", it is important to remember that this is not an individual customer count, it is a reflection of every time the door turns. We look at why is it busier sometimes during the year than other times, or why was it less busy this month than the same month last year or the year before. The unemployment rate has an effect on who is coming through the door and what their needs are. At a time of low unemployment we tend to see people who need more assistance in becoming job ready, so they may return more times. We also look at Center System Issues and at Center staffing. Right now we have two vacancies in DOL staff. Melissa stated that one is pending and they are hoping to back fill the other. Melissa will be holding a NYSDOL required training on Workplace Violence Prevention for all staff. The Leadership Team, on behalf of the Committee, takes a look at the entire Career Center both inside and outside to make sure it is safe for our customers and staff. The training helps identify any risks and makes recommendations to the Leadership Team to overcome and mitigate those risks. The training will include dealing with hostile customers and even environmental concerns such as hurricanes or tornados. The committee meets at 8:00 am the 4th Wednesday of the month in Cobleskill.

The full Committee report is available to Board members on the website.

Next Meeting: Wednesday, September 25th, at 8:00 a.m. at the Cobleskill Center.

V. Environmental Scanning:

Gail said that sometime in October or November we should have our final funding. We passed the 3-month budget in June and in October or November, we will need to have a resolution to pass the full year budget. We are hoping to have the budget for the October meeting but need to receive our "Notices of Obligational Authority" first. It is possible that we may hear something before the end of September. We have developed a Draft Budget based on draft funding dollars they gave us back in June.

We have been assisting employers by doing a lot of On-Site Recruitment. Today we held a recruitment at a business that is closing, West Rock (formerly Capstone Containers). A number of businesses, including Keymark Corporation and Richardson Brands, attended the recruitment. We are hoping for a seamless movement for employees from one job to another. Gail shared that this is where our Dislocated Worker grant might help an employer. An employer may find an employee who is almost ready for a job but lacks a few skills. Our Business Services Representative can write an On-the-Job training program that can help the employer train for the skills needed. It gives the business some relief as it would reimburse 50% of the wages during the OJT training period. It also gives the business an employee that has been working, has good work habits, and wants to continue working.

Dollar General and Marshall's have also been very busy using the Career Center for their recruitment and hiring needs.

VI. Board Member Go Round:

Wendy Adams (Lamont Engineers, P.C.):

- Has been with Lamont Engineers for one year.
- Is building a pavilion for employee use.

Laurie Bargstedt (HFM BOCES):

- Serves Adults with Reading, Writing and Math Skills leading to HSE or who have weak skills.
- Offers assistance with English as a Second Language and Corrections Barriers.
- Offers New Program - IC3 Certification - Workforce Readiness Training that will develop digital literacy skills.
- Offering Fundamentals of Retail Certification in fall.

Donna Becker (Schoharie County DSS):

- This is her 2nd month as the new Commissioner.
- Civil Service exams are listed on the website.

Kerry Brunner (Richardson Brands Company):

- A lot of Research and Development being done. Re-branding and product line facelift.
- Employment going well. Right-sized and not losing employees.
- Were able to get some wonderful employees from West Rock.

Marty Callahan (Gehring Tricot Corporation):

- Jim Law retired from the Board – He contributed Black Raspberry and Chocolate ice creams for tonight's meeting.
- The textile industry is going well with a lot of new developments.

Roger Cusano (Universal Plastics Corporation):

- Finished upgrades in machine department.
- Installed 4 new computer operated routers.
- Expanding the paint finishing area.
- Holding off hiring, due to lull in industry.
- Existing orders are doing well.
- Cobleskill site is doing best with sales of all three sites.

David Fariello (St. Mary's Hospital):

- Healthcare changing.
- State level programs changing - Case Management of Health Homes and Mental Health Programs.

- Emergency Room visits have dropped 15-20%, Admissions have dropped as well.
- Urgent care is booming. Charlton Urgent Care opens September 17th. Building and land was donated by Stewart's.
- St. Mary's hospital system now has 1,826 employees.

Andrea Fetting (*Fulton County Office for the Aging*):

- Alternate Certifier for HEAP. Already received over 300 applications.
- Health Insurance Counseling Open Enrollment - October-December.
- Working on their 4-year Strategic Plan.
- The Eddy's Alzheimer's Program and Alzheimer's Association is recruiting volunteer caregivers.

Pamela Goldswor (*Townsend Leather*):

- Grove Street location is fully opened.
- Bulldozing half of the building on Townsend Avenue and expanding production.
- Hired 10 people last month and need 10 more.
- Opened Workplace by Facebook. Allows and encourages the use of cellphones.
- Celebrating 50 years this month.
- Working with Johnstown Schools (and soon Amsterdam) to set up a mentorship program.
- Did a Back-to-School Backpack Drive.

Arthur Graulich (*Argus Acres*):

- Agriculture is doing well.
- Working between rains.

Melissa Johnston (*NYS DOL*):

- Unemployment Insurance Claims are down.
- Seasonal Unemployment should start soon.
- UI customer mandate is 3 visits but some aren't even making it to 3rd visit before being hired.

Karen Miller (*Jack Miller's Tractor & Truck, Inc.*):

- Business has been good this summer.

Dave Morrow (*Fulton-Montgomery Community College*):

- Enrollment down.
- Finishing Phase 2- Science Lab and Theatre. Dr. Rao donated \$500,000 for renovations to the theatre.
- Acting President Greg Truckenmiller as of August 1st.
- Planning to conduct a Presidential Search.

Donna Pesta (*SUNY Cobleskill*):

- Students are back. They are in their 2nd week of classes.
- Held a Part-time Job Fair for over 500 students. Opportunities for them are limited by lack of transportation or the fact that they go home on weekends and breaks.

Judy Petroski (*ACCES/VR*):

- Finished summer program for work experience.
- Busy writing college plans or other training programs for fall.
- Hold contract for Pre-Employment Training Services for Youth.
- Re-bid for Core Rehab Services.
- Positions available in Johnstown and Utica.

Amy Rogers (Keymark Corporation):

- Shuttle for employees available in Amsterdam, Johnstown and Gloversville.
- Attending Job Fairs about once a week.

Jeannette Spaulding (Schoharie Co. Community Action Program, Inc.):

- Has hired a new Finance Director.
- Early Outreach for HEAP has started. Applications have been mailed to those who received HEAP last year. Season will open November.
- Given out 30+ Air Conditioners for individuals that have medical needs. This is ongoing.

Jeffrey Stark (IUPAT District Council #9):

- Hired 35 painters in last 6 weeks.

Peter Stearns (Laborers Local #157):

- Things going good with labor. A lot of work still.

VII. Board Member Feedback?

VIII. Adjournment:

Motion: Dave Morrow Seconded by: Kerry Brunner
Meeting Adjourned at 5:54 p.m.

***The next Board Meeting will be held on October 2nd, 2019 at 4:30 p.m. at
the Amsterdam Workforce Career Center.***