

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

**Board Meeting  
Via Zoom**

Wednesday – February 2, 2022

**I. Opening and Attendance:**

Welcome: Pam welcomed everyone and thanked them for coming. She introduced new Board Members; *Christie Davis, Academic Advisor/Workforce Development Specialist at FMCC and Angelia Kehl, Recruiting and Sourcing Specialist at St. Mary's Healthcare.*

Members Present by Zoom: Wendy Adams, Laurie Bargstedt, Donna Becker, Elijah Braemer, Martin Callahan, Roger Cusano, Christie Davis, Pamela Goldswor, Melissa Johnston, Angelia Kehl, Christopher Manus, Donna Pesta, Amy Rogers, Kenneth Rose, Jeannette Spaulding, Jeff Stark, and Peter Stearns

Excused: Kerry Brunner, Andrea Fettingner, Arthur Graulich, Danielle Hartwig, Kathleen Kilmartin, Sandra MacDonald, Allene Monaghan, Don Snoop and Joseph Tracy

Absent: Lani Pertell

Also present: *Mary Hill*, Program Director, FMS Private Industry Council, Inc., *Lorraine Ruganis*, Director of Counseling, ACCES/VR, and *Wanda Young*, Job Developer, Montgomery County Department of Social Services

Staff to Board present: Gina Papa, Beverly Ball and Kimberly Skiff

**II. Action Items:**

- **Resolution BY 2021 -09:** Acceptance of the minutes from the September 1, 2021 Board Meeting
  - Motion: *Melissa Johnston* Seconded by: *Laurie Bargstedt*
  - Discussion: There was no discussion.
  - Vote: All in favor
  - Motion Carried
  
- **Resolution BY 2021 -10:** Acceptance of the minutes from the October 6, 2021 Board Meeting
  - Motion: *Christopher Manus* Seconded by: *Marty Callahan*
  - Discussion: There was no discussion.
  - Vote: All in favor
  - Motion Carried
  
- **Resolution BY 2021 -11:** Upon the recommendation of the Accountability and Return on Investment Committee: Approval of the revisions to the WIOA Program and Sub-Contractor Monitoring Policy

- Motion: *Jeff Stark* Seconded by: *Roger Cusano*
- Discussion: In Andrea's absence, Gina explained that this policy had to be updated to add Beverly and Gina's names to the Leadership Team and update a technical advisory from the NYS Department of Labor that we referenced in the policy. NYSDOL put out a new technical advisory, so we had to update the new number of the advisory.
- Vote: All in favor
- Motion Carried

### III. Information Sharing:

**Accountability and Return on Investment Committee**: In Andrea's absence, Gina shared that one of the things that we have been working on is the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that we have with our partners. It has been completed and submitted to the Department of Labor and is being reviewed. Once it gets approved, we have to obtain the official signatures and then it is complete.

Our policies to assist those individuals going to Classroom Training and On-the-Job training states that we can spend up to \$6,000 and \$4000 respectively per person. Unfortunately, in years past, the funding has been so low we weren't able to spend nearly that much and had to limit it in PIC's contract. Now we have more funding available because we were able to carry it in from last year. All we need to do is write an amendment to our contract with the Private Industry Council letting them know that they can use the full amounts on future contracts.

We also talked about the program and fiscal monitoring by the New York State Department of Labor. Both have been completed; we received a formal report from the program monitoring and are waiting for the fiscal report. It was recommended that we have a written contract with our cleaners.

Kim gave the financial reports for December, which puts us at halfway through our fiscal year and therefore we should be at 50% expended. The Board budget is at 45.46%, so technically we're a little bit under spent and the PIC budget is also under spent by a little bit more. This is largely because we have a lot of training funds available that were limited. With the amendment to the contract, PIC will be able to spend more on the training contracts and we should see that percentage going back up.

Kim was able to show the committee members the actual line items on the budget that show where we have the training money. It shows that there was about \$150,000 allocated to training funds and we've only spent about \$30,000 right now. By seeing those numbers on the budget lines, it allowed us to see that we do indeed have the money available to increase the amount of those training contracts.

Lastly, if any board members are not already on a committee or you are someone that really likes the numbers, we could use more members to the Accountability Committee. We look at the oversight of the finances that the Board is spending on the system and in the centers. If you are interested, you can reach out to Gina or Beverly.

*The full minutes from the committee meeting are available on the website for review.*

**Next Meeting: February 22, 2022, 3:30pm via Zoom**

**Business Services and Employer Engagement Committee**: Amy reported that the Career Centers' staff conducted outreach to 171 businesses and added two new businesses to our database.

Nancy Reccio explained that one of the roles of the committee is to understand and oversee the services that the Career Centers' business services staff provide to local businesses and she discussed their day to day activities.

The committee started something new, with a discussion topic of the month. Gina recommended we start off with discussing Social Media and how your business is using it; which platforms do you use, how do you use it and for Recruiting? Advertising? Communication? For the future meetings we're going to have a topic of discussion for members to share ideas and things that are or are not working for them.

Our topic for the next meeting is Workplace Culture. What does your business or agency do to make your workplace desirable and keep employees happy and engaged? Does it help with retention? Do you need ideas for addressing workplace culture?

Anyone that would like to be a part of this committee or participate in this discussion, please reach out to Beverly.

*The full minutes from the committee meeting are available on the website for review.*

***Next Meeting: Thursday, February 17<sup>th</sup> at 8:30 a.m. by Zoom.***

**WIOA (MOU) Partners Committee:** Mary stated that the last WIOA Partners meeting was on December 3, as it is a quarterly meeting. We had 11 partners attend by Zoom because we're not doing in house yet.

Mary started the meeting off by talking about the referrals that we have gotten. Referrals have been very low lately; partly due to many of our partner agencies not being opened yet. The other thing is that many of the agencies are facing the same thing; there are not a lot of customers coming in our doors right now. It doesn't seem like people are looking for work or needing help. The majority of the customers that we see are people who are looking for help with their unemployment insurance claims. Although, we have seen an uptick of classroom training.

She reminded about the importance of doing the referral sheets. It's very important that we keep track of these referrals so that we know what agencies our customers are going to for assistance. It helps us with our follow up that we are required to do. Mary sent out a new form for everybody to use and she reminded everyone that if they have new people starting, she would be happy to train them on the new forms. She shared that not one agency can provide all the services needed by our customers. We need each other. We need each other's services, and we need each other's help. Our customers' need so much during this pandemic and no one agency has all of the services or the money to provide all of these services. She stated it is critical to keep our referrals going.

Mary shared that at the meeting they go around the room and each person talks about their agency and what's going on with them. We know whose open, who's not open, who is seeing customers, what their needs are, what we can help them with, and there's a lot of conversation between the agencies about what we can do for each other.

These meetings are open to anybody who would like to attend. It's really very interesting and very informative. If you're looking for ways to help your customers, coming to one of these meetings and hearing what all these agencies have to offer is a really good thing for all of you.

*The full minutes from the committee meeting are available on the website for review.*

***Next Meeting: March 4, 2022, 9 a.m. by Zoom***

**Workforce Systems Oversight Committee:** Donna shared that the committee met on January 26<sup>th</sup> and Don Snoop announced that he would be stepping down as Co-chair of the committee, but will be continuing as a member of the committee.

Beverly gave us highlights from December. Most of the visits now are people looking for help with ID me, which is a layer of security that people need to fill out when they're filing for unemployment. It's a little challenging for people who are not tech savvy. Luckily, there are some staff members that have become very good at that, and they have been able to help people and they're also training other staff members.

For the month of December, there were two training contracts written. Both were for the RAD tech program at FMCC. Overall, services were down for the month but they think part of that was because of the holidays and the increased COVID numbers in the area.

Mary Hill let us know how things were going at the Career Centers. They are currently down 2 staff members; one is a HSE teacher and a Resource Room person in Gloversville. They have had no applicants for the teacher position and 2 people applied for the resource Room. One was not qualified and the other one accepted a higher paying job somewhere else.

Youth in the program are keeping busy with career exploration and job readiness training. Youth staff are planning on getting some local businesses to do some zoom calls and talk to the youth about what their business does and what they look for when they're hiring.

So, even though the centers are currently closed, staff are working with job seekers and businesses. They're doing it remotely in all sorts of different ways; email, phone, zoom and Facebook. Mary felt that they are providing those services very well, even though it's not in person, and they will be evaluating when the centers will be able to reopen.

We heard from Pam Levy from the Catskill Center for Independence. They also are providing all their services remotely and may possibly continue into March.

We heard an update on the WIOA monitoring that has been completed. There were two findings and they were both resolved before the final report. One was about staff providing more details on their case notes. Staff was provided a link to some online training and the staff has already completed the training.

We would love to have some new members, so if you don't have anything going on Wednesday, February 23<sup>rd</sup> please contact Beverly.

*The full minutes from the committee meeting are available on the website for review.*

**Next Meeting:** *Wednesday, February 23<sup>rd</sup> at 8:30 a.m. by Zoom*

## **V. Environmental Scanning:**

Gina shared that she attended a training through our member organization, the New York State Association of Training and Employment Professionals (NYATEP). They do a lot of good, big picture events for us, and they recently held a Town Hall through zoom. They had a couple of Congressmen from New York speak. They had Roberta Reardon, the Commissioner of the Department of Labor for New York State, and they had speakers from some of the local areas. Basically they talked about all of the funding that's becoming available for workforce. The budgets haven't been passed yet, but between Economic Development and Workforce Development there is going to be a lot of funding. It was good to hear from people that are involved at high levels and hear what they're seeing and what they feel is going to be happening.

At our local level, New York State Department of Labor is funding a new position for us here at FMS and this position is specifically dedicated to helping individuals with disabilities get into the workforce while helping businesses tap into this population. It's a pretty underserved population. The Career Centers across the State don't serve a ton of people with disabilities and the state would like to see us change that. We held a special meeting of all of our partner agencies that provide services to individuals with disabilities and we asked them where they see gaps in the services that are available for these individuals.

Some of you may remember, many years ago, we had somebody in a position very similar to this. First it was Connie Glover who went on to work for ACCES/VR and then we had Ashley Walton who currently works for Liberty ARC. When we had this position, we were able to determine that our area wasn't lacking services for the individuals with disabilities, what we were lacking was somebody to coordinate all of those services and make the connections. This individual is going to be looking at who has what services in the world of disabilities and they will be providing training to the staff in the Career Centers so that they are more comfortable serving people with disabilities.

We submitted our plan a couple of weeks ago and we are waiting for feedback. Once we get that back, we're going to get the position filled. We have not yet decided whether or not we're going to do a direct hire through the board or if we're going to contract with another entity or put out an RFP. There are pros and cons to each of those options. Something else we have to think about right now with the state of the workforce; is there going to be somebody out there that has the skills and abilities to do this position. I'm hoping that we would have somebody to start in April.

## **VI. Board Member Go Round:**

### **Wendy Adams Rosa, Lamont Engineers, P.C.:**

- Everything is going well at Lamont Engineers. Fully staffed and have two interns.
- This is their slow time due to the weather.

### **Laurie Bargstedt, HFM BOCES:**

- Fully staffed.
- Programming continues to go well during winter months. Popular choice for many students.

### **Donna Becker, Schoharie County DSS:**

- New program to entice people to start up or expand daycare centers. Western Schoharie is a "daycare desert" with little to no daycare offered. There are lots of funds out there. It is not administered by DSS, it's going to be administered through the state. They're also talking about changing some of the procedures for daycare such as in increasing the amount people can earn. No wait list for daycare assistance.
- The Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP) is active.
- Right now they have 59 individuals who are homeless, 45 adults and 14 children.
- They are still working on a Warming Center. Having difficulty finding a location for it.

### **Elijah Braemer, Dollar General Distribution Center:**

- Things are going very well, although it is never ending in the supply chain field.
- Fully staffed. Have a new Senior Director leading our facility here in Amsterdam.

### **Martin Callahan, Gehring Tricot:**

- Going very well, extremely busy. Supply chain is still extremely tight and lead times are way out.
- Recruitment is going well.
- Have a full HR Department now.

**Roger Cusano, Universal Plastics Corporation:**

- Doing good staff wise. Added some positions.
- Supply chain issues; slow lead times and in some cases, double down materials and prices are up on average almost 38%. Have to work with their customers to pass on those costs.
- January was a good month and hoping to build on that as they get towards spring.
- Still hiring for certain positions. Hopefully expanding their shifts and getting back to a second shift at some point.

**Christie Davis, Fulton-Montgomery Community College:**

- Internship Fair for Human Services, Individual Studies, Healthcare, Cyber Security, and Computer Science (*just to name a few*) – March 10<sup>th</sup> in person at FMCC. Electronic registration coming out soon.
- Have a Human Resources Consortium group with various employers. Have various topics, depending on what employers are suggesting and what's hot and interesting at that time. Because of the discussion at the last Business Services Meeting, the next HR Consortium meeting will be for employers that want some tips on social media; how to market your company, how to recruit for your company, and how to have a Facebook or Twitter following. A Communication Professor from the College of St. Rose will be the presenter. The meeting is on March 17<sup>th</sup>, more to come.
- SUNY Early Childhood Worker Scholarship: For daycare workers who are employed 20 hours or more, they can attend a local SUNY for a Micro Credential Certificate, Associate Degree, Bachelor's Degree, or even a Master's Degree. They can potentially have funding to help up to \$2,000, on top of financial aid. This is really going to help the part time worker with part time school. Offering Zoom information sessions for daycares and daycare workers to join all throughout the months of February and March.
- SUNY Apprenticeship funding available: You might have entry level workers or you might have workers that needs some upscaling, if there is a SUNY apprenticeship title that can basically help those workers increase their skills and education, through your local SUNY, hopefully us at FMCC.
- Online offerings expanding through FLEX mode. A little difficult; not everybody learns well online. FLEX mode is combination learning. FMCC offers it in person and online.
- Noncredit courses: They are trying to reach out to employers, if there is something that they can help with, even if it's just a noncredit training, please let Christie know. There is a lot of conversation around financial aid for noncredit courses within SUNY and the Department of Labor, so there may be some changes coming in the future.

**Pamela Goldswor, Townsend Leather:**

- Still growing and expanding, moving things around to some other buildings.
- Fully staffed.

**Melissa Johnston, NYS Department of Labor:**

- Pending backfill on the Cobleskill position, hopefully by our next meeting will have someone in place for that.
- They continue to focus on the virtual services, both to our job seeking customers and to businesses. They are hosting in each region of the State (10) a regional virtual job fair. If your business has not participated, please reach out to Melissa to get signed up for the next one. Averaging around 150 per event and about 50 businesses.
- They continue to provide virtual services in the form of reemployment appointments for unemployed customers doing resumes, job leads or whatever somebody needs to get back to work as soon as possible.

- There is a brand new bot on the Department of Labor website called the Perkins UI bot. The purpose of that is to help people who have general questions about their unemployment claim. Melissa thinks that this is going to help customers out, especially since a common complaint that they hear is that customers are having trouble getting through to the telephone claim center.

**Angelia Kehl, St. Mary's Healthcare:**

- Seeing a decline in COVID patient numbers.
- Going to be investing into two additional employees in the recruitment office.
- Excited for some potential internships or part time workers from some of the upcoming graduates and students.

**Christopher Manus, IUOE #158:**

- Training season for all of their members. Outside work is slow during winter months, so good time for in house training.
- Work is actually pretty good. Half of the number of men that are on the out of work list right now. Usually a good indicator of how the season is going to go.
- They have a big job, the Champlain Hudson Express Line, a 338 mile electric line that goes from the Canadian border all the way down to New York City. There's probably going to be up to 250 operating engineers on that line.
- Open recruitment and accepting applications for anybody with a high school diploma and an aptitude for heavy equipment. As soon as the weather breaks, they'll be doing interviews.

**Donna Pesta, SUNY Cobleskill:**

- Finishing their 2<sup>nd</sup> week of class. Relatively healthy - all sorts of testing, low positive numbers.
- President, Dr. Terenzio has started a new initiative, "Thriving College - Thriving Community" and it really embraces the role that the College plays in the community, especially Schoharie County.
- Looking at redeveloping their Advisory Committees. Right now, every academic program has an advisory committee and employers in the field. Instead of just sticking to strict academic programs, they want to bring employers from different sectors together and focus more on issues and what the College can do to better prepare their students for the workforce.
- Hosting an Agriculture Career Fair on March 15<sup>th</sup>.

**Amy Rogers, Keymark Corporation:**

- Still actively recruiting.
- Conducting a Job Fair with Montgomery County DSS on February 14th at the Fonda location.

**Jeannette Spaulding, Schoharie Co. Community Action Program, Inc.:**

- Most of the programs are status quo.
- Mix of virtual service delivery and in person service delivery.
- Administrator in Schoharie County of the Child Care Resource and Referral Program through the Office of Children and Family Services. Currently running the Childcare Stabilization Grant for the county. Childcare is of prime importance in our community for the safety of children and for people to be able to work and know that their children are being taken care of safely.
- Their Community Services department operates the free Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program for individuals that are on the lower income side but not necessarily low income side. It's really streamlined due to the pandemic. A lot of these processes give us new ways to provide services while reducing barriers for people.

**Jeff Stark, IUPAT District Council #9:**

- In the middle of their in person training for their bridge painters.
- Many of their people have been in and out of the out of the workforce, because of COVID but they're still recruiting.

- Looks like it's going to be a good year for all the trades, Jeff was talking to the roofers the other day who said they're probably going to hire 50 to 60 roofers this season. Because of the supply chain issues, everybody's bombarded. Same with metal and other supplies; especially with the infrastructure bill for many of the trades.
- Jeff stated that it is a great way to make a living if you want to make \$100,000 a year, plus benefits, without spending thousands of thousands of dollars on education, this is the place to be.

**Gina Papa**, Executive Director, FMS WDB:

- With the retirement of our High School Equivalency teacher, there's a lot of other things that we are doing with youth. We know a lot of times people that join boards like ours are interested in working with or helping young people. One of the things that the Youth staff is doing is organizing Zoom meetings for some of the Youth in our programs. They are hoping to hear from Businesses and Agencies about their career paths and opportunities for careers. If anybody's interested in being a speaker with some of the kids in our youth program, by all means reach out to Beverly and she can pass the message along to Mary and the staff in our youth program. Gina shared that she thinks that's a great way for all of us to give back to the Youth in our communities.

She attended a training a couple weeks ago on Women and Apprenticeship in Non-Traditional Occupations. It's a multi county grant and they're helping fund women that are interested in non-traditional employment and they're able to pay for pre-apprenticeship training. They're out of Utica, and they serve 11 counties. If any of your agencies have customers that may be interested in something like that or any of you are looking to host Women in Apprenticeship, reach out and we can connect you with the right people. The definition of Non-Traditional employment is if the industry average is less than 25% women.

**Kimberly Skiff**, Fiscal Manager, FMS WDB:

- Everything is going along pretty good. We're looking for ways to spend the training money and increase participation.

**Guest:**

**Lorraine Ruganis**, Director of Counseling, ACCES/VR:

- Enjoyed working with the Johnstown office recently and the counselors there and they are welcoming referrals.

**VII. Adjournment:**

Meeting Adjourned at 5:32 p.m.

*There is no meeting in March.  
The next Board Meeting will be held on April 6, 2022 at 4:30 p.m.*