

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

**Board Meeting
Via Zoom**

Wednesday – October 6, 2021

I. Opening and Attendance:

Welcome: Pam welcomed everyone and thanked them for coming. She introduced new Board Member; *Sandra MacDonald*, Human Resource Manager at River Ridge Living Center in Amsterdam. Pam asked Board Members and staff to introduce themselves and share one thing that they enjoy doing.

Members Present by Zoom: Wendy Adams, Laurie Bargstedt, Donna Becker, Roger Cusano, Andrea Fettinger, Pamela Goldswor, Melissa Johnston, Sandra MacDonald, Allene Monaghan, Donna Pesta, Amy Rogers, and Jeff Stark

Members Present by Telephone: Kerry Brunner, Martin Callahan, Danielle Hartwig, and Christopher Manus

Excused: Arthur Graulich, Kathleen Kilmartin, Lani Pertell, Andrea Scribner, Don Snoop, and Peter Stearns

Absent: Elijah Braemer, David Fariello, Ken Rose, Jeannette Spaulding, and Joe Tracy

Also present: *Mary Hill*, Program Director, FMS Private Industry Council, Inc.

Staff to Board present: Gina Papa and Beverly Ball

II. Action Items: *There was not a quorum present. Resolution BY 2021 – 09 will move forward to the December 1, 2021 Board Meeting.*

III. Information Sharing:

Accountability and Return on Investment Committee: Andrea shared that the committee did not meet last month. The budget has already been passed and the Single Audit was already approved. We were only a month into the new fiscal year, so the committee decided it really didn't need to meet.

She reminded everyone that they are welcome to join the committee and that all of the minutes of past meetings are available to view on the website.

*The full minutes from the committee meeting are available on the website for review.
Next Meeting: Tuesday, October 26th at 3:30 p.m. by Zoom.*

Business Services and Employer Engagement Committee: Laurie reported that Business and Employer contacts for August were down slightly for August, with just over 2,000 contacts. This may have been due to the extra employer contacts in July for the Job Fair held at the Riverfront Center.

Nancy Reccio reported at the meeting that in August both Kasson and Keller/Keymark Corp. and Broadway Home Care had recruitments at the Gloversville Center. Unfortunately, there were no job applicants. They also co-sponsored a Job Fair with Schoharie County Chamber of Commerce. There were 25 businesses and 21 job applicants. As you all know, that number is far below what would normally be expected as all employers are facing the same challenges.

Nancy talked about the Health Care Training Grant that is in partnership with Herkimer Oneida Madison WDB. They are working with a number of local health care providers for training. Unfortunately many of the people who signed up for the class backed out as they were required to be fully vaccinated.

Everyone shared that they are not getting a lot of job applicants and members of the committee are hoping that if others on the Board have other ideas to share, as far as job recruiting, it would help everyone and be greatly appreciated.

Pamela Goldswor said that they are working with the "success coach" from the Mohawk Valley Employment Resources Network. The company is also doing a survey to take the temperature of the morale of employees and are considering more part-time opportunities to work around what people need, including flex schedules. They are also seeing people who are retired but interested in coming back into the workforce.

Amy Rogers of Keymark Corporation and Kasson Keller held a couple of employee appreciation events. Tech Valley Shuttle continues to do a good job for them, running shuttles from Johnstown and from Amsterdam.

Laurie shared that any employer who is interested in joining the committee is welcome and that you don't have to be a member of the Board in order to join this committee.

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

Next Meeting: Thursday, October 21st at 8 a.m. by Zoom.

WIOA (MOU) Partners Committee: Mary stated that she introduced the Committee's new Co-Chair Ann Gallagher-Sagaas, Albany District Manager of the New York State Commission for the Blind (OCFS/NYSCB). The Albany District represents Schoharie County.

She was pleased that 15 different agencies attended this quarterly meeting and were able to share what was new in their agency or organization, what their re-opening plans were and if they are open or seeing customers yet.

Mary said that referrals continue to be slow since the start of the pandemic. She reminded members that even if the referrals are being made virtually, it is important to record them on the referral sheet and send it to her. Any referrals that are made by phone, email, or some other technology are "countable" and should be logged in as a referral. Mary did send out a complete set of the referral forms after the last meeting so people that are working from home can have them on their computers.

Mary stated that committee members enjoy the Zoom meetings because it saves them the travel time and she has noticed participation has increased since they started using Zoom. Members did agree that it would be nice to have one meeting a year face to face.

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

Next Meeting: December 2021, Day to be Determined, 9 a.m. by Zoom

Workforce Systems Oversight Committee: Donna stated that Beverly shared her August Report. There were 34 appointments in Gloversville, 109 in Amsterdam and 98 in Cobleskill. This was a decrease from overall traffic of 266 last month to 241 this month. The Cobleskill Center increased a total of 43%. Although traffic decreased slightly during the month, services were up. This is an indication of what we expected with more intensive services being offered to customers.

We have received approval of our Local Plan. Both the Local and Regional Plans show our in-demand sectors and occupations continue to include advanced manufacturing, distribution centers, and healthcare as well as agri-business and farm-to-table enterprises and related industries such as yogurt and beverage (craft brewing, distilling, and wineries).

We are seeing an uptick in the interest in our High School Equivalency Program. This program really took a hit during the pandemic, so it's wonderful to see youth coming back in all three counties. They also continue to do on-site recruitments for our businesses. Classroom training has picked up significantly.

Melissa brought us up to date with NYSDOL. They are continuing to provide Re-employment Services to UI customers virtually. They are anxious to help people get back to work and explain work search requirements for collecting UI. In the past year, benefits were not withheld if recipients did not fulfill their work seeking obligations but that has changed. The plan going forward is to start withholding benefits if a person is not in compliance. Melissa also reported that NYSDOL has been successfully hosting virtual career fairs across the state.

Pam Levy stated that her staff at Catskill Center for Independence continue to work in the Cobleskill and Oneonta offices on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, and remotely Tuesday and Thursday.

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

Next Meeting: Wednesday, October 27th 2021, at 8 a.m. by Zoom.

V. Environmental Scanning:

- Gina shared that she has now been in the Executive Director role for 3 days and so far she has attended a few Zoom meetings.
- Getting re-familiarized with contacts, etc. Happy to see some familiar faces, but have many new to meet.
- Will be reaching out to Board Members – hoping to meet with everyone individually to learn about their agency/business and their part on the board

VI. Board Member Go Round:

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

- Doing well and is fully staffed.
- Summer intern that has gone back to school. New fall intern through December.
- Have jobs with things planned for several years.

Laurie Bargstedt, HFM BOCES:

- Having challenges dealing with COVID and staff and adult learners.
- Staff offering distance learning for adults who need to pursue their high school equivalency exam. She encouraged members to refer potential or current employees that need that certification or requirement for promotion to reach out to her.
- COVID has allowed them to expand their distance learning options; from once a week, not at all or completely independent learning.
- Working with a local business to bring HS Equivalency right into their plant. If anyone interested let Laurie know.
- They still provide the IC3E Digital Literacy Certification combined with English as a Second Language for the workplace, so that it can provide employers with bilingual individuals.

Donna Becker, Schoharie County DSS:

- They are backfilling all 6.5 vacancies in DSS. Filled a couple already.
- Many job openings posted in the entire county on the county website.
- Starting a new Schoharie County Housing Committee with two sub-committees; one for Temporary & Transitional housing and one for Permanent Housing.
- They are looking at the possibility of opening a warming center.

Martin Callahan, Gehring Tricot:

- Have a lot of openings, but more coming in for interviews.
- Lead times extended.
- Overall, fiscal year very strong.
- New Division (under Gehring umbrella) will be opening in the 1st Quarter of next year. (Not in St. Johnsville)

Roger Cusano, Universal Plastics Corporation:

- Attended the Cobleskill Job Fair. Got some applicants.
- Has hired 3-4 new employees and has more to fill.
- Supply chain has long lead times.
- Using temp agencies for specialized technical positions.
- Looking at additional in house training opportunities.

Andrea Fettingner, Fulton County Office for the Aging:

- Busy, but fully staffed.
- Busy with Home Energy Assistance Program and Medicare open enrollment starts next week.
- Shared that there are many positions available at the county level, especially at DSS.

Pamela Goldswor, Townsend Leather:

- Recently held a Flu shot clinic that was well attended.
- Hiring; more applications coming in but finding rapid turnovers because of training required. Retention is hard.
- Waiting to see what the new COVID mandates will be. Currently at 75% vaccinated.
- Supply chain is also hard on them.

Danielle Hartwig, DHL Supply Chain: *Could not hear the audio from her telephone.*

Melissa Johnston, NYS Department of Labor:

- Excited to continue to provide to reemployment services.
- Staff required to have 5 completed appointments per/day and supervisors 3/per day.
- Now issuing "Failure to Report" for individuals who are not coming to appointments. Benefits are held until they do report.
- Preparing for their busy season when seasonal employees get laid off.

Sandra MacDonald, River Ridge Living Center:

- Has many positions open.
- More RN's are responding. Hard with LPN's because they make more through temp agency.
- Starting a temporary Nurses Assistant program. Will have an additional 6 CNA's after the completion of course.
- Will be reopening a wing in November after it closed for renovation during the pandemic.
- In Amsterdam dealing with transportation issues for the Dietary & Housekeeping staff. Almost 10% use expensive taxis to get to work.

Christopher Manus, IUOE #158:

- Represents skilled labor organization; from heavy equipment on roads and bridges to commercial development.
- Very busy. Could take 100 people and not be able to fill all the jobs.
- Average age of membership is 55-59 years old. Actively recruiting younger individuals.

Allene Monaghan, ACCES/VR:

- Accepting appointments only at this time; but doing face to face or remote.
- Referrals are picking up.
- Looking for a new Job Developer.
- Hired an Office Assistant in Johnstown and will be hiring a Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor.

Donna Pesta, SUNY Cobleskill:

- Finishing 6th week of classes. All in person.
- Very low, minimal positive COVID cases.
- Students are enjoying a normal college experience, beside wearing masks and being COVID tested.

Amy Rogers, Keymark Corporation:

- Holding a flu shot clinic this week.
- Uptick in applications.
- Actively recruiting.
- Waiting to see what the COVID mandate will bring.
- Offered to share info on their Transportation Shuttle services with Sandy MacDonald.

Jeff Stark, IUPAT District Council #9:

- Leveled out. Hired 60 new members over the summer months.
- Members volunteered to finish painting the military tank in the Town of Florida Veterans Park. They had already painted their cannon and jet fighter.
- Shared information about the Amsterdam Knights of Columbus; including movie nights, upcoming Lasagna dinner and pictures with Santa on December 4th. All information can be found on their Facebook page.

Guest: Ken Adamczyk, FC Center for Regional Growth:

- Looking to hire a Marketer.

VII. Adjournment:

Meeting Adjourned at 5:26 p.m.

*There is no meeting in November.
The next Board Meeting will be held on December 1, 2021 at 4:30 p.m.*