

**WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD**  
**JANUARY 22, 2002**                      **8:30 A.M.**                      **CAYUGA MEDICAL**  
**CENTER**

**PRESENT:** Barbara Blanchard, Nathan Carlisle, Doug Czerwonka, Lee Dillon, Paul Gardner, Milt Goldstein, Mary Gould, Carl Haynes, Dammi Herath, Jack Little, Todd Mallinson, Dennis Mastro, Jean McPheeters, Mary Opperman, Lisa Patz, Alan Pederson, Connie Sowards, Michael Stamm, Irene Stein, Marty Turnbull

**EXCUSED:** Ivy Allen, Rich Bohman, Cindy Hoose, Mary Pat Dolan, Bob Fortier, Joyce Maglione, Doug McDonald, John Rossi, Steve White, Nancy Zahler

**ABSENT:** Tom Colbert, Mark Babbage

**GUESTS:** Howard Berman, President and CEO, Excellus; Tom Riley, New York State Department of Labor; Carolyn Hale, New York State Department of Labor; Aurora Valenti, Tompkins County Clerk; Bernie Heath, Tompkins County Workforce Development; Jim Cunningham, AM&T; Bonnie Howell, Cayuga Medical Center

**CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Pedersen called the meeting to order at 8:31 a.m.

**OFFICIAL SWEARING IN**

Board members were sworn in by Aurora Valenti, Tompkins County Clerk for terms to expire June 30, 2002.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

It was Moved by Ms. Stein, seconded by Ms. McPheeters, and unanimously adopted by voice vote of members present to approve the minutes of November 27, 2001, as submitted.

**PRESENTATION ON THE HEALTH CARE INDUSTRY**

Mr. Berman, President and CEO of Excellus gave a presentation on the merger of Blue Cross Blue Shield with Excellus and reported on the direction the company will be taking in coming years stating the goal is to provide a seamless financing system linked with a seamless delivery system to consumers. He reported on some of the obstacles the health cares industry faces stating the cost of market entry and exit is very high and the consumer does not understand the quality and price. Competition in health care poses dangers including increasing the aggregate community cost and risks quality such as loss of access to care and undermining professional trust. The goals of a community's health care system are efficiency, innovation, and quality. In order for a health care system to succeed there must be collaboration in health care involving both business and governance. Those that have it will prosper, those that don't will destroy their community's health systems.

Mr. Berman also reported on his term as a member of the State Workforce Investment Board (SWIB). He stated his term will end in February, but he sees a great deal of potential for workforce development in New York State. He stated the SWIB needs to focus on areas of potential growth increasing the state's gross product versus jobs that are in shortage and at this point additional work is needed.

Ms Giordano asked what should be done locally to impact the healthcare industry. Mr. Berman stated this was not discussed at the SWIB, but areas need to have a plan and goals and then execute them.

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Mr. Pedersen on behalf of the full board welcomed Mr. Goldstein back from his leave of absence and thanked Ms. Dolan for acting as Interim Chair of the Workforce Services Committee while Mr. Goldstein was away. Mr. Pederson also introduced Ms. Carolyn Hale of the New York State Department of Labor and Mr. Jim Cunningham from the Alliance for Manufacturing & Technology.

The Self Assessment Survey was distributed to Board members with a request that they be returned to Jennifer Luu by February 15, 2002.

## **NOMINATIONS**

It was Moved by Mr. Mastro, seconded by Mr. Haynes and unanimously adopted by voice vote of members present to approve the appointment of Scott Pronti of Emerson Power Transmission to the Workforce Development Board for a term to expire June 30, 2002. Mr. Pronti's appointment will be forwarded to the County Board for approval.

It was noted that there are two additional openings on the Board and members were asked to forward any suggestions for candidates to Mr. Mastro for follow-up.

## **VISIT TO UKRAINE ONE-STOP UPDATE**

Ms. Blanchard reported in November she traveled to Ithaca's sister city Kiev in the Ukraine where she visited an employment center. She reported prior to 1990 there were centers established throughout the Ukraine that was funded by State support. The unemployed were paid welfare and there was a very ineffective system of worker skill improvement. In 1990 that model was evaluated and by 1993 training and retraining of workers began for those employed or just out of work. She reported that everyone in the Ukraine is literate with at least a high school diploma. In 2000 the Ministry of Labor began focusing on employer needs and working with direct connections between the trainee and future employer. Focus is also given to working with individuals to instill work ethic skills, interview techniques, and resume writing. Prior to beginning training, prospective employees interview with the employer to have their needs assessed based on the employer's perceptions. Some programs that result include On the Job Training or instruction in center classrooms. The worker gets to see a direct connection between the

training and the job.

Ms. Blanchard reported that self-employment is rapidly growing in the Ukraine and those individuals are given a special test that is an entrepreneurial success level exam. Unemployment compensation is also extended to self-employed workers for twelve months and the individual may choose to have it paid to them in a lump sum. Unemployment compensation is based on a tiered system and those with less than two years on the job receive the minimum level of compensation, those with 2-6 years receive 50% of their salary, those with 6-10 years receive 60% and those with 10 years or above receive 70%. A six-month salary subsidy is also extended to employers if there hasn't been a decrease in jobs in the job category for the past two years and the employer cannot fire anyone from employment for two years.

The unemployment rate in the Ukraine is .62% and there were 212 men without work and 360 jobs available at the time of Ms. Blanchard's visit. She noted a sign on the wall in the center said "Jobs Exist for Those Who Look for Them".

## **UPDATE ON CENTER OPERATIONS**

Ms. Sowards distributed the statistics for center operations. She reported that Tompkins County is currently tied for 5th as having the lowest unemployment rate of 3.3 percent.

## **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

### **MARKETING AND OUTREACH**

Mr. Mallinson reported that the marketing campaign would begin in approximately two weeks. Ms. Giordano reminded members of the February 6th luncheon with Commissioner Angello to launch the marketing campaign and stated she hopes everyone will be able to attend.

## **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

Ms. Giordano stated that negotiations for the second year MOU are still underway and the financial aspect has been the most burdensome. She reported the State has completed its audit and they seem very happy overall. She reported there have been some funding cuts proposed at the Federal level. This is due in part because localities are having difficulty reporting their success because of the reporting system that is used. She noted that she recently attended a national conference and there are very few areas that are reporting at this time.

Ms. Giordano reported on the employees laid off at Kolar stating that a team of center staff was on-site the day of the lay off to provide information on unemployment and re-employment services. Over half of the employees laid off were reemployed elsewhere within one month. She asked that she be notified if members hear of potential layoffs in the community.

Ms. Giordano reported that she, Mr. Stamm, and Ms. Fuller will be presenters at a national conference in Washington, DC in March. She reported the High Tech grant is going very well.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 9:37 a.m. The next meeting will be held March 26, 2002, at 8:30 a.m. in the Borg Warner Room of the Tompkins County Public Library.

Minutes prepared by [Jennifer Luu](#).

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