

**WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD**  
**NOVEMBER 27, 2001      8:30 A.M.      TOMPKINS TRUST COMPANY**

**PRESENT:** Lee Dillon, Mary Pat Dolan, A.J. Kircher, Mary Gould, Dammi Herath, Jack Little, Joyce Maglione, Denny Mastro, Doug McDonald, Jean McPheeters, Tim O'Neill, Mary Opperman, Alan Pedersen, Michael Stamm, John Rossi, Connie Sowards, Nancy Zahler, Rich Bohman, Irene Stein, Lisa Patz, Marty Turnbull, Nathan Carlisle, Thomas Colbert, Bob Fortier, Paul Gardner

**EXCUSED:** Barbara Blanchard, Doug Czerwonka, Carl Haynes, Todd Mallinson

**ABSENT:** Mark Babbage, Steve White, Ivy Allen

**GUESTS:** Tom Riley, New York State Department of Labor; Beth Fuller, TC3, Jim Cunningham, Alliance for Manufacturing & Technology; Laura Peters, Catholic Charities; Bob Sweet, Empire State Development

**CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Pedersen called the meeting to order at 8:29 a.m.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

It was Moved by Ms. McPheeters, seconded by Ms. Stein and unanimously adopted by voice vote of members present to approve the minutes of September 25, 2001, as submitted.

**ADDITIONS/DELETIONS**

Ms. Herath asked that her announcement be added to the agenda.

**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF LABOR CONFERENCE**

Ms. Turnbull stated that she and Ms. Giordano recently had the opportunity to attend an Economic and Workforce Development Leadership Summit in Newark, New Jersey. The United States Department of Labor Employment and Training Division, and the New York State and New Jersey Workforce Development Boards hosted the event. She stated David Sampson, Assistant Secretary of the United States Commerce for Economic Development was the keynote speaker. He gave an excellent speech around the need for a connection between economic and workforce development so that strategies used are seamless and complimentary. She stated that she found that Tompkins County was several steps ahead of other areas and this was very encouraging. Ms. Turnbull received a copy of the speech and will make copies available to Board members. She noted another session that was also held called, "Taking the Workforce Investment Board to the Next Level" with Jim Boyd from the National Leadership Institute of Workforce Excellence. She distributed the Institute's web site address and stated there is a lot of information on the web site that could be beneficial to the Board. A participatory session was also held with a consultant for participants to look at different tasks from both an economic and workforce development

perspective. It was very informative to see the work plans and strategies depending on which organization participants were from.

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Ms. Herath announced that the Women's Opportunity Center submitted a proposal for a house that was being donated by a local family in the community and the proposal was accepted. The house will be used for transitional housing for families who are receiving TANF, who are under 200 percent of the poverty level and who have transportation issues that prevent them from coming into the City for services. She stated that funding was received from SUNY to help offset costs.

## **COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT INITIATIVE**

Ms. Giordano reported that the Community Assessment Initiative Committee, chaired by Mr. Mastro has completed Phase I of its work. A lot of the recommendations coming from the Committee are based on both qualitative and quantitative data. She reviewed the key recommendations. They are:

- Develop and/or improve self-help and minimally assisted services for business and job seekers.
- Develop and/or improve front-end services and ensure that they are of the highest quality.
- Expand the size and diversity of the customer base.
- Develop a comprehensive list of all workforce resources within the community to inform the board and improve decision-making.
- Devote more resources to employed workers with priority given to low-wage workers.
- Establish a list of targeted demand occupations and develop strategies for addressing each of them.
- Develop next steps and prepare for Phase II.

Mr. Pedersen thanked the Committee for a job well done. It was Moved by Mr. Bohman, seconded by Ms. McPheeters and unanimously adopted by voice vote of members present to approve the recommendations as submitted to be used for planning purposes. Ms. Fuller asked if there is a review/update process that will be followed. Ms. Giordano stated that continuous updates will be completed, this is a living document and timelines have not yet been set. It was Moved by Mr. Mastro, seconded by Ms. Stein and unanimously adopted by voice vote of members present to approve the work plan and committee assignments stemming from the work completed in the Community Assessment Initiative.

## **MARKETING PLAN UPDATE**

Ms. Heath stated that the Marketing Committee has been very busy since the Center was certified by the State. She noted that there has been a lot of technical difficulty receiving the marketing materials from the consultant that was hired by the State. The files

that were received were either corrupted or not compatible with our computer systems. Discussions have been held with Howell and Liberator, the marketing firm hired by the State, and these issues are being resolved. Also of note, there has been further delay because New York State Commissioner of Labor, Linda Angello did not like the new logo and asked that it be changed. This has also pushed back our marketing efforts. The new logo should be received within a week. Once these issues are resolved a kick-off event with Commissioner Angello will be planned.

Ms. Giordano stated that funding of the marketing campaign would be done with the remaining funds from the One-Stop Implementation Grant. She stated that she has also been made aware that additional funds may be available for local areas because some areas have turned back portions of their funding. She has written to the State requesting an extension of the grant and also additional funds.

Ms. Zahler asked if outreach would be done to the Latino community. Ms. Giordano stated that a video is being planned in Spanish. She stated the United States Department of Labor has also contracted with Cornell University on a national level to consult with One-Stops on ways to reach out to the disabled population, non-English speaking individuals, etc. Ms. Dillon stated outreach to the rural community is of concern to her. Ms. Giordano stated that marketing to rural areas is a priority of the Community Assessment Initiative and the Marketing Committee has taken this into consideration. Mr. Little asked if there are performance measures for the plan. Ms. Giordano stated that this would fall under the auspices of the Quality and Assessment Committee and the One-Stop Operator Agreement. Ms. Patz stated that qualitative measures need to be established yet, and right now the goal is to get the word out to as many people as possible about the services of the Workforce Development System. Ms. Giordano stated the Marketing Committee has looked at demographics and different media formats to come to their conclusions. On motion of the Marketing Committee the recommendations were approved.

## **BUSINESS SERVICES/BUSINESS RESPONSE TEAM**

Ms. Giordano stated she, Mr. Stamm, and Ms. Fuller gave a presentation at the NYATEP conference last month around business services. They focused primarily on board level business services and also delineated between business services at the operational and board levels. The Business Response Team focuses on economic development, provides a collaborative approach, and reports to the Executive Committee and the full Board. The operations Business Services Team focuses on the workforce, providing a single point of contact, and reports to the Board Director and the Workforce Services Committee. Ms. Giordano stated members of the Business Response Team include the Board Director, representatives from the Chamber of Commerce, Empire State Development, NYS Department of Labor, TCAD, TC-3, BOCES and any others that may be appropriate depending on the situation. Functions of the Business Response Team include:

- Relocation, expansion information and services
- Labor market information

- Determine appropriate training subsidy
- Offer choice on training providers
- Develop business consortia
- Seek grants to meet local business workforce needs, and
- Refer to operations team for human resource services

She noted that a collaborative approach insulates employers from bureaucracy and provides assistance in helping companies stay in the community.

## **UPDATE ON LOCAL ECONOMY**

Mr. Stamm reported that Cornell recently announced a hiring freeze for non-academic positions. This is somewhat unusual, because the university has always been insulated from the national economy, but they are continuing with their construction projects and stable. He reported that no growth is expected in the durable goods industry and possibly some decline in those companies that were vulnerable in a stable economy. He noted high-tech firms continue to grow and that the government and not-for-profit sectors are concerned about state money being available. He reported it is predicted in the retail and commercial sectors that big box development will continue, but smaller shops will be impacted. He stated there is a concern about air service in the County and the Air Service Task Force will be meeting with airlines in an effort to encourage service in the area. Mr. Stamm reported that as of January 1, 2002, there will be new elected officials in the County and this may change priorities and the direction of economic development in the County.

Ms. Opperman reported on the hiring freeze at Cornell, stating Cornell is still hiring, but that the President of the University reviews all requests. She stated hiring would continue for those positions funded through grant money. The New York State budget will have an impact on the University in future years and Cornell is looking at a long-term realignment of resources towards core services such as teaching and research. She stated that in the past federal research grants came with a very reasonable overhead rate and in the last 5-10 years the government's overhead rate has dropped. Each time the rate is renegotiated Cornell loses millions of dollars. This is coupled with the increased expectation of shared funding and the match that is needed to obtain research funding. She noted that this effects all large research institutions.

## **NEW YORK STATE WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD CHAIRS MEETING UPDATE**

Mr. Pedersen stated that after several years there has been a real effort at the state level to bring together Workforce Investment Board Chairs to discuss issues and he was able to participate in an organizational meeting in October. He stated that many of the local boards are experiencing some of the same frustrations as Tompkins County and there is a sense that if the local board chairs meet with the State Workforce Investment Board (SWIB) there will be opportunities to ensure that the local autonomy moves down from the state and also provide a forum at the state level to hear local concerns. NYATEP is helping to facilitate pre SWIB meetings for local chairs to meet and discuss issues and then go with a consistent

voice to the SWIB meetings. He stated that he believes that over time this will have a very positive impact. He noted that in talking with other chairs throughout the state that Tompkins County is significantly farther ahead this is very nice place to be.

### **ONE-STOP REPORT**

Ms. Sowards stated that the unemployment rate is currently is three percent and Tompkins County still has one of the lowest unemployment rates in the State. Active job seekers on file are 1435, and total businesses on file are 457. There are 245 active job listings at the Center. Through October-November there have been eight recruitment events at the Center and 72 customers have been trained or are in training since July 1, 2001. There are currently 27 applicants for Job Start and Job Ladder and there are 206 total slots available. Ms. Fuller noted that the slots available for InVEST are not solely for the unemployed, but also available for incumbent workers.

Mr. Rossi reported that until September 2001 Tompkins County had a lower unemployment rate than 2000 and this reflects the minor effects of the recession. He stated that the seasonal adjustments are slightly higher than 2000 and there has been a decrease in the manufacturing sector. Overall between October 2000 and October 2001 Tompkins County has lost approximately 100 jobs. He reported that the number of registered job seekers has steadily gone up and the number of visits to the Center went from 672 in July to 1100 in October. This is attributed in part to increased unemployment but also because people are finding the services at the Center to be useful and they are learning that the Center is a good place to look for work. Job order listings totaled 96 for October and there were 20 first time business users in October. He stated that market penetration is approximately 22 percent and the goal is to keep increasing that number.

### **HIGH TECH WORKER GRANT UPDATE**

Ms. Fuller reported to date there have been 21 workshops and 191 people trained. Most participants are being trained in Internet, software, and networking applications and because of this; course offerings for the spring semester have been revised. Approximately 30 courses will be offered and they are available on TC3's website.

### **DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

Ms. Giordano reported on a federal report that was issued regarding the status of implementation around the country. Three areas that are fundamental to success of the one-stop system are partner participation, job seekers ability to receive enhanced choices for training and private sector participation on boards. She will email the Board further details about what is happening nationally and the recommendations outlined in the report. She stated the report is submitted to Congress and impacts whether or not the current one-stop structure is changed.

Ms. Giordano also reported that there are approximately 8-10 funding opportunities that are going to become available. There are two that are promising practice grants that fund \$50,000 each and also Phase II of the Community Assessment Initiative that funds

\$100,000. The third, a youth grant, is being reviewed.

She stated that the Board hosted the Finger Lakes Entrepreneurs Forum on November 16th. This was a very successful event. Many contacts were made and thought should be given to what services can be offered to small businesses. She stated that there is a strong need for human resource assistance within small businesses.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 9:57 a.m. The next meeting is scheduled for January 22, 2002, at 8:30 a.m. The location will be announced.

Minutes prepared by [Jennifer Luu](#).

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