

**Chief Elected Officials  
And The  
Boone and Winnebago Counties Workforce Investment Board, Inc.  
MINUTES OF December 4, 2007**

Site: The Workforce Connection, 3134 11<sup>th</sup> Street, Rockford, IL 61109

- I. **WIB Call to Order.** WIB Vice-Chairman Paul Callighan called the Boone and Winnebago Counties Workforce Investment Board meeting to order at 7:30 a.m.

**CEO Call to Order:** Jim Ryan of the City of Rockford called the CEO meeting to order at 7:31 a.m. on behalf of Mayor Lawrence Morrissey.

**WIB Present (25):** Steve Anderson, Jon Bates, Dr. Jack Becherer, Karen Brown, Michele Caldwell, Paul Callighan, Angela Hite-Carter, Janet Ellis, Pedro Enriquez, James Fehlhaber, Steve Gibson, Lynn Godina, Harvey Lightbody, Dave Morgan, Dan Parod, John Phelps, Dr. Owen Phelps, Jim Pirages, Mark Podemski, Maureen Rosenberg, Jim Ryan, Mark Stefanic, Nord Swanstrom, Shirley Walker, C. Mark Williams **Absent (14):** Allan Barsema, Shirley Burks, Linda Campos, Kevin Dulian, Dr. Richard Fairgrievs, Luanna Grimes, Todd Kindred, Stephanie Lueder, Larry McKay, Richard Mowris, Gus Saros, Mary Beth Scholten, Elton Turner, Steve Yagle

**CEOs Present (3):** Jim Ryan (Designee for Mayor Lawrence Morrissey), Chairman Catherine Ward, Sue Mroz (Designee for Chairman Scott Christiansen)

**WIB Staff Present:** Darcy Bucholz, Trudy Wellman, John Strandin, Robert Jones

**Partner Staff Present:** Tom Austin – IDES, Dan White – Rock River Training Corporation; Mike Williams – Rock River Training Corporation; Gary Lawson – Rock Valley College Dislocated Worker Program; Linda Sullivan – disabilityWorks; Ted Duckett – IDES; Sue Molyneaux – Rock River Training Corporation; Amy Massoth – Rock Valley College Refugee and Immigrant Services; Richard Hrynkow - IDES

**Guests Present:** Steve Simmons – Chicago Jobs Council; Luevinus Muhammad – Rock Valley College; Diana Barthelman – Rock Valley College; Ruben DeLeon – AFL-CIO

- II. **WIB Minutes of November 6, 2007:** Mark Podemski made a motion to approve the minutes of November 6, 2007. Shirley Walker provided the second to the motion. The minutes were approved.

**CEO Minutes of September 4, 2007:** Catherine Ward made a motion to approve the September 4, 2007 CEO meeting minutes. Jim Ryan provided the second to the motion. The minutes were approved.

- III. **Project Jump Start:** Diana Barthelman of Rock Valley College Adult Education Program and Other Grants addressed the members to discuss a new initiative called “Project Jump Start”. Diana introduced Lueninus Muhammad, the Project Jump Start Coordinator. The project is designed to provide workplace literacy skills and job getting and keeping skills for individuals with low literacy levels. The first session of the project is scheduled to begin in January. In the Rock Valley College district (Winnebago, Boone, and a small portion of Ogle Counties) there are over 57,000 adults with less than 12 years of education. There are approximately 32,000 adults in need of English as a second language, approximately 27,000 adults live in poverty, and we have a current unemployment rate of 8.1%. Because of these startling statistics, a decision was made to address more than adult education. Currently 13 organizations are partnering on this initiative.

The curriculum for Project Jump Start was obtained from the *Employability Skills for Adults with Learning Difficulties and Disabilities* curriculum. The curriculum was developed by The Adult Learning Resource Center in Arlington Heights. All instructors for Project Jump Start have been trained on this curriculum. The classes run for 8 weeks in two different locations; The Abilities Center, 1907 Kishwaukee Street, Rockford, Illinois on Tuesday and Thursday from 9:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m., and Ellis Heights Center, 1801 West State

Street, Rockford, Illinois on Monday and Wednesday from 9:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

There are many components to Project Jump Start, starting with the employers. Employers are asked to commit to the mission and goals of Project Jump Start, willingness to interview, company tours, classroom participation, incentives (as little as trinkets that a company offers, gift cards, gas cards, student scholarships, etc), and look at hiring Jump Start graduates into entry level positions. Sponsoring a student through the program would cost \$528.00.

(Chairman Ward left the meeting and C. Mark Williams was designated to take her place in the CEO meeting.)

- IV. WIA Minimum Training Expenditure Requirement – presentation/discussion:** Darcy Bucholz reviewed the new policy regarding the WIA funds. The Illinois Workforce Investment Board has approved a policy requiring that 40% of program expenditures in the WIA adult and dislocated worker programs each year be for training activities. This policy is in effect now. The training expenditure minimum will affect all areas across the State of Illinois. Activities considered “training activities” are occupational classroom training; customized training; incumbent worker training; bridge programs; on-the-job training; work experience; academic/remediation; pre-vocational services (limited to 6 months); books/materials/fees; and participant support during training and up to six months following the completion of training. All training must be done outside of the WIA system, not by WIA paid staff.

We have two years to meet the policy. By PY2009 sanctions will be imposed. However, if we do not budget to meet the policy or meet the 40% requirement by June 30, 2008, our incentive funds will be required to be applied to training. In other words we lose control of the incentive funds. At the current time our dislocated worker program will need to increase the training budget and decrease the “fixed” budget by approximately 2.3% (\$36,000). The adult program is short by approximately 8% (\$87,000) in the training expenditures. Each operator will review the costs that are in their budgets and determine if there are any costs that can be shared, eliminated, or reduced. The WIB budget will be reviewed also and the allocation of costs between funding streams and admin to program will be reviewed.

Paul Callighan suggested that a proposal and/or actions planned or taken be provided to the Board at the next meeting.

- V. Area Economic News and Related Activities:** John Strandin spoke about a press conference that will be held on December 5<sup>th</sup> to announce a survey for employers to identify their job, skill, and training needs. During the press conference Paul Callighan will speak to the availability of training dollars through The Workforce Connection. He will also announce a job and career fair that will be held in January.

Gary Lawson of the Dislocated Worker Program spoke about the status of the Dislocated Worker Program and the rapid response to the pending Chrysler and supplier layoffs. Workshops are being setup for the Chrysler employees and employees of the suppliers to Chrysler. On top of regular benefits available there may be a Trade Act Adjustment (TAA) petition be filled so the employees can receive extended benefits, due to jobs being transferred overseas.

Mike Williams spoke about the adult WIA program, which may help those individuals that are not eligible for the Dislocated Worker Program. In addition, Rock River Training just received a Healthy Neighborhood grant from the City of Rockford to provide services in the Weed n Seed area. This grant will utilize WIA funds also.

- VI. Financial Reports:** Dan White presented the financial reports through October, 2007. He is not seeing any current problems at this point, with the exception that DWP may fall short on the 40% spending for training. There is a yellow flag with a few new youth contractors, but will be addressed in the very near future.

- VII. Other/New Business:** Darcy Bucholz announced that January 10, 2008 the 2<sup>nd</sup> Clinical Faculty Academy under the Critical Skills Initiative for Health Care. The academy is for master prepared nurses that are interested in teaching and/or currently teaching.

Darcy Bucholz requested those members that have not filled out the Board Assessment for the Benchmarking WIBs Report, to please do so.

The next WIB Executive/CEO meeting is January 8, 2008 at 7:30 a.m. in the Conference Room The Workforce Connection and the next WIB meeting is scheduled for 7:30 a.m. on February 5, 2008; The Workforce Connection, Classroom 4 & 5.

**VIII. WIB Adjournment:** The WIB meeting adjourned at 8:58 a.m.  
**CEO Adjournment:** The CEO meeting adjourned at 8:59 a.m.

**Items included with the WIB and CEO meeting packets:**

- 1) 12/04/07 WIB/CEO Agenda
- 2) WIB Minutes of November 6, 2007
- 3) CEO Minutes of September 4, 2007
- 4) WIB Financial Report – July 31, 2007

Trudy Wellman  
Boone and Winnebago Counties Workforce Investment Board

Date

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(Signature affixed upon WIB approval)

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(Date affixed upon WIB approval)