



CAPITAL AREA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD
MEETING MINUTES
February 28, 2008

The Capital Area Workforce Development Board met in regular session on Thursday, February 28, 2008 at 8:30 a.m. at Wake Technical Community College, Public Safety Training Center, Raleigh, North Carolina. Members present: Zena Anderson, Robert Barham, Bruce Clarke, Kenny Gibbs, Terry Keene for Earl Marett, P.R. Latta, Gerald Mitchell, Dr. Donald Reichard, Nelson Rose, Vickie Shore, Michele Tavernise, Marie Watson and Durwood Woodall. Staff: Regina Crooms, Nikki Marshall, Darius Morris, Lisa Ramsey, Jane Sterner and Brenda Wilkerson. Guests: Lisa Arnette, Employment Security Commission Region IV; Johanna Barker, Johnston County Industries, Yes I Can Program; Evelyn Bethea, YES Program; Wayne Beverly, Employment Security Commission Region IV Manager; Eugena Blalock, Telamon Project Pride, WIA Youth Participant; Carmen Carroll, Capital Area JobLink at Swinburne; Chris Droessler, Wake County Public School System; William B. Johnson, Division of Workforce Development; Becky Long, Capital Area JobLink at Cary Employment Security Commission; Darion McRae, WIA Youth Participant, YES Program; Dana Martinez, Community Partnerships Incorporated, YES Program; M. Michele Matthewson, Telamon Corporation, Project Pride; Jan Oakley, Johnston County Industries, Yes I Can Program; Jessica Owens, WIA Youth Participant, Yes I Can Program; Nancy Stancil, Capital Area JobLink at Johnston Community College; and Zaida Partin, Capital Area JobLink at Clayton Corners.

Chairman Barham called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone. He thanked Mr. Gerald Mitchell for hosting the meeting at another fine Wake Technical Community College facility – the Public Safety Training Center. Mr. Mitchell advised the Board that the Public Safety Training Center opened Phase I on January 2, 2008 and is designed to train public safety personnel. Phase II is scheduled to open at the end of 2009, and Phase III will require a bond referendum. When completed, this state-of-the-art facility will house a total of 100,000 square feet of training space. Mr. Mitchell invited everyone to tour the facility following the meeting.

Chairman Barham proceeded and asked if there were any corrections to the draft minutes of December 6, 2007. The minutes were approved as written.

The STEM Initiative was the first item on the agenda, and Chairman Barham announced that the Department of Labor has released a notice of funding availability that might be of interest to the Board. He called upon Ms. Regina Crooms to provide more details.

Ms. Crooms informed the Board that the purpose the STEM Grant is to expand and align current and new workforce education and training strategies in the areas of Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM). One Stops would be responsible for promoting, attracting and preparing disadvantaged youth and dislocated workers for STEM careers while enhancing the competitive position of local employers.

Currently, only 5% of the US workforce is employed in STEM fields; however, STEM occupations represent 50% of the nation's sustained growth.

Required partners for the STEM Grant include STEM employers, education systems, faith and community based organizations, industrial laboratories and STEM associations.

Phase I of the grant application closes March 11, 2008 and 5-7 awards will be given nationwide. The total amount of funding allocated to this grant is \$10M with a ceiling of \$2M and a floor of \$1.5M. Ms. Crooms asked the Board for consensus to pursue this grant opportunity. Chairman Barham opened the floor to receive a motion. Mr. Mitchell made a motion to accept; a second motion was received. Motion carried. Chairman Barham thanked Ms. Crooms for the information on this opportunity.

Next on the agenda was the "Discovering the Missing Link Forum" and Chairman Barham called upon Brenda Wilkerson for an update. Ms. Wilkerson advised the Board that the upcoming business and education forum was created to address some of the challenges facing both educators and businesses to ensure that future resources meet demands. High school and college age students and parents need to be educated regarding the future of the workforce, so that students will be available and equipped to meet workforce needs.

The "Discovering the Missing Link Forum" is scheduled for Friday, March 14, 2008, 9:00 am to 11:00 am and will be followed by the Regional Workforce Board Collaborative from 11:30 am to 4:00 pm at the McKimmon Conference and Training Center in Raleigh, North Carolina.

The forum will include a panel discussion facilitated by Ms. Regina Crooms and will consist of the following employers and educators:

Employers:

Susan Portman, VP - Westar Precision, Inc.

Valerie Sachariat, Director of Talent Acquisition - Time Warner Cable

Sarah Carr, Recruiter - TriArc Foods

Roslynn Bartley, Recruiter/Retention Specialist - Wake Technical Community College

Educators/Trainers:

Pam Gobel, CRC Director - North Carolina Community College System

Chris Droessler, School-to-Career Coordinator - Wake County Public School System

Sandy Gareton, Campus Director - TechSkills

Professor Leonard Anetta, HI FIVES Program Director - North Carolina State University

Additional organizations attending the forum include North Carolina Vocational Rehabilitation, Polymer Group, Inc., West Corporation, JobLink, Insource, Johnston County Public Schools, Flextronics and Division of Workforce Development.

Bruce Clarke indicated that we needed to be ready for some real discussion, as there are strong feelings regarding whether the public school systems are adequately preparing students for the jobs of tomorrow. Reports indicate that students are currently being prepared for jobs 100 years ago. If change does not occur, we will eventually have two extremes with no middle class jobs available.

Ms. Crooms added that Capital Area Workforce Development Board has purchased the documentary 2 Million Minutes. This documentary takes the two million minutes of six high school students and compares their life in Indiana, Shanghai and Bangalore. The documentary will also be featured during the Regional Workforce Board Collaborative session.

At this time, Chairman Barham called upon Mr. Chris Droessler, Capital Area Youth Council Chair to provide a Youth Council Mid-Year Report. Mr. Droessler announced that in addition to the mid-year report that three (3) WIA Youth Participants were in attendance to give the Board an overview of their progress since entering the Youth WIA programs.

Highlights of the Capital Area WIA Youth Services included the following: 238 youth currently being served in Johnston and Wake Counties; Johnston County Industries serving 68 youth; Community Partnerships serving 101 youth; and Telamon Corporation serving 69 youth. Mr. Droessler continued to provide updates regarding year-to-date expenditures and final performance measures for PY2006.

Mr. Droessler reminded the Board that Haven House ended their contract in December 2007. He reported that 41 WIA enrolled youth from Haven House were transferred to Community Partnerships Inc. (CPI) in January 2008. CPI's contracted amount was modified to reflect an additional \$77,477.00 to serve these youth.

Additional youth highlights included the opening of two (2) SAVVYouth Centers and one (1) Youth Information Site. The SAVVYouth Centers are located at Capital Area JobLink at Raleigh ESC and Capital Area JobLink at Johnston Community College. The Youth Information Site is located in Benson, North Carolina at Not Just Another Community Center, Inc.

Upcoming Youth Events include the 2008 Youth Summit, March 14, 2008 at Millbrook United Methodist Church in Raleigh; National Youth Service Day, April 25-27, 2008; and a Statewide Youth Summit in Greensboro, North Carolina, April 18-19, 2008.

Upon conclusion of Mr. Droessler's report, he called upon the WIA youth participants for their spotlights.

Darion McRae, a participant of the YES program, announced that he has greatly benefited from the tutoring and education that the YES program has provided. Since first entering the program, he has been able to increase his grade level three grades. Ms. Martinez, YES Program Coordinator, is very pleased with the progress Darion has made.

Jessica Owens, a Yes I Can participant, has overcome many obstacles to achieve her goals, but enthusiastically announced she has finally become independent. Ms. Owens attends Wayne Community College, but will be transferring to Fayetteville State University to pursue a degree in Criminal Justice. She has successfully been on her job for one (1) year and most recently purchased her first car. She is grateful for how the Yes I Can program has put her on the right path regarding her education and future career endeavors.

Eugena Blalock, a Project Pride participant, told of how she was a young mother when she entered the program. Although it was a struggle, and many times she wanted to quit, Program Coordinator Michele Matthewson and Case Manager Anthony Harris pushed Eugena hard and would not allow her to give up towards reaching her goals. Eugena was proud to announce that two days ago, she received her diploma.

The Board applauded the efforts and accomplishments of these youth, and Chairman Barham thanked the participants for coming and sharing their stories with the Board. Mr. Tavernise asked if there was information available regarding the cost per participant within the WIA Youth Programs. Financial Officer Darius Morris will obtain that information and provide it to the Board.

Chairman Barham reminded the Board that funding runs on a fiscal year beginning July 1, 2007 and ending June 30, 2008. He called upon Darius Morris to provide a mid-year financial expenditure summary to the Board.

Mr. Morris advised the Board that Wake County Government is currently implementing a web based financial system, and the system is currently down for two weeks. It is scheduled to resume operation on March 17, 2008, and processing of payments will recommence at that time. Designated Capital Area staff will be trained on the system to provide back up to Mr. Morris.

Moving onto the report, Mr. Morris provided statistics from July 2007-December 2007. He indicated that some funds would be transferred from WIA Adult funds to Dislocated Worker funds, which will assist with the amount needed to complete the program year.

Capital Area Workforce Development Board has been informed by the Division of Workforce Development of a rescission that is going to occur in March 2008. In the past, Capital Area has had a 15%-20% carry over to the next program year. Mr. Morris expressed that we should have an insight on the rescission sometime this week.

Ms. Crooms surmised that perhaps Roger Shackleford should be contacted to see if the state can absorb some of the cost of the rescission, but was uncertain as to what the Department of Labor would allow. Speculation is that we will experience a 15% rescission.

Additional highlights from Mr. Morris' expenditure summary included information on the Incumbent Worker program, Disability Program Navigator, Project NewBuild and ex-offender services. He also reminded the Board that Project NewBuild is not a WIA program. Ms. Crooms added that Project NewBuild used to be a federal HUD program and is now a USDOL program. We were awarded \$1.1M to provide two (2) years of direct service and one (1) year of follow-up after completion.

Mr. Morris concluded the report by providing information on the number of Capital Area staff, JobLink Career Centers and JobLink Information Sites, and service providers and contractors. Chairman Barham thanked Mr. Morris for the thorough financial overview.

The Board Spotlight was the next item on the agenda, and Chairman Barham called upon Mr. Bruce Clarke to give his presentation. Mr. Clarke began by engaging the meeting attendees in an entertaining game of “Truth or Lie”. We learned that Mr. Clarke met his wife in the third grade, was named one of the Best Lawyers in America in 2001, and left the practice of law after eighteen (18) years to get out of the emergency room environment of litigation and more into the workplace wellness side.

Additional highlights from Mr. Clarke’s portfolio included being a mail order coin dealer at age 13, parachuting from an airplane during college and photographing Angela Davis, Morgan Fairchild, Lawrence Taylor and Joan Armatrading.

Mr. Clarke concluded his presentation by providing the Board with some facts pertinent to his current endeavors. As President of Capital Associated Industries, Mr. Clarke offers services to over 1000 employers in central and eastern North Carolina. Capital Industries provides employers with management information, day-to-day telephone guidance, training and human resources services.

Capital Associated Industries assists with HR projects ranging from recruiting to writing an employee handbook, as well as providing wage and salary information. They are actively involved in public policy and advocacy and have a lobbyist at the state legislature to lobby on workforce issues. Chairman Barham thanked Mr. Clarke for his delightful presentation.

In the Chair’s Report, Chairman Barham provided the Board with a Board Standards update. The Commission on Workforce Development approved and adopted standards of performance for North Carolina local boards based on specific criteria. The State will begin conducting random audits of local boards addressing the areas of strategic planning and oversight of WIA, as well as conducting interviews with economic development leaders, businesses representatives and key stakeholders.

If all standards are met, the local board will receive a letter from the Chairman of the Commission on Workforce Development and a certificate of achievement. If board standards are not met, the local board Chair will receive a letter indicating that standards were not met; technical assistance will be offered and a reassessment will occur in three (3) months. Ms. Crooms stated that Mr. Graham Watt is heading up the committee for board standards. She also indicated that Mr. Chris Rolfe, Chairman of the North Carolina Commission on Workforce Development is a strong supporter of the implementation of board standards.

Chairman Barham announced that Durwood Woodall, Susan Jackson and Regina Crooms attended the National Association of Workforce Boards conference in Washington, DC, February 24-26, 2008. He called upon Durwood and Regina to provide an overview of the conference.

Mr. Woodall commented that this year’s conference theme of Collaborate, Advocate, Innovate – Helping America Work was excellent. Speakers Daniel Pink, Newt Gingrich and Gene Sperling addressed the issues of design for functionality, positioning our educational system to compete on a global basis, and the need for the United States to position itself for a global economy.

Ms. Crooms added that the conference offered a wealth of sessions geared towards education, and faith based and community initiatives, and she was able to bring back information to share with staff.

The conference also provided the opportunity to visit Capitol Hill, and Ms. Crooms, Ms. Jackson and Mr. Woodall met with Senator Dole, Senator Burr and Congressman Miller representatives to discuss relevant workforce issues. A follow-up letter has been sent to each of these representatives requesting that they sign on to the FY08 House WIA Dear Colleague Rescission Letter and the WIA Reauthorization Letter to the Senate.

Chairman Barham reminded the Board that the Capital Area Board Retreat is scheduled for April 17, 2008, 9:00 am to 4:00 pm at The Wagner in Clayton, North Carolina. Topics for discussion and review include strategic planning, regional collaboration and board strategies for the next five years.

Under other business, Board members received the Workforce In-Depth Custom Region Summary and the Labor Market Information Update provided by the North Carolina Employment Security Commission, Labor Market Information Division. Also, an update of the YouthBuild program was tabled to the next meeting.

Additional announcements and reminders included:

Youth Summit – March 13, 2008
Discovering the Missing Link Forum – March 14, 2008
JobLink Career Fair – March 26, 2008
Veteran's Stand Down – March 27, 2008
Capital Area Board Retreat – April 17, 2008

Chairman Barham thanked everyone for coming and announced the next meeting is scheduled for April 24, 2008 in Johnston County at Johnston Community College. The meeting was adjourned at 10:10 am.