

Board Meeting Minutes
September 16, 2021 8:30 am
The Lincoln Loft
Watertown, NY

Welcome/Call to Order: Chairman Matt Cooper welcomed all of the Board Members at 8:20 am and introduced new member Rob Aiken from Aubertine and Currier.

Privilege of the Floor: There was none.

Approval of Minutes:

- Chairman Cooper asked for corrections or discussion of the minutes for the June 17, 2021 Board Meeting. There were none. Chairman Cooper next asked for a motion to approve the minutes. Mr. Aiken made that motion. Mr. O'Driscoll seconded. All were in favor.
- Chairman Cooper asked for corrections or discussion of the minutes for the August 26, 2021 Executive Board Meeting. There were none. Chairman Cooper asked for a motion to approve the minutes. Mr. Stehlin made that motion. Ms. Pettit seconded. All were in favor.

Correspondence: Executive Director Mayforth stated that no correspondence had been received.

One-Stop Operator/Provider Report: One-Stop Operator Munson reported that many customers entering The WorkPlace are now looking for re-employment services, rather than unemployment services. Ms. Munson stated that there were 1,189 job openings in the second quarter of 2021 compared to the 263 openings from the second quarter of 2020.

Ms. Munson discussed details of the 9th Annual Job Fair that was held on September 14. There were more than 1,400 job openings available among the businesses that participated in the fair. Ms. Munson also provided updates on open recruitments that were held at the Lewis County WorkPlace for Kraft and DHL. 17 customers interviewed with Kraft and 11 were hired. Nine customers interviewed with DHL and two were hired.

Ms. Munson asked if anyone had any questions on the One-Stop Operator Report. Chairman Cooper asked if the increase in customers seeking re-employment services at The WorkPlace is expected to continue. Ms. Munson stated that The WorkPlace should continue to see an increase in customers looking for employment and continued success of customers obtaining their delayed unemployment insurance.

Summer Youth/Young Adult Program: Youth and Young Adult Program Coordinator Ethan Brown reported the differences in the number of applications prior to COVID-19 and during the pandemic. 107 Youth were employed in the 2021 Summer Youth Employment Program, which is more than double the number of youth that worked in the summer of 2020. Many of the traditional worksites, such as local school districts, returned to participate this summer after declining in 2020.

Mr. Brown and Executive Director Mayforth stated that The WorkPlace will be recruiting new Summer Youth Counselors for 2022, as four of the five Counselors from this past summer will not be returning.

Mr. Brown also discussed goals that were accomplished in 2021 and additional goals set for 2022. These goals include additional communication techniques with youth workers and lessons on social media use. Another goal for 2022 is to work collaboratively with local partner agencies on pre-work experience programs for 14 and 15 year olds. Mr. Brown also presented on a team building event at Camp Wabasso and the end of summer picnic held at Thompson Park.

Director's Report/Financial Report: Executive Director Mayforth reported on funding amounts for Program Year 2021 WIOA Youth, Dislocated Worker and Adult Programs.

Director Mayforth stated that 3% of the workforce has left in the last calendar year, in part because of retirements of specific demographics, child care issues and seasonal employment. Mr. Zembiec asked for clarification on the differences between labor and participation rates, particularly among retired workers.

Director Mayforth explained that the additional pandemic unemployment assistance has ended as of September 5th. Mr. Aiken asked what unemployment rates look like now compared to 2019. Director Mayforth stated that the rates are about the same, and that many other states have not seen dramatic declines in their unemployment rates once the additional pandemic insurance funding has lapsed.

Director Mayforth also discussed the impact the pandemic has had on women in the workforce and the lack of child care in our area. According to Director Mayforth, the amount of women in the workforce are near levels not seen since the 1970's, when the participation rate of women in the workforce was historically low. More parents have adapted to a hybrid model of education for their school-age children in order to avoid child care costs and/or searching for child care in this area. Mr. Todd stated that a lack of bus drivers is also causing problems for local school districts in terms of remaining open for in-person learning five days a week.

Director Mayforth reviewed earlier discussions on businesses providing financial incentives in order to recruit new employees. Mr. Zembiec stated that many employees who worked through the pandemic and did not receive any financial incentive either quit their employment or moved to a new job. Director Mayforth opined that businesses should think about incentives other than money to recruit new employees, such as vacation time, sick time and work environment.

Director Mayforth revealed that the spring job fair, which is typically held by the Watertown Chamber of Commerce, will be conducted by The WorkPlace for 2022. We will be moving forward on planning for Career Jam in 2022, as well.

New Business:

- Resolution 21-01 Membership Renewal: Greater Watertown North Country Chamber of Commerce

Chairman Cooper asked for questions on the resolution. There were none. He then asked for a motion of approval.

Motion: Mr. Hagemann

Second: Ms. Pettit

Approved: Unanimously

- Resolution 21-02 Membership Renewal: Lewis County Chamber of Commerce
Chairman Cooper asked for questions on the resolution. There were none. He then asked for a motion of approval.
Motion: Mr. Hagemann
Second: Ms. Pettit
Approved: Unanimously
- Resolution 21-03 Membership Renewal: Advocate Drum
Chairman Cooper asked for questions on the resolution. There were none. He then asked for a motion of approval.
Motion: Mr. Todd
Second: Mr. Stehlin
Approved: Unanimously
- Resolution 21-04 Approval of Transfer of Administration Funds to Adult and Dislocated Worker Funding Streams
Chairman Cooper asked for questions on the resolution. There were none. He then asked for a motion of approval.
Motion: Mr. O'Driscoll
Second: Dr. Stone
Approved: Unanimously
- Resolution 21-05 Approval of Revisions to the Use of Perkins Grant Funds for Program Year 2021
Chairman Cooper asked for questions on the resolution. There were none. He then asked for a motion of approval.
Motion: Mr. Stehlin
Second: Mr. Prasuhn
Approved: Unanimously

Roundtable Discussion: Mr. Wessner shared that the Watertown Downtown Business Associations has created an art commission that will review local artists' pieces to be used for a mural on the river walk in the City of Watertown. The first mural will be unveiled at a public viewing party on October 2nd. More information will also be provided in the coming weeks via the DBA's Facebook page.

Ms. Pettit and Dr. Stone discussed the need for child care workers and educators in our area; by working with youth at an early age who express an interest in going into these fields, we may be able to subdue any severe labor shortage among teachers and child care staff in the future. Ms. Pettit also asked about the amount of students in the nursing programs at both Jefferson Community College and Jeff-Lewis BOCES. Dr. Stone stated that 25 students will graduate from JCC's RN program this December and another 35-40 students will graduate from the program in May 2022. Mr. Todd reported that there are currently 20-30 students in the BOCES LPN program, with a capacity for as many as 50 students.

Next Meeting: December 16, 2021 8:00 am
Hilton Garden Inn
1290 Arsenal St.
Watertown, NY 13601

Adjournment: Chairman Cooper made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Pettit seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 9:56 am.

Attendance:

Robert Aiken
Rod Castillo
Matthew Cooper
Robert Hagemann
Cheryl Mayforth
Lynn Murray
John O'Driscoll
Shena Patrick
Jody Pettit
Mark Prasuhn
Patrick Sheppard
Dale Stehlin
Ty Stone
Stephen Todd
Joseph Wessner
Dave Zembiec

Others in Attendance:

Ethan Brown
Angel Munson