

COUNTY OF ULSTER

Workforce Development Board

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Jen Metzger,
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Ulster County Workforce Development Board Meeting January 10, 2023 Minutes

- MEMBERS PRESENT –** Tony Marmo, Don Mapes, Don Lucarello, Frank Falatyn, Coleen Macaluso, Angela Patella, Jess Davis, Alex Cordova, James Ferraro, Ashima Butler, Anthony Mignone, Mike Iapoce, Chris Marx, Maura McMahon
- MEMBERS ABSENT -** Brian Amthor, Desiree Lyle, Joe McDole, John Eickman, Michael Berg, Nels Leader, Sean Mahoney, Tamika Dunkley, Tina Buono, William McKnight
- ALSO PRESENT –** Sharon Williams, OET Director/WDB Director, Faith Golden, OET Deputy Director, Renee Pugliese, OET

The meeting was called to order at 3:35 pm by Tony Marmo, WDB Chair. There was a quorum.

1. **OPENING – TONY MARMO, BOARD CHAIR:**

Tony welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked everyone for their 2022 participation.

2. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES – TONY MARMO**

Tony asked for a motion to approve minutes from November 2022. Motion made by Frank, seconded by Alex. All in Favor, none opposed. Minutes approved.

3. **FINANCIAL REPORT – FAITH GOLDEN, OET DEPUTY DIRECTOR**

Faith presented the charts and graphs for the December 2022 Report on Adult, Youth and Dislocated Worker funds. We are in the middle of the program year. The charts show the percentage of funds spent so far in the program year. A question was asked as to what the definition of dislocated worker is. The short definition is someone who is on unemployment or has exhausted their unemployment benefits and is unlikely to return to their previous occupation.

We still have funds left to spend. We are under with Youth spending. Discussion followed.

4. **POLICY UPDATES**

OET is tabling at DSS and DMV to attempt to recruit more customers and get more foot traffic. This is on a trial basis in the first quarter (January – March). We will try other locations also to boost our numbers. We will be looking at the Ellenville area – possibly outside the hospital. We are looking at the areas where we need to boost our numbers so we can spend our dollars.

It was asked where training dollars are allocated in the next program year and are we anticipating additional training dollars? We don't know, it varies. We may know around April.

5. WORKFORCE SUMMIT 2 PREVIEW – TONY MARMO

The second Summit will be at SUNY Ulster Kingston Campus on Thursday, January 12, 2023. There are some open slots left to sign up if interested.

We will do a re-cap of the July Summit. Attendees will break out into 4 groups to work on topics:

- Employer Investment in Upskilling and Retention
- Engaging Historically Excluded Populations
- Engaging Youth in Career Pathways
- Wrap-around services (housing, childcare, transportation)

Will move in a forward direction – will these groups continue to meet? It is our hope that this be ongoing on some level. We will have folks from the private sector, the government, and education.

How can we increase our workforce? Kudos to Sharon and her staff for planning/coordinating this summit.

One of the missions of this summit is for the Workforce Development Board to be the coordinator/point-person for what comes out of the summit.

The Committee structure in 2023 may alter a bit. We need to reach folks that have not been engaged. We should think about the scenario if we run out of training dollars. Also, unknown external factors could arise. Discussion followed.

There is a lot of demand for workers in Ulster County. Think about Recession.

The statistics give conflicting information – it shows that the entertainment/hospitality/tourism industry is getting more growth. We at OET have to get more creative with how we train people and how we recruit.

Emerging Industries are coming into Ulster County. We are talking about 1600 employees in the next two years.

There are no answers, but we will put together a model. Goal is to be prepared and come together/continuity. This is going to be ongoing.

Angela shared information regarding the NYS Office of New Americans (Ramirez June Initiative). They are working with new Americans/refugees. There are untapped workers out there who want to work. The agency is there to help with housing, documentation to get their working papers, translating, etc. They also help employers hire people. They have offices all over the State. It was asked if we can get them on a Zoom meeting for our next WDB meeting. Angela will get in touch with them.

It was brought up that 35% of students at Kingston High School are not citizens and, therefore, we cannot hire them. Discussion followed regarding people becoming new American citizens and the housing problem; are they issued a housing voucher? Housing is difficult due to stigmas, etc. (Section 8) Landlords should be encouraged to bring in new Americans.

Our groups will meet in between now and the next summit and will strategically move forward. We will have to distinguish between people who are legally entering the country through an immigration program who can legally work here and have working papers/work permits versus asylum seekers that have to undertake a very specific process that starts with applying for asylum - we can't serve them. DSS has not seen a lot of inquiries from the immigrant community coming in. Try some outreach to agencies (Ulster Immigrant Defense Network, Catholic Charities, and Salvation Army) that have interaction with the immigrant community, if the immigrants have documentation that would permit them to work.

Ukrainian refugees in the Ellenville area have been coming in to BOCES and looking for ESL classes and looking to find employment. BOCES is trying to hook them up with resources.

6. TERMS OF TENURE/UPCOMING CHANGES/MEMBER PARTICIPATION – TONY MARMO

There is a Get To Know You gathering being planned at Ole Savannah on Thursday, Jan. 26 at 5:00pm.

Engagement committee focuses on membership. The term ends on June 30, and July 1 they change members.

Strategic initiatives – nothing new to report.

Public Engagement – we have some things going on with John, we will wait to hear from that.

7. DIRECTOR'S REPORT – SHARON WILLIAMS, WDB DIRECTOR
PROGRAM UPDATES -

A New County Executive has been appointed. Jen Metzger officially took office on January 2, 2023. Workforce is high on her list of strategic initiatives. We are hoping that she will make a stop at the Summit.

County employment statistics/In Demand Occupations List – the updated data points were sent out by Johnny Nelson. Demand Occupations list – It is up to us to modify the list. There are emerging industries – we have to look at all the categories. Green initiatives – 2023 creativity.

Dates for WDB Meetings 2023 – Please make note of the meetings for 2023 included in your packet. Hybrid (in-person and Zoom) meetings will continue in 2023. OET will send out the link to the Zoom meeting if you can't make it in person.

Lightcast Data Platform – Tim Weideman of Economic Development has purchased a license to Lightcast which is brand new to the County (a re-imagined data system from which we can pull more real time data vs. State data which always has a lag time). OET will have a license also in the future.

Discussion followed on Demand Occupations. What is the definition of "Establishment" on the Employment Trend sheet, 2nd Qtr. 2022? The numbers seem off.

More discussion continued regarding the untapped population of disabled/handicapped individuals and bringing them into the work field. They are loyal, get comfortable, and stay in jobs – they don't job-hop.

8. MOTION TO ADJOURN – TONY MARMO

Tony asked for a Motion to adjourn – Motion made by Frank, seconded by Anthony Mignone. Meeting adjourned at 4:43 pm.

ULSTER COUNTY WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD
NEXT MEETING:

Tuesday, March 14, 2023
3:30 PM